

Henry Bibb, the fugitive slave from Kentucky, was then introduced and made an impressive and sensible speech on the importance of supplying the slave with the Bible. He said that as the representative of the down-trodden slave in America, he was glad to hear of the proposal to send a copy of the Scriptures to every colored family. I may speak, said Mr. B., with some authority on the subject. I know by experience the secrets of the prison-house. A slave till within a few years myself, I am entitled to an attentive hearing, not only from the courtesy of this audience, but from my identity with the slave. After all the efforts that have been made to circulate the Scriptures among the American population—after the resolve of the Bible Society to supply every family with a copy—still 3,000,000 of my brethren, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, are deprived of the privilege of reading the Word of God. Mr. B. then drew a vivid picture of the evils of Slavery and the sufferings of the slave, of the universal licentiousness that made the semblance of marriage a mockery, of the violent disruption of the dearest ties, and the misery and degradation of being sold in the market like a beast of burden. These evils would be removed by the introduction of the Bible. If my Anti-Slavery friends had stuck to the Bible, I believe, said Mr. B., that there would have been no occasion of our meeting to-day. I hold to fighting men with their own weapons, and with the Bible as an instrument, their success would have been certain.

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him what was done for circulating the Scriptures among the slaves. The Parent Society left this work to the local Societies. But what are the local Societies at the South composed of? Of slaveholders who will not put the Bible into the hands of their slaves. He inquired of Dr. B. with regard to Kentucky. He turned over a long list, till he came to Bedford County—the County he came from. Who are the agents there? Mr. A. I know him well. A slaveholder. Who next? Mr. E. Another slaveholder. Who next? Mr. C. my old master. A brother of the Methodist Church, who put me in hand-cuffs, tied my feet under a horse, and sold me to a gang of gamblers to speculate on at New Orleans. My wife he sold at a great price for viler purposes. These men will never supply the slave with the Scriptures. The Bible Society will never do it. We must go to the people. The American Missionary Society have undertaken it, and by the help of God will accomplish it.

It may be objected that as the slave cannot read, the project will be useless. This is a mistake. There is not a plantation at the South, on which there is not one or more slaves that know how to read. The house servants often learn by stealth of the children, and, keeping their own counsel, become proficient in reading, without a suspicion of it by their owners.

It is said that slaveholders are opposed to circulating the Bible. But in six States there is no law against it; no law against teaching the slave to read.

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