

**MARYLAND SLAVERY
AND MARYLAND
CHIVALRY; PP. 3-55**

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Maryland Slavery and Maryland Chivalry; pp. 3-55 by J. S. Lame

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J. S. LAME

**MARYLAND SLAVERY
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MARYLAND SLAVERY

AND

MARYLAND CHIVALRY.

CONTAINING THE

LETTERS OF "JUNIUS," ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED
IN ZION'S HERALD:

TOGETHER WITH A

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT PROMPTED
THE PUBLICATION OF THOSE LETTERS.

ALSO A

SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE PERSECUTION SUFFERED BY THE AUTHOR
AT THE HANDS OF SOUTHERN SLAVEHOLDERS.

BY

REV. J. S. LAME,

OF THE PHILADELPHIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1858.

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P R E F A C E .

SINCE our violent expulsion from the field of labor to which we were duly appointed, we have been frequently solicited to publish a brief and impartial history of the origin of the letters of "Junius;" together with an account of the proceedings of our Southern friends when they became apprised of our complicity with those letters.

That the following pages are free from error, is more than we can hope. That they are exempt from intentional mistake we are fully assured.

If we have incautiously soiled the fair fame of the humblest, we will be most happy to apologize for, and as far as possible repair, the injury.

If we have misstated facts—if we have arrived at wrong conclusions—if, on the perplexing subject of slavery, we are "zealously affected, but not well," we are open to conviction.

We do most devoutly abominate oppression in all its forms and phases. The great deep of our soul has been stirred by the sights we have seen and the sounds we have

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heard; and we are deeply desirous of contributing the widow's mite to the treasury of human freedom.

May God defend the right!

J. S. LAME.

VILLAGE GREEN, *September*, 1858.

MARYLAND SLAVERY AND MARYLAND CHIVALRY.

As it is known to the Church that the author of the following pages has been recently expelled from the field of labor to which he was appointed at the late session of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, it is but just that the church should be acquainted with the crime with which he is charged—for which he has been tried and adjudged guilty—and is now suffering the penalty of expatriation.

In order to have a proper understanding of the letters published in *Zion's Herald* (Boston), and republished in this pamphlet, it will be necessary to present some preliminary facts and observations.

We were born and educated in the State of Pennsylvania. Being incessantly pursued by a voice that importunately cried, "Wo unto you if you preach not the Gospel"—and believing that our only road to heaven lay through the Pulpit, we reluctantly consented to enter the ministerial ranks. In our twentieth year we became a member of the Philadelphia Conference. In the spring of 1856, we were appointed to labor in Slaveholding territory. Up to that period, we had never read an elaborate treatise on the subject of slavery. Having frequently read conflicting newspaper accounts, we had arrived at the conclusion to ignore the whole subject, and turn it over to the tender mercies of the politicians. The question of the right of property in man had never been settled, for it had never been investigated; and our presumption was that the condition of the bond was superior to the condition of the colored free. Thus we were prepared to apologize for, if not defend the institution.

A few months after our arrival on the circuit, being in a country store, a man of wealth and distinction commenced talking to one of his slaves who was present, accusing him of keeping swine that he fed from his master's cornfield. Growing furious as he spoke, he avowed his determination to send South for a nigger-driver, and designed to put a whip in one hand, and a pistol in the

other, and drive his slaves into measures, and if they resisted to shoot them down like dogs. The poor slave, though a man of years, appeared like the quivering aspen, scarce venturing a word of reply. We trembled as we thought of the tremendous power of the master over his defenceless slave.

Occupying the kitchen attached to the house in which we resided, were five negroes. They were utterly destitute of a bed. A few filthy rags constituted their only couch. During the excessively severe winter of 1856, as we lay on our own comfortable bed, our heart ached as we thought of the destitution and suffering of those poor slaves, who had so few friends to sympathize with them, no kind hand to minister to their necessities, no mother's gentle care in directing their erring steps, and with minds utterly untutored. In the depths of winter, through the long cold nights, while their master and mistress were reposing on comfortable beds—the product of those negroes' labor—they lay, with the wind whistling through the quarter, while the snow became their covering. Thoughts suggested by these circumstances kept wakeful our midnight hours. One of those slaves, a boy of 16, in bondage for a number of years, seizes a favorable opportunity to go and see his father, without his master's consent; and for this atrocious crime, his term of bondage was doubled.

These facts presenting themselves to our mind, forced us to reflect, and to make an investigation of the *theory* of slavery.

The more we read—the more we reflected on the abstract question—and the more minutely we watched the practical operations and developments of the system, the more fully we became settled in the conclusion that such a system is utterly repugnant to the teachings of the Bible. And such were the abominations of the traffic, as practised by church members and ministers, by professors and publicans, that we were driven to the admission that, considering the circumstances, the American is the worst system of slavery that ever saw the sun; and, with our eye fixed on the fires of the last judgment, we aver that such shocking abomination, grinding oppression, cruel barbarities, unrelenting despotism, and foul impurities, are practised on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, as would have disgraced Earth's most barbarous age and nation.

And yet the system with which these atrocities seem inseparably connected, finds apologists innumerable in the church, and even among God's ministers.

We consoled ourselves with the thought that the Discipline of the M. E. Church, both in letter and spirit, was opposed to slavery. Turning to page 21, we found what we, in our simplicity, thought was a prohibitory law on the subject of buying and selling slaves; but we were soon informed, by commentators on the Discipline, that this law prohibited traffic in the foreign slave trade. That is, a rule of the M. E. Church forbids its members to become pirates. What a stupendous pitch of morality that law supposes!

The Discipline certainly declares slaveholders ineligible to official station in the church; but the members of the Board of Stewards owned at least 30 slaves, and bought, bred, beat, and sold them *ad libitum*. One member of that board we had frequently heard make the boastful assertion, that the moment his servants were dissatisfied and wished another master, they were at perfect liberty to go. So, taking the good brother at his own proposal, one night the whole *posse* took French leave; but no sooner was the fact known that they had gone—than a large reward was offered for their apprehension and recovery.

Thus we have indicated the position we occupied up to the spring of 1857, firmly established in the belief of the great wickedness of slavery, but not settled as to the proper means for its removal. Ministers of age and wisdom deprecated all agitation of the subject, discountenancing its introduction into the pulpit and the press.

In the month of April, 1857, we received our appointment to Snow Hill Circuit, Worcester Co., Md., the circuit extending almost to the line of Virginia. We entered upon our labor with the determination to earnestly and honorably endeavor to discharge all the duties of our position. Here we were more fully impressed with the evils of slavery: portraits of its shocking abominations hang as distinct and prominent pictures on the walls of memory. Here we were able to learn how the slaves present so fine an appearance on the Sabbath, and on holiday occasions. After they have spent the day in laboring for their masters, a portion of the night is usually employed in making baskets, brooms, &c.; and no sooner did a load of wood arrive at the parsonage than a number were on the ground to secure the task of cutting and splitting, after nightfall.

I have held frequent conversations with the poor sufferers, as they toiled at the wood. I asked one poor fellow, the property of a drunken master: "Are you free?" "Ah! no, massa!" "They say

that Maryland is to be a free State." "Ah! I'se heard dat too often, massa!"

One old, back-bent, hard-handed man of toil stated that, in his younger days, he labored all day for his master, and spent the whole of six consecutive nights working for his personal benefit; and that, when he expressed his wish to marry a free girl, his master, to intimidate him, threatened to sell him South. He married a slave, and, as a consequence, that wife, with a portion of his children, are now probably in the rice swamps of the South. But he got another wife and children. Ought we to have expelled him for the crime of adultery? We pause for a reply. As the result of excessive labor, and great exposure, his spine is curved, his limbs twisted and distorted, and he stands as an animated exhibition of the beauties of bondage, and as a mute appeal to indignant Heaven for retributive justice.

Another affecting instance of the helplessness of the slave we found in his incompetency to hold religious services except in the presence of a legally authorized white man. It sometimes happened that, owing to the apathy of the whites, no protector could be provided. At one of the churches on the circuit, the colored people were compelled to suspend their meetings for many months. The authority ceded to the protector is not transferable. The colored people of an adjoining circuit convened a meeting for the purpose of preaching a funeral sermon. The authorized protector being indisposed, he sent his license to a friend, who repaired to the place of meeting, and the exercises commenced. During their progress, a constable entered, dispersed the assembly, arrested the white man, and carried him before a magistrate. Having frequently preached for our colored members, we have seen most astounding displays of religious excitement. The house may be resounding with loud Hallelujah's, and a score of mourners at the altar, may be importunately imploring mercy; yet, at a certain hour of the night, the proceedings must be stopped, the lights extinguished, and the people driven like swine from the house.

One evening, owing to an extraordinary effusion of divine power, the meeting was delayed a few moments after the fatal hour. As we retired from the house, the patrol, with staff in hand, and posse at his side, was wending his way to the meeting, and, as we were informed, accelerated the speed of some of the tardy worshippers, and then returned to a hotel to spend the night in a noisy frolic.