

When this concern first arose in the Society of Friends, it was the offspring of love to God, and love to our fellow men. It originated in a feeling of compassion for the poor oppressed Slaves as well as of benevolent regard to those who held them in bondage. No hostility, or even unkindness, was entertained towards those who claimed to be their owners; a very large proportion of whom, from long established habit, and almost universal example, had been very much blinded to the iniquity of the system, and its awful consequences. With such, our faithful predecessors in the cause of justice and humanity, were concerned personally to labour; & in the spirit of meekness, by affectionate remonstrance, endeavoured to convince them of the impolicy, as well as injustice, of the practice. Our Lord and Master has declared "when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice, and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers". This blessed state of preservation and safety, has in all ages of the Church, been graciously vouchsafed to his truly dedicated and humble followers. Our worthy predecessors in the Truth, by devoted attention to the voice of this true Shepherd, were signally preserved from the agitations and excitements which distract and unsettle the flock, and always tend to break and destroy the peace and harmony of Society. By learning to distinguish and certainly to know his voice from that of the "Stranger" they were enabled, in great unity, to maintain and advance the various testimonies given them to bear, and none more conspicuously than our righteous testimony against enslaving the African Race.

Our blessed Lord, in addressing his followers, said, My Kingdom is not of this world; if my Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight. John xviii. 36. Accordingly, the promulgation of the glorious gospel dispensation was committed to a few unlettered fishermen of Galilee by whose faithful labours, under Divine influence, it was, without the aid of force or violence, extended to the utmost boundaries of civilisation. The arduous duty of those of this Society, who, under the same Divine influence, were called upon & commissioned to bear testimony against the injustice of reducing, by force, our fellow beings, equally as ourselves the offspring of the universal parent, and objects of his love and regard, to a state of unconditional bondage was in like manner faithfully performed.

The instruments most conspicuous in this labour, were also plain, unlearned men, who, believing themselves required by the Head of the Church to devote themselves to this work, went forth in great humility and meekness; and in the spirit of love, with kindness, and much forbearance, laboured for a reformation.

"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again", was the language of our Divine Lawgiver; and the declaration is found to be true in the experience of all those who faithfully follow him as the Captain of their salvation. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." In its exercise under the Divine government, it awakens no angry passions, it suffereth long and is kind - "it taketh its Kingdom with entreaty, and not with contention, and keepeth it by lowliness of mind" and while it bears its testimony to the truth, it opens the ears of the hearers to receive