

did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke XII. 47. 48.) Instead then of joining with others in contriving or supporting a system of coercion, whereby the Slaveholder shall be compelled to perform an act which he may not apprehend himself called upon to do we believe it would be more consistent with the mild and benificent spirit of the Gospel, and with the example of the holy and immaculate Pattern of all perfection, in the language of kindness and conciliation to call the attention of the Slaveholder to the unerring standard of righteousness in himself to urge him to solemn considerations of the position in which he stands; that thus, happily for himself, he may be persuaded voluntarily to do justly to those in bonds to him, whereby mercy and truth, by the force of their own benign influence should triumph over injustice and oppression. For more than one hundred years after the rise of our religious Society, there were amongst our own members many slaveholders, - sincere hearted men and women who were conscientiously desirous of maintaining all the Testimonies of the Society. But of the enormity of the evils consequent upon Slavery they had not then become sensible, and were quietly resting under the system, as many now are, without any manifestation of uneasiness, or apparent conviction that they were doing wrong. But in the course of time, under the enlightning influence of the same divine principle of Life and Truth, in the soul, that had manifested to our dedicated predecessors many evils that then abounded in the world, the injustice of the African Slave trade, and of Slavery was clearly opened to their understanding. They saw that the whole system was in direct violation of that positive

injunction of the Divine Master "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them". Their minds being thus drawn to the subject, they were led to trace this system through all its stages from its commencement to its termination; during which examination they perceived, that the annals of human barbarity furnished no instance of greater cruelty, outrage, and oppression than were inflicted on the African race, by this trade, and the system that supported it. The consequence was, that Friends came to the solemn conclusion, that so far as we were ~~ever~~ concerned, it was our duty to separate ourselves from any participation in such accumulated guilt: first by withdrawing from any connexion either with the foreign or domestic Slave trade, and secondly, by manumitting and discharging from servitude whatever slaves might be in our possession. The Society of Friends in thus taking up a Testimony against slavery publicly and openly, did not desire to invade the privileges of their neighbours, nor in any way improperly ^{identify} with them. With us it was purely a religious concern, unconnected with any political or temporal considerations, and valuing above all earthly privileges the inestimable blessing, of liberty to act freely according to the dictates of Divine Light, the Society felt no disposition to invade the sacred right of others to the same enjoyment.

We have neither in the example nor precepts of our Lord & Master, any authority to compel people to do what we may believe to be right. It is our privilege and our duty to act according to the dictates of conscience, and therefore, for the relief of our own minds we gave pardon to the Slaves under our control. Having thus borne our testimony against Slavery and set an example of justice to those around us, we had so far discharged our duty,