

THE HIRELING AND THE SLAVE

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The Hireling and the Slave by William J. Grayson

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WILLIAM J. GRAYSON

**THE HIRELING
AND THE SLAVE**

B. F. Carroll
1855

THE

HIRELING AND THE SLAVE.

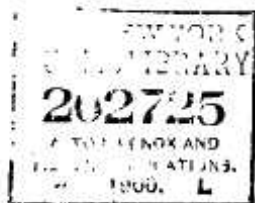
APPROX all, Slavery in their case (the Jamaica slaves) is but another name for servitude. M. G. Lewis.

Irish whites have been long emancipated, and nobody asks them to work, or permits them to work, on condition of finding them potatoes. CARLYLE.

SECOND EDITION.

CHARLESTON.
JOHN RUSSELL.

1855.



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TO

JAMES L. PETIGRU, LL.D.

I ASK permission to inscribe the following verses to you.

If not a fit offering to your taste and judgement, they at least give me an opportunity for saying how much I admire the wit, intellect and learning, which you have devoted with so much success to every noble purpose; which have never failed friend or stranger in distress, nor shrunk from a toil or sacrifice required by Justice, Humanity, or Generosity.

The most exalted station in society is that of the Advocate who employs distinguished legal attainments and abilities to defend the unfortunate, vindicate truth and right, and maintain law, order and established government—and this station is universally admitted to be yours.

P R E F A C E .

THE malignant abuse lavished on the Slaveholders of America, by writers in this country and England, can be accounted for, but in one way, consistently with any degree of charitable consideration for the slanderers. They have no knowledge of the thing abused. They substitute an ideal of their own contriving for the reality. They regard Slavery as a system of chains, whips and tortures. They consider its abuses as its necessary condition, and a cruel master its fair representative. Mr. Clarkson took up the subject, originally, as a fit one for a college exercise in rhetoric, and it became a rhetorical exercise for life to himself and his followers. With these people the cruelty of Slavery is an affair of tropes and figures only. They have shown as little regard for truth, fairness and common sense, as they would

do to gather all the atrocities of their own country committed by husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, priest and people, and denounce these several relations in life in consequence of their abuses.

The labourer suffers wrong, abuse and cruelty in England, but, they say, it is against the law, against public opinion; he may apply to the Courts for redress; these are open to him. Cruelty to the Slave is equally against the law. It is equally condemned by public opinion; and as to the Courts of Law being open to the pauper hireling, we may remember the reply of Sheridan to a similar remark,—yes, and so are the London Hotels—justice and a good dinner, with Champagne, are equally within his reach. If, in consequence of the evils incident to hireling labour—because there are severe, heartless, grinding employers and miserable starving hirelings, it were proposed to abolish hireling labour, it would be quite as just and logical as the argument to abolish Slavery because there are sufferings among Slaves, and hard hearts among Masters. The cruelty or suffering is no more a necessary part of the one system than of the other. Notwithstanding its abuses and miseries, the Hireling System works beneficially with white labourers; and so also, not-

withstanding hard masters, Slavery, among a Christian people, is advantageous to the negro. To attempt to establish the hireling system with Africans, would be as wise as to endeavour to bestow the constitutional government of England on Ashantee or Dahomey. In both cases there would be an equal amount of abstract truth and practical absurdity.

Slavery is that system of labour which exchanges subsistence for work, which secures a life-maintenance from the master to the slave, and gives a life-labour from the slave to the master. The slave is an apprentice for life, and owes his labour to his master; the master owes support, during life, to the slave. Slavery is the negro system of labour. He is lazy and improvident. Slavery makes all work, and it ensures homes, food and clothing for all. It permits no idleness, and it provides for sickness, infancy and old age. It allows no tramping or skulking, and it knows no pauperism.

This is the whole system substantially. All cruelty is an abuse; does not belong to the institution; is now punished and may be in time prevented. The abuses of Slavery are as open to all reforming influences as those of any other

civil, social, or political condition. The improvement in the treatment of the slave is as marked as in that of any other labouring class in the world. If it be true of the English soldier or sailor, that his condition has been ameliorated in the last fifty years, it is quite as true of the negro.

If Slavery is subject to abuses, it has its advantages also. It establishes more permanent, and, therefore, kinder relations between capital and labour. It removes what Stuart Mill calls "the widening and embittering feud between the class of labour and the class of capital." It draws the relation closer between master and servant. It is not an engagement for days or weeks, but for life. There is no such thing, with Slavery, as a labourer for whom nobody cares or provides. The most wretched feature, in hiring labour, is the isolated miserable creature who has no home, no work, no food, and in whom no one is particularly interested. *This is seen among hirelings only.*

I do not say that Slavery is the best system of labour, but only that it is the best, for the negro, in this country. In a nation composed of the same race or similar races, where the labourer is intelligent, industrious and provident, money wages may be better than subsistence. Even under all ad-