

fectingly to be observed that a baneful excess in drinking distilled spiritous liquors, is prevalent amongst many of the inhabitants of our land; how evident are the corrupting, debasing and ruinous effects consequent upon the importation, distillation and retailing of them; whereby intemperance is greatly aided and encouraged to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more; and increasing vice and dissoluteness in the land; with which many religiously attentive minds have been long painfully exercised.

Proceeding  
against those  
who trans-  
gress.

It is earnestly desired that Friends, in all quarters, may be excited to suffer the affecting importance of this evil religiously to impress their minds: and Monthly Meetings are directed to labour in the spirit of love, in order to convince those of our members of the impropriety of their conduct, who may be engaged in importing, distilling, vending of or trading in distilled spiritous liquors, as an article of drink, or who use it as a common drink themselves, or hand it out for that purpose to others. And if after Monthly Meetings shall have patiently laboured with such as continue in either of these practices, they cannot be prevailed upon to desist from the same, such meetings are left at liberty to disown them.

## NEGROES AND SLAVES.

Testimony  
against slave-  
ry.

As a religious society we have found it to be our indispensable duty to declare to the world, our belief of the repugnancy of slavery to the christian religion. It therefore remains to be our continued concern to prohibit our members from holding in boudage our fellow-men. And at the

present time, we apprehend it to be incumbent on every individual, deeply to consider his own particular share in this testimony. The slow progress in the emancipation of this part of the human family we lament; but nevertheless do not despair of their ultimate enlargement. And we desire that Friends may not suffer the deplorable condition of these, our enslaved fellow-beings, to lose its force upon their minds through the delay, which the opposition of the interested may occasion, in this work of justice and mercy; but rather be animated to consider, that the longer the opposition remains, the greater is the necessity on the side of righteousness and benevolence, for our steady perseverance in pleading their cause.

Let us also amidst our sympathy for the sufferers, not forget to cultivate those sensations which direct the mind in pity towards the deplorable state of those men, whether in foreign countries or our own, who promote, procure and execute the tearing away of the Africans from their native land; as well as for those who detain them in bondage. Let us, therefore, seek for and cherish that disposition of mind, which can pray for these enemies of humanity, and fervently breathe for their restoration to soundness of judgment and purity of principle.

In relation to the descendants of the African race, we earnestly desire, that those who may be under the care of any of our members, may be treated with kindness; and as objects of the common salvation, instructed in the principles of the christian religion, as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their respective neighbourhoods, advise and assist those who are at liberty, in the

Commiseration to those who are involved in slavery or slave trade.

Treatment of the African race in friends families.

education of their children, and common worldly concerns.

Against hir-  
ing slaves or  
taking such  
as apprentices

If any in membership with us should hire slaves, or should take as apprentices or servants slaves who are to be returned to their alleged owners, after a term of years, or limited time; or shall purchase slaves to be liberated at any time after the ages of eighteen for females and twenty-one years for males; or act as executors or administrators to estates where slaves are thus bequeathed; or be accessory to any step whereby their bondage may be continued, beyond the term above limited; however they may be induced thereto from an apparent motive of contributing to the cause of humanity, it is our judgment, that such countenance the injustice of slavery, and oppose our testimony against it: they ought, therefore, to be speedily treated with, in the spirit of love and wisdom, in order to convince them of the iniquity of their conduct, and if, after christian labour, they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice as to do whatever the Monthly Meeting shall judge right in the case, and condemn their deviation from the law of righteousness and equity, to the satisfaction of the said meeting; they ought to be disowned, as otheir transgressors are, for immoral, unjust and reproachful conduct.

Attention to  
what may be  
farther open-  
ed on this  
subject.

The situation of those of the African race, who have been held as slaves by any of us or our predecessors, calls for our serious examination and inquiry, how far we are clear of withholding from them what, under such an exercise, may be opened to our view, as their just right; and we earnestly and affectionately intreat those in particular, who have released any of them, to attend to the further manifestations of duty. Even if no such obligations to this people existed amongst us, it is

worthy of our consideration, whether any object of beneficence is more deserving of our regard, than that of training up their youth in such virtuous principles and habits, as may render them useful and respectable members of the community.

## OATHS.

OUR testimony against the imposition of oaths is founded upon the following express and positive command of the Author of the Christian religion, viz: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black; but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." **Matt. v. 33 to 37.**

Scripture  
testimony a-  
gainst.

This testimony we also find was clearly held up, and emphatically enjoined by the apostle James, upon his christian brethren. "But above all things my brethren," says he, "swear not; neither by heaven; neither by the earth; neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." **Jas. v. 12.**

Believing therefore, that no argument can invalidate prohibitions thus clear and positive, we are bound religiously to regard them; and whilst we feel gratitude for the continuance of that indulgence by which our affirmation is accepted; let us

Ought to be  
respected.