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GOD AND SLAVERY IN AMERICA:

FRANCIS WAYLAND AND THE EVANGELICAL CONSCIENCE

by

MATTHEW S. HILL

Under the Direction of Dr. Wendy H. Venet

ABSTRACT

The work examines the antislavery writings of Francis Wayland (1796-1865). Wayland pastored churches in Boston and Providence, but he left his indelible mark as the fourth and twenty-eight year president of Brown University (1827-1855). The author of numerous works on moral science, economics, philosophy, education, and the Baptist denomination, his administration marked a transitional stage in the emergence of American colleges from a classically oriented curriculum to an educational philosophy based on science and modern languages. Wayland left an enduring legacy at Brown, but it was his antislavery writings that brought him the most notoriety and controversy.

Developed throughout his writings, rather than systematically in a major work, his antislavery views were shaped and tested in the political and intellectual climate of the antebellum world in which he lived. First developed in *The Elements of Moral Science* (1835), he tested the boundaries of activism in *The Limitations of Human Responsibility* (1838), and

publicly debated antislavery in *Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution* (1845). The political crisis from the Mexican-American War through the Kansas-Nebraska Act heightened Wayland's activism as delineated in *The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate* (1847), his noncompliance with the Fugitive Slave Law, and his public address on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill (1854). In 1861 he became a committed Unionist.

I argue that Francis Wayland was a mediating figure in the controversy between abolitionists and proslavery apologists and that his life was a microcosm of the transition that many individuals made from moderate antislavery to abolitionism. Wayland proved unique in that he was heavily coveted by Northern abolitionists who sought his unconditional support and yet he was respected by Southerners who appreciated his uncomdemning attitude toward slaveholders even while he opposed slavery. I argue that Wayland's transition from reluctant critic to public activist was not solely due to the political sweep of events, but that his latter activism was already marked in his earlier work. Most importantly, his life demonstrated both the limits and possibilities in the history of American antislavery.

INDEX WORDS: Francis Wayland, Antislavery, Abolitionist, Baptist Denomination, Richard Fuller, William Hague, Cyrus Pitt Grosvenor, William Lloyd Garrison, Anthony Burns, Mexican-American War, Compromise of 1850, Fugitive Slave Law, Civil Disobedience, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Civil War, Pacifism, Emancipation, Freedmen

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MATTHEW S. HILL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Georgia State University

2008

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August 2008

DEDICATION

To Dad
1947-2003

~In memory of my father Roger D. Hill~

I wish you were here to see this project through to completion. Though I can never repay the debt that I owe you, your legacy lives on in my life and the lives of my children.

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INTRODUCTION

Francis Wayland: Life and Legacy in Antislavery History

In 1860 E.N. Elliott, President of Planter's College, Mississippi, penned in the opening lines of the proslavery anthology, *Cotton is King* (1860), "There is now but one great question dividing the American people, and that, to the great danger of the stability of our government, the concord and harmony of our citizens, and the perpetuation of our liberties, divides us by a geographical line." The editor further spoke of "estrangement, alienation, enmity" arising "between the North and the South." These opening lines are an apt summary of the life of Francis Wayland, noted pastor and educator, although he was not the intended subject. Wayland argued with equal passion for the sinfulness of slavery and for the need to maintain an unbroken fellowship with southern slaveholders. Perhaps no other evangelical and intellectual figure of his generation was so pressured by his peers to support immediate emancipation due to the general respect that his name garnered in the North and South alike. The geographical line of which Elliott wrote, was precisely the division Wayland worked to avoid. Furthermore, the expansion of slavery that produced the "estrangement, alienation, enmity" between the nation politically was the same force that tore at the nation's denominational unity. His efforts to hold these centrifugal poles together proved no more successful than those of his political counterparts.[1]

This work explores the life and labors of Francis Wayland (1796-1865) and argues that Wayland held the centrist position in the struggle against slavery and that his life represented a microcosm in the growth of northern antislavery sentiment. He was a noted Baptist pastor, president of Brown University, educational and humanitarian reformer, economic, political, and philosophical theorist, and antislavery advocate. He wrote on a broad number of subjects, but he

[1] E.N. Elliott, ed., *Cotton is King and Proslavery Writings: Comprising the Writings of Hammond, Harper, Christy, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright* (Augusta, Ga.: Prichard, Abbott & Looms, 1860), iii.

was best known for his educational reform, economic and moral philosophy, and his famed debate with fellow Baptist divine Richard Fuller. Widely respected in his own day and the author of a leading text on moral philosophy that was notably used in southern colleges, Wayland makes an interesting case study in the intellectual world of antebellum America. Although comprehensive, I focus on his antislavery views and situate his life within the broader antebellum context.

A brief summary of his life will best provide insight into his contributions and significance. Francis Wayland was born to middle-class parents in New York City. His father was a successful businessman, but gave up his career to become a Baptist minister. Wayland entered Union College in 1811, graduated two years later, and studied medicine until 1816. Following a religious experience, he left medical school to attend Andover Theological Seminary in preparation for the ministry. From 1817 to 1821 he worked as a tutor at Union College, but left this position to pastor the First Baptist Church of Boston from 1821-1826. Twice married, his first wife died in 1834 and he remarried in 1838. The father of four, his only daughter died at fifteen months, but his three sons survived his death. His son Francis Jr., was particularly prominent as he graduated from Brown in 1846, studied law at Harvard, worked as a probate judge in Connecticut in 1864, lieutenant-governor from 1869-1870, and served as the dean of Yale Law School from 1873-1903. His son Heman Lincoln, served as pastor, military chaplain, professor of rhetoric and logic at Kalamazoo College in Michigan and president of Franklin College in Indiana from 1870-1872. Although Francis Wayland was not particularly noted as a pastor, some of his sermons were widely circulated. He temporarily accepted a chair in moral philosophy and mathematics at Union College, but was soon unanimously chosen as President of Brown University, a position he held from 1827-1855. At Brown, he was

instrumental in revising the curriculum by adding science, modern languages, and electives. He further expanded Brown's endowment and campus size. His administration has been touted as the "golden age of the university."[2]

An avid reformer, he worked tirelessly in educational reform, hospital administration, public library fundraising, and prison reform. A noted author, he wrote on a variety of subjects. On education, his key works were his *Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System in the United States* (1842) and the *Report on the Condition of the University*, *Report to the Corporation of Brown University on the Changes in the System of Collegiate Education* (1850). His political views were laid out in *The Duties of an American Citizen* (1825), *The Affairs of Rhode Island* (1842), and *The Limitations of Human Responsibility* (1838) and *The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate* (1847). His *Elements of Political Economy* (1837), was a noted, if not original work, and his philosophical and educational text, but not a notable original work textbook as was his *Intellectual Philosophy* (1854).

Although he did not consider himself a theologian, his *Notes on the Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches* argued for complete congregational autonomy in the Baptist churches. Although not considered a leading pastor, his two sermons "The Moral Dignity of the Missionary Enterprise" (1823) and "The Duties of an American Citizen" (1825) were published to wide acclaim. His most noted work, *The Elements of Moral Science* (1835) sold more than 100,000 copies, was well received in Europe, and became the leading textbook on moral philosophy in American colleges for nearly fifty years. This work was widely used in southern colleges despite its various antislavery passages. When the sectional crisis heated up, many

[2]"Francis Wayland" in Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds, *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols., (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1936) 19:558-560.

schools pulled his textbook, but others simply edited its antislavery portions and continued to use it. This fact alone testifies to its importance as a nineteenth century intellectual work.[3]

Despite holding antislavery views, Wayland shied from more activist political involvement. He did not support making slaveholding a test for Christian fellowship and argued tirelessly that severing theological ties would lose northern Christians whatever influence they could have over their southern brethren. Nevertheless, in a series of journalistic exchanges with proslavery advocate and fellow Baptist minister Richard Fuller of South Carolina, he argued that slavery was not sanctioned in scripture. Published in book form under the title *Domestic Slavery considered as a Scriptural Institution* (1845), this work was widely read by both northerners and southerners alike. Particularly marked, then and now, was the congenial tone of the exchange from both parties.

The political crises' of the 1840s and 1850s prompted Wayland to choose sides, as it did so many other Americans of his day. His general silence on antislavery was broken with the Mexican-American War, the Wilmot Proviso, the Fugitive Slave Law and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Convinced that the South was determined to spread slavery beyond its current boundaries, Wayland supported the Free Soil Party and later the Republican Party. When the Civil War broke out, he threw his support behind Lincoln, the Union cause, and immediate emancipation. His support added an important intellectual voice to the emancipationist fray, one that many of his friends considered both welcoming and long overdue.

His support for the war was somewhat of a departure for him. Although not a pacifist, he was onetime president of the American Peace Society. He opposed the Mexican War, dubbing it "wicked, infamous, unconstitutional in design, and stupid and shockingly depraved in its

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[3]Francis Wayland and H.L. Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland*, 2 vols. (New York: Arno Press, 1867; 1972), I: 385.

management." Yet the Civil War was a war of liberation, designed "to bring slavery forever to an end." He urged citizens to dutifully support the federal government in prosecuting the war for so righteous a cause. During the war, Wayland wrote dozens of letters to army chaplains, congressmen, and senators. In 1862 he was appointed a member of the Board of Visitors to the West Point Military Academy and spent four years working for the Christian Commission. Toward the end of the war, he wrote numerous letters debating how best to elevate the status of recently emancipated slaves. Like many pastors, he sermonized a eulogy following the death of Abraham Lincoln, and similar to Lincoln's Second Inaugural, Wayland encouraged all to "lay aside all malice and revenge" and to "do justice to the high as well as the low." [4]

To better grasp the historical context in which Francis Wayland lived, it is important to understand the antebellum world in which he lived. What follows is an examination of the key political, intellectual, and religious issues of his day. Following this is a closer look at the slavery question and particularly the role of clergymen in this debate. Grasping these issues better enables the historian to situate Wayland within the political and moral climate in which he lived. Doing so further helps to judge Wayland both by the standards of his own day and those of his peers.

To further establish the religious context of antebellum America, it is crucial to measure evangelical strength in antebellum America. In this study, I define "evangelical" as those denominations which adopted the "new measures" such as the revivalism and voluntarism methods of the Great Awakening, and were generally orthodox in their theology. In 1775 ministers numbered one per fifteen hundred inhabitants, but by 1845, ministers numbered one per five hundred. Periodical publications of Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists became a hallmark of their numerical growth and cultural influence, but unlike the colonial era,

[4] Wayland and Wayland, *A Memoir,* 2:55, 260-279; quotes on 55 and 274.

Antebellum evangelicalism was marked by competition and fragmentation. No longer addressed to gentleman and learned clergymen, these periodicals were marketed to the masses. Furthermore, most colleges were denominationally based schools. This fragmentation and denominationalism should not obscure the level of interdenominational cooperation that often existed in reformist and humanitarian work.[5]

Numerically, even conservative estimates place evangelical church membership at 3.5 million, and adding on twice that many non-members who attended, over 10 million Americans, or about 40 percent of the population, had ties to or close sympathy with evangelical Christianity. Evangelical influence increases if all those who were products of a Protestant upbringing are factored in. Richard Carwardine adds that it had become "the largest, and most formidable, subculture in American society."[6] American Christianity was denominationally diversified, no longer overshadowed by Puritan elites. Methodists and Baptists, in that order, grew exponentially over their Congregationalist and Presbyterian forbearers that had once boasted greater strength. Yet collectively, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Baptists made up 70 percent of all Protestants.[7] In theology and hierarchal structure however, Methodists and Baptists were openly antitraditional, anticlerical, anticonfessional, and anticreedal, thus squaring themselves with the new American ethos.

Often overlooked by historians in standard interpretations of the origins of the Civil War, are the denominational splits Presbyterians (1837), Methodists (1844) and Baptists (1845). Theological ruptures, no less than political ones fractured the nation. Denominational schisms

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[5] On these new intellectual and theological trends see: Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1989). On antebellum reform and humanitarian work see: Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reformers and the Religious Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) and Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860*, 2nd ed. (Hill and Wang, 1997).

[6] Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 44. 1-49.

[7] Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 270 for statistical and numerical date on denominational growth.

sectionalized voting behavior. They also set a poor example for politicians who noticed that supposedly unified evangelicals (in theological belief, but not political belief) could not mend their differences. Northern and Southern evangelicals interpreted these events differently. Southerners argued that a tyrannical northern majority violated denominational constitutional integrity and they easily transferred this lesson to the political crises over slavery, the U.S. Constitution, and their "minority status." Northerners understood it differently, particularly in their argument that southerners violated the spirit of their denominational integrity by their legal (but ungodly) practice of slaveholding. In this sense, southern slaveholding was a legal right, but equally a moral failure.

These dissimilarities were rooted in the different political and cultural reality found in the North and South. Northern culture and society as a whole, was more urbanized, industrialized, economically diversified, and ethnically mixed through immigration. The greater range of economic choices and institutional options prevented the narrower social stratification found in the agrarian South. The New England ministry evolved as well. The historian Donald Scott noted that the colonial pastoral relationship was one of public order, harmony, deference, social stability, hierarchical structure, and character-building, while the nineteenth-century order was one of electoral pandering, inverting hierarchical ladders, institutionalized factionalism, and self-interest. The New England clergy, formerly the guardians of public order in localized communities, became professional theologians engaged in benevolent institutions and moral societies. They worked outside the new democratic party system which eroded the moral and social landscape. Moreover, eighteenth century collegiate education trained pastors for social leadership within their proper station, but nineteenth pastoral training was oriented toward occupational training and preparation. The creation of seminaries removed theology from the

center of the university to professionalized schools. The result was that the "formalization and standardization" of professional ministerial training removed them from the larger socialization of the university.[8]

Much of these theological realities applied to the South, but in general theology rooted itself differently in the South. In general, the conservatism of Southern culture more easily maintained conservatism in Southern theology. By contrast to the North, Southern culture remained tied to tradition, localism, patriarchy, deferential politics, and notions of honor and shame, where community loyalty and interpersonal relationships protected traditionalism. Value was rooted in community identity, not individuality. This explains why notions of honor, duty, code, and shame remained salient realities in the South, where reward or dishonor was conferred upon the individual by the community as a whole. Southern theology, and by default Southern justification for slavery, was rooted in the defense of Christianity, itself another peg in the maintenance of the social order. The Southern slaveholding dilemma, was how to bridge the widening gap between guarding the traditionalism that welded to slaveholding and the modernization of the industrializing world.[9]

Timothy L. Smith concisely summed up antebellum Protestant religion by arguing that "four fundamental changes" marked "the inner life of American Protestantism." First, lay participation and control replaced the traditional reliance on the clergy for church organizational work. Second, churches worked more frequently through interdenominational channels rather

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[8]Donald M. Scott, *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978). For northern theologians in general see Charles C. Cole, *The Social Ideas of Northern Evangelists, 1826-1860* (New York: Octagon, 1966).

[9]On religion and southern culture see: Donald Mathews, Religion in the Old South (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); E. Brooks Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1795-1860* (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1978); Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980); Charles Reagan Wilson, ed., *Religion in the Old South* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1985); Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997); Edward R. Crowther, *Southern Evangelicals and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Edwin Mellon Press, 2000).

than competitively. Third, ethical and moral concerns replaced dogmatism in theological writings. Fourth, Arminianism supplanted Calvinism in most theological circles.[10] The irony of antebellum religion is that revivalism in religion both multiplied conversions and lay involvement and yet weakened the prestige and authority that colonial era clergymen once enjoyed. Theology was no longer the purview of the educated clergy, but rather accessible to the mass populace in a more democratic form. Revivalism and democracy then was a tradeoff for a once more exclusive network of clergymen.

Slavery was the chief ideological divide engulfing the nation politically and theologically. Slaveholders developed elaborate proslavery arguments in defending the peculiar institution. Biblical, no less than secular arguments, formed the heart of proslavery defenses. Theological arguments, despite the Old School/New School divisions of Presbyterianism, then, did not determine the fracturing of the evangelical camp, but rather the slavery issue shaped the heart of theological division among Northern and Southern Protestants. Evangelicals were no more sheltered or immune from the political turmoil of the nation as were their more secular counterparts, a fact that politicians the likes of Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun easily noticed.

Intellectually, American thought overlooked a gulf between the revivalism born of the Second Great Awakening and the increased secularization of the university. No longer dominated by ecclesiastical issues, American institutions of higher learning were swayed preeminently by science, but also philosophy, law, moral philosophy, and political theory. Intellectual historian Bruce Kuklick, notes that the creation of divinity schools shifted theology

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[10]Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1955), 80.

from the center of intellectual activity to a relegated corner in the university. Lost as well was the once classical grounding of the medieval universities.[11]

Theologically, the shift from Calvinist established churches in the colonial period gave way to democratized Christianity overwhelmingly dominated by Methodists and Baptists. The revivalism and reforms of the nineteenth-century added to evangelical numbers, but evangelical success brought a backlash in that the closer the church wed itself to the nation, the nation inevitably influenced the church. As the nation secularized, so did the church. Ironically then, the "Christianizing" of the nation led to the secularization of the church. These trends continued throughout the Civil War and left a deep impact following the war. What was lost was not evangelical numerical strength, but rather its cultural and political influence. The secularizing trends that developed more rapidly in Europe, although already rooted in American thought and culture, swiftly engulfed American evangelical strength that became oriented toward Social Gospel pragmatism. American theological development became increasingly intellectually weak, pietistic, fideistic, and defensive in the new scientific corporate driven America.

If as Edmund Morgan argued, the statesman replaced the theologian following the American Revolution, particularly in New England, the theologian was equally usurped by the scientist in post Civil War America.[12] The nation's scientists, not the nation's theologians, became the new standard bearers of national consciousness. If anything, the war revealed the declining intellectualism in American theology since the passing of the Puritan and Calvinist framework. The battlefield, not the pulpit settled the crisis facing the nation. This moral failure easily translated into political irrelevance following the war. Consistent with the theology of

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[11] Bruce Kuklick, *Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 87.
[12] Edmund S. Morgan, "The American Revolution Considered as an Intellectual Movement," in *Paths of American Thought*, ed., Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Morton White (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963), 11.

Friedrich Schleiermacher or Soren Kierkegaard, religion became more private and less public. Mark Noll described the war as a "theological crisis" and a failure of Northern and Southern theologians to settle the greatest moral question of the day.[13] Francis Wayland, mindful of these changes, became a leading evangelical critic in lamenting the integration of the pulpit and politics. His *The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate* (1847) was timely sermonized following the Mexican War. His immediate intent was opposition to the war, but its broader meaning elevated private conscience over immoral legislation. Implicit in his argument, is that that his fellow evangelicals were not discriminatory enough in separating the precepts of scripture from the precepts of their government. Too often, he argued, evangelicals merged the two into one.

Politically, the nation drifted toward disunion as the slavery debate became both central to politics and sectional in nature. Although slavery was prohibited throughout the Northwest Territory, the three-fifths compromise gave the South political leverage out of proportion to its white population, and while the slave trade was banned beginning in 1807, it left the door open for an additional twenty years of direct importation from Africa. The slave question remained peripheral to mainstream politics until the Missouri Compromise segregated slavery along the Mason-Dixon line. The consensus was that an even balance of free and slave states would ensure equality of representation, but in reality, it only delayed an eventual showdown over slavery. Coupled with the more rapidly expanding population of the North, and in part due to increased immigration in the 1840s and 1850s, the South was losing its political leverage.

The inauguration of William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* in January 1831 denominated a new chapter in American abolitionism. His demand for "immediatism" offended both Northern and Southern sensibilities, both in his denunciation of slavery as sinful, and in his

[13] Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

insistence for immediate emancipation. With the exception of the Quakers, mainstream Protestant denominations had lost their abolitionist fervor that marked the immediate decades following the American Revolution. Garrison, disgruntled with the churches' inconsistent response to slavery, became rather heterodox doctrinally, and argued from outside an evangelical framework. But evangelicals, such as Lewis and Arthur Tappan and Theodore Weld, did join the abolitionist cause. Despite the mails campaigns of 1835 and the Gag Rule, slavery remained a moral issue, rather than a heated political one until the Mexican War opened new western territory to expansion. The question of whether it would be slave or free, and the efforts of the Wilmot Proviso to keep slavery out permanently, not only made slavery central to politics, but split the political parties along sectional lines. The decades of the 1850s became no less than an avalanche of one political crisis after another. [14]

Following the Mexican War and the Wilmot Proviso, slavery tore the political landscape asunder as politics became increasingly sectional in nature. For northerners, the Fugitive Slave Law and the Kansas-Nebraska Act awoke moderate northerners to the dangers of the Slave Power. For southerners, John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry and the election of Lincoln convinced many that their interests were best served outside the Union. David Potter, for example, argued that the Fugitive Slave Bill seemed to put the government "into the business of man-hunting" and the Dred Scott ruling empowered the extremists and "cut the ground from under the moderates" and acted to "impair the power of Congress to occupy middle ground."[15] Michael Holt noted that the Kansas-Nebraska Act "ignited an explosion of rage in the North." Holt further added that John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry "traumatized many

[14] See William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion, Volume I:. Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) for a detailed discussion of the unfolding events.
[15] David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1976), 131 and 291.

Southerners."[16] Eric Foner argues that the election of Lincoln "marked a turning point in the history of slavery in the United States" a fact that northerners and southerners alike recognized.[17] Mitchell Snay concurred, stressing that the Republican victory "triggered the final transformation from Southern sectionalism to Southern nationalism."[18] Evangelicals, like their secular counterparts, were swept alongside by the same political tide as were the nation's statesmen.[19]

Lastly, to better position the Wayland/Fuller debate, it is helpful to put their arguments within the broader proslavery/antislavery debate between American clergymen in general. Many of these writings were formal debates, others were speeches given to promote one view or the other, while others were essays written to refute a prior work by one holding a contrary view. Collectively, they illuminate how integrated the nation's clergy were in the slavery debate and consistent with their secular counterparts, they were as equally divided. In many respects, these writings were less about slavery, than about theology. Nor does an easy geographical division of southern clergymen as proslavery and northern clergy as antislavery exist. Dissent existed on both sides of the Mason-Dixie line. Moses Stuart, the nation's leading exegete in the antebellum era, was antislavery but argued that the Bible sanctioned slavery. Charles Hodge, prominent theology professor at Princeton and editor of the *Princeton Review*, argued along similar lines, although he later switched his views in the late 1850s. Southern antislavery pastors were not unknown, although most suffered abuse or fled the South prior to the Civil War.

Noted examples of antislavery pastoral writings preceding the Wayland/Fuller correspondence are *Slavery* (1835) by the prominent Unitarian pastor William Ellery Channing,

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[16] Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1978), 48 and 224.
[17] Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 315-316.
[18] Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 151.
[19] See William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion, Volume. II: Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-1861*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) for the mounting crisis from the mid-1850s to the Civil War.

A Review of the American Slavery Question (1836) by E. P. Barrows, Jr., Pastor of the First Free Presbyterian Church in New York, and *American States, Churches, and Slavery* (1862) by Rev. J.R. Balme. Pastor of the Church of the Puritans, George B. Cheever, D.D., authored two ant-slavery works himself, *God Against Slavery and the Freedom and Duty of the Pulpit to Rebuke it, as a Sin Against God* (1857) and *The Guilt of Slavery and the Crime of Slaveholding Demonstrated from the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures* (1860). Rev. Charles Elliott, D.D. authored a two volume work titled the *Sinfulness of American Slavery* (1851) and pastor Albert Barnes covered similar ground in *An Inquiry into the Scriptural Views of Slavery* (1855) and noted abolitionist R.P. Stanton's sermon *Slavery Viewed in the Light of the Golden Rule* (1860).

Two proslavery anthologies of proslavery writings were published in the antebellum era, *The Proslavery Argument* (1852) and *Cotton is King* (1860). Noted individual proslavery literary works, sermons, or writings include Virginia pastor Thornton Stringfellow's *A Brief Examination of Scripture Testimony on the Institution of Slavery* (1841), and *An Essay on Liberty and Slavery* (1856) by Albert Taylor Bledsoe, LL.D, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Virginia. James Henley Thornwell, a pastor and educator dubbed "the learned of the learned" by the historian George Bancroft, wrote voluminous scriptural defenses of slavery while decrying its abuses. Noted sermons of his were *The Christian Doctrine of Slavery* (1850) and his *Duties of Masters to Slaves* (1856).

Proslavery clergymen easily had their intellectual or political counterparts. They included the Virginian Thomas Roderick Dew, whose widely read review of the slavery debates in the Virginia legislature was a turning point in the proslavery argument. Fellow Virginian George Fitzhugh, famed author of *Cannibals All! or Slaves Without Masters* (1855) and John C. Calhoun's correspondence with an English abolitionist, compiled as *Two Letters on Slavery in*

the United States, Addressed to Thomas Clarkson (1845). Others include agriculturalist, turned fire-eater Thomas Ruffin, the anthropological "two race theory" of Dr. Josiah Nott, and unrepentant secessionist Robert Barnwell Rhett.

Noted pastoral debates include *A Debate on Slavery: Held in the City of Cincinnati, on the First, Second, Third, and Sixth Days of October 1845, Upon the Question: is Slave-holding in Itself Sinful, and the Relation Between Master and Slaver, a Sinful Relation?* between antislavery pastor, the Rev. J. Blanchard, Pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati and proslavery apologist N. L. Rice, D. D., Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati. The debate between proslavery advocate and antislavery pastor A. Pyrne, titled *Ought Slavery to be Perpetuated? A Debate Between Rev. W. G. Brownlow and Rev. A Pyrne Held at Philadelphia, September, 1858*, is particularly notable because Brownlow was both a firm proslavery apologist and yet an unwavering Tennessee Unionist once the Civil War broke out. The debate between the two Baptist ministers, Francis Wayland and Richard Fuller, published as *Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution* (1845) was notably civil in tone. What is particularly striking about Wayland, is that despite his clear antislavery commitments, his character and writings remained in good standing throughout the South until the sectional crisis eventually made such compromising sentiments unthinkable.

One final point is crucial to understanding abolitionism and slavery, and more specifically, individuals like Francis Wayland who held antislavery views but who were not abolitionists. Robert Forbes argues that historians confuse *outcomes* with *beliefs*. The churches' failure to end the institution of slavery, may indicate less their acceptance of the institution, rather than their *inability* to end it. Forbes argues that clerical proslavery defenses were more

defenses of Christianity, rather than slavery.[20] This ties in squarely with research by Mark Noll who argues that the literal hermeneutic then reliant on Scottish philosophy suggested that a denial of the scriptural compatibility of slavery was a denial of biblical authority itself. This restricted hermeneutic differed considerably from hermeneutical strategies utilized by Catholic, African-American, or certain Reformed groups. In short, to deny such a plain, literal reading of the Bible smacked of heresy.[21] Historians Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese in their *The Mind of the Master Class* suggest that the proslavery apologists, in appealing to scripture, got the better argument. Interestingly, however, European evangelical abolitionists found American proslavery apologetics amusing if less convincing.

Forbes further suggested that historians overplay the influence of moral suasion. Antislavery sentiments alone, no matter how ideologically pure, could not end such a deeply embedded economic and social institution. Many slaveholders and non-slaveholders alike feared the social fallout in ending slavery more than the ideological inconsistency with a nation "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" and a slaveholding republic. Coercion was necessary both for its continuation and to its eventual demise. Individuals like Wayland surmised it better to work within the existing system, to dismantle the institution through gradual, legal means, and above all, to maintain fellowship across the geographical divide tearing the nation apart. Whether better calculated or not, this was the choice most Americans took.

Furthermore, categorizing abolitionists is difficult to do, which reinforces my contention that tagging Wayland as "conservative" on slavery is meaningless. Historians have

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[20] Robert P. Forbes, "Slavery and the Evangelical Enlightenment," in John R McKivigan & Mitchell Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate over Slavery* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 68-106; 75.
[21] Mark Noll, "The Bible and Slavery," in Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, and Charles Reagan Wilson, eds, *Religion and the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 43-73.

compartmentalized abolitionists into several camps. Divisions generally include proslavery, anti-slave system (distinguishing between slavery and the slave system as practiced in the United States), antislavery (slavery as sin, but not necessarily slave-holding), and abolitionists. Ronald Walters argues that such a division "tends to freeze abolitionists in a moment in time" and "obscures antislavery as process." He suggests that historians examine "starting points and ending points" and recognize that positions and ideas changed with time.[22] Wayland, like many antislavery individuals who resisted abolitionists, often ended up there by the start of the Civil War. Wayland then, should not be "frozen in time," but rather understood as a man betoken to the same forces of change as the majority of Americans of his day.

As stated in the opening, Francis Wayland was a leading proponent of the centrist vision in the struggle against slavery and that his life was a microcosm in the transition from moderate antislavery sentiment to full-brown Unionism and emancipation. Too often historians compartmentalize the history of slavery in American history, seeing only the twin poles of abolitionism or pro-slavery advocates. To be fair, both northern abolitionists and southern fire-eaters alike argued in these terms. However, the majority of northern and southerners in antebellum America were moderate on slavery. No simple dichotomy existed between an antislavery North and a proslavery South. Dissenters were present in both the North and South. Francis Wayland, though unique in that he was simultaneously sought after by northern abolitionists for support and yet respected in southern circles, reflected the transition of many northerners in shifting from moderate antislavery sentiment to active political support for emancipation.

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[22] See Ronald G. Walters, "The Boundaries of Abolitionism," in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman eds., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 3-23.

In many respects, Wayland's moderate position mirrored Abraham Lincoln's antislavery position. The border states of Kentucky, Missouri, Delaware, and Maryland demanded a moderate approach to maintain their loyalty. Lincoln well understood the delicacy of the issues at stake and the need to move cautiously on slavery. Firmly antislavery, he chose containment over immediate abolitionism, and then supported emancipation as a war measure. Seen in this light, Wayland represented the position of most northern antislavery evangelicals who shied from direct activism. Just as Lincoln argued that the northerners would be powerless to affect slavery outside the Union, so Wayland argued that isolating the southern evangelical camp would do the same. Whatever influence northern evangelicals may have with their southern counterparts would be hopelessly lost if slavery became the only benchmark for fellowship.

No historian has analyzed Wayland's life as a whole, or yet analyzed his moderate antislavery views as a microcosm of antebellum society as a whole, much less in considering his views as little different from those of Abraham Lincoln. Seen through this prism, Wayland's "conservatism" on slavery was more mainstream than historians recognize. Furthermore, his "conservatism" appears less an appeasement position, than a calculated response to issues that offered no easy solutions. Certainly, the moderating Henry Clay was to be preferred over the extremist John C. Calhoun. Equally so, perhaps the moderating Wayland was preferable to the zero-sum game of the abolitionists.

The historiography on Francis Wayland is very thin. The chief work on Wayland is a memoir composed by his two sons, Francis Wayland and H.L. Wayland titled *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland, D.D., LL.D.*, (1867). This is the most comprehensive work on his life, but it is clearly dated and largely a collection of his writings intermixed with editorial comment. James O. Murray published, *Francis Wayland* (1892), the first and only full-length

biography of Wayland, though it is little more than a rehashing of the previous work. Two of his contemporaries held differing opinions of him. William Lloyd Garrison referred to Wayland as "that selfish and cowardly teacher of morality," largely due to his resistance to active abolitionism. However, he noted that his *Elements of Moral Science* was "as a whole, is of some value."[23] Senator Charles Sumner held a different opinion, referring to Wayland as an "eminent person, honored wherever the pulpit and philosophy of our country are known."[24]

Contemporary historians equally hold Wayland in high regard. Timothy L. Smith in *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (1955) argued that the tensions of the 1850s found men like Wayland taking "a prominent part in the nationwide awakening" in the fight against slavery. Richard Carwardine in his *Evangelicals and Antebellum Politics* (1993) argued that Wayland was "a man of wider interests and greater intellectual power" and a "representative of the polished side of American evangelical Protestantism." Mark Noll in his *America's God: Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (2002), referred to Wayland as "an intellectual of consequence," but significantly added that he is "one who has been neglected by historians."

Serious work on Wayland is sorely lacking. Charles C. Cole Jr's *The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelists: 1826-1856* (1978) analyzed two key aspects of Wayland's thinking. On political economy, he noted that Wayland's views were more timely than novel. His work often mirrored the leading political economy books of his day, but his argument against the accumulation of wealth for wealth's sake, was particularly noted following the Panic of 1837.

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[23] William Lloyd Garrison to Henry C. Wright, Boston, October 1, 1844 in Walter M Merrill, *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison: No Union With Slaveholders, 1841*-1849, 6 vols (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973) III:263. (261-270) and William Lloyd Garrison to William Goodell, Brooklyn, February 26, 1836 in II: 46 (43-54)

[24] Charles Sumner, "Letter Addressed to a Committee of the Free-Soil Party in Boston, October 26, 1848," in George Frisbie Hoar, ed., *Charles Sumner, His Complete Works*, 20 vols (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1900) 2:312; 299-315 for the entire speech.

His chief work on the subject, *Elements of Political Economy* (1837) sold more than 50,000 copies and was reprinted as late as 1875. Wayland argued that both wealth and property were sanctioned by God, but the more one had, the more social responsibility one had to use it for the wider good. The nation, Wayland argued, wallowed in greed and unaccountability.

Coles further noted Wayland's gradualism on slavery, notably his distinction between slavery and slaveholding. In his view, not all slaveholders were equally guilty, due either to their treatment or evangelicalism of slaves. Even more so, slavery was so ingrained in southern culture that its immediate abolition was unrealistic. Better to maintain theological and sectional peace with southern Christians, than to banish all as evil slaveholders and lose all influence with them. The sheer force of political crisis of the 1850s changed his views however.

Mark Y. Hanley, in *Beyond a Christian Commonwealth: The Protestant Quarrel with the American Republic, 1830-1860* included Wayland in a litany of noted Protestants who openly chastised the American republic. Hanley argued that Wayland resigned in part because the presidency at Brown University because he felt torn between the sacred and the secular and championed "preaching" over teaching." Retiring from Brown, he retuned to the pulpit at the First Baptist Church in Providence where he resumed his ministry. Wayland argued that the United States was selling-out its religious soul to economic and political self-interest. He chastised both northern and southerners alike for "religion's compromise with nationalistic and humanitarian aims" and "material encroachments upon the ancient faith." His core argument was that Christians wedded democracy and economic prosperity to the Gospel and no longer distinguished between the two.

Deborah Bingham Van Broekhoven's essay, "Suffering with Slaveholders: The Limits of Francis Wayland's Antislavery Witness," in *Religion and the Antebellum Debate over Slavery*,

eds. by John R. McKivigan and Mitchell Snay (1998) argued that Wayland was firmly antislavery yet equally antiabolitionist. Although committed to biblical antislavery, he did not condemn slaveholding or slaveholders as inherently sinful. He noted the evil effects of slavery, wished for its end, but argued that slavery was so intertwined in American culture that it could not be forcefully dismantled except by dramatic social upheaval. Emancipation for Wayland was best achieved gradually, not immediately. His chief grievance over all was that Northern abolitionists willingly severed ties with their southern counterparts on the issue of slavery. Van Broekhoven then traced his gradual support for emancipation that followed the political crisis of the 1850s through the outbreak of the Civil War. My work in particular explores not only the political triggering events that shaped his evolving views, but also the larger intellectual strands of his full corpus of work that shaped and modified his thinking. In short, though political events moved him physically from reluctant emancipationists to full-blown Unionist, his latter activism was already intellectually embedded in his earlier work.

John Patrick Daly's *When Slavery was Called Freedom: Evangelicalism, Proslavery, and the Causes of the Civil War* (2002) unfairly and inaccurately lumps Wayland into the "Social Darwinism" and "social vision of evangelicals." He confuses his focus on individual salvation, an Armenian rather than a Calvinistic understanding of salvation, with Wayland's refusal to condemn all slaveholder's as sinful. Wayland distinguished slavery from slaveholding, but he did not rest his case on individual conscience as Daly asserted, but rather that immediate abolition was unworkable and therefore it was unfair to suddenly sever ties with all southern slaveholding Christians.

Laurence M. Vance's essay, "Francis Wayland: Preacher-Economist" in *The Independent Review* (Winter 2006), argues that Wayland's *Elements on Political Economy* "is still a classic

that deserves consideration two centuries later." He further argues, contrary to the greater praise accorded his *Elements of Moral Philosophy*, that his economic work is more enduring. This is similarly echoed by economic historian John Bell in his *A History of Economic Thought* (1953) that his economic work was ""by far the best and most adaptable text written by any American prior to 1867." Joseph Dorfman concurs in *The Economic Mind in American Civilization* (1946) that Wayland was "the ideal text writer."

This introduction and historiography helps establish the importance of the life of Francis Wayland, and the general neglect of historical research on him. It situates Wayland within the broader intellectual, religious, and political context of antebellum America. It suggests reasons for his dismissal by historians and the pitfalls in doing so. As a pastor, educational reformer, university president, economic, political, and philosophical writer, Wayland is significant in the broader context of nineteenth century American intellectual history. His *Elements of Moral Science* alone, as the leading textbook on moral philosophy in antebellum America, established his place as an significant intellectual figure. His antislavery views, while many may argue were typical of such writings, were in fact representative of antislavery moderates. What set Wayland apart were his biblical arguments against slavery, in contrast to two other notable evangelicals of similar stature, Charles Hodge of Princeton and Moses Stuart of Andover Seminary, who while antislavery, argued that it had biblical support. Wayland's position then, not only chastised southern slaveholding biblical arguments, but ran against the grain of many leading prominent northern scholars.

In chapter one, I first establish his intellectual worldview in order to contextualize his antislavery position. A prodigious thinker, he wrote and lectured on a wide range of subjects, scattered throughout his voluminous collection of sermons, lectures, public speeches, and college

texts. To better consolidate and compartmentalize his thinking, these issues are arranged topically rather than chronologically. Specific topics include his ethical philosophy, political economy and its link to morality, his educational theory and practice, his educational vision for curriculum changes at Brown, and his church polity and ecclesiastical viewpoints. Collectively, this illuminates his intellectual maturation, the social and political climate which shaped his mindset, and his place in the larger context of Antebellum America.

In chapter two, I develop his antislavery views delineated in his *Elements of Moral Science*. Although a larger work of ethical philosophy, it is his earliest and most unified writing on slavery, and as the leading textbook on ethical philosophy in antebellum America, his viewpoints were widely disseminated. I also develop the historical background of the biblical proslavery argument, the abolitionist philosophy of immediate emancipation, and other noted antislavery writers to better position Wayland among them. I conclude by critiquing his most controversial work, *The Limitations of Human Responsibility*, which spelled out his philosophy on ethical accountability and social responsibility.

In chapter three, I review his celebrated and widely publicized debate with South Carolina pastor Richard Fuller. It was particularly noted by Northerners and Southerners alike for its hospitable temperament by two high-profile individuals. In general, it developed in greater length, and in the heat of public battle which he detested, his viewpoints previously expressed in his *Elements of Moral Science*. First published in serialized form in the *Christian Reflector* and then published as a book, it enjoyed wide readership. In light of its popularity, I examine published responses, both in support of and in rejection of his arguments.

In chapter four, I examine his eye-opening European trip where he felt that he was brazenly hounded by British Baptists as to his antislavery views. Also, I develop his political and

intellectual evolution in regard to the denominational split in the Methodist and Baptist churches, the Mexican War, the Wilmot Proviso, and the Compromise of 1850. Collectively, these political events brought Wayland out into the open, provoked public speeches, and led him to entertain the justification and limitations of civil disobedience in lieu of the Fugitive Slave Law. Uncharacteristically for Wayland, he blatantly urged noncompliance with the law in question, though he warned that civil disobedience was to never exceed the immediate law in question. To better understand this, I analyze other writings in Antebellum America on civil disobedience.

In chapter five, I conclude his intellectual journey in tracing his thought and social activity from the Kansas-Nebraska Bill through the Civil War. Wayland, in a widely circulated public address, denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Bill as an act of bad faith. Politically a Whig, he voted for the Free Soil Party in 1848 and Republican in 1856 and 1860. Secession, he indicted an illegal act, and though he never wavered in his faith in individual change, he progressively denounced the South as a monolithic whole. A strong Union supporter, he actively worked among the newly liberated black population in helping them make the transition from slavery to freedom

In summary, I seek reestablish Wayland's place both in antebellum America and in American church history. As an intellectual figure, educational reformer, economic and political theorist, and author of the most widely read text on moral philosophy, Wayland secured himself as an intellectual leader in nineteenth century, but one long overlooked by historians. His evangelical credentials as a prominent Baptist and former pastor of a large urban church also solidify his position in American religious history. Historians have only analyzed Wayland piecemeal, as an educational reformer, pastor, antislavery advocate, or writer of political economy or moral philosophy, but no one has analyzed his life a whole and contextualized it

within the broader intellectual climate of antebellum America. Taken as a whole, Wayland emerges as an intellectual of considerable weight, but long neglected in the pantheon of nineteenth century American intellectual leaders. In addition to this, no one has contextualized his antislavery views as representative of most antebellum Americans, be it northerners or southerners who were more swayed by events rather than moral arguments. Even more specifically, his life is a microcosm of how antislavery moderates embraced immediate emancipationists as the political crisis of the 1850s became the Civil War of the 1860s.

CHAPTER ONE

Francis Wayland and Antebellum American Thought

Francis Wayland, a major figure in his own lifetime, has been lost in undeserved obscurity for the past century. Garnering little more than a cursory nod in textbooks of Antebellum America, Wayland has been the subject of little more than chapter length works on economics, educational philosophy, antebellum reformism, political monographs, and slavery debates. No full scale-scale biography of Wayland has emerged in more than one hundred years and his non-published, personal correspondence remains largely untranscribed. A prodigious writer and thinker, he wrote and lectured on nearly every conceivable subject while president at Brown University, from 1827-1855. Rarely do historians get such a complete glimpse of an individual's views on so wide a variety of topics. His scholarship provides a detailed look at his moral philosophy, economic theory, philosophical reasoning, theological viewpoints, political theorizing, and the social issues of his day. He pastored churches in Boston and Providence before and after his appointment at Brown University and thus his viewpoints were shaped and molded both inside and outside academia. His perspectives then are particularly valuable as he represents an antebellum thinker who worked from the vantage point of an intellectual academic and a hands-on practitioner.

It is a curious fact that Wayland devoted less space to slavery than to his other major endeavors, yet his antislavery writings are what sparked the greatest controversy. Both North and South of the Mason-Dixon, intellectuals engaged in the slavery debate held opinions as to his viewpoints. His popularization in both northern and southern circles, extended beyond his antislavery writings, but politically charged subject matters naturally exposed his position to counter-critiques. Yet, it is incumbent upon the historian to first understand his overall

intellectual thought to better contextualize his antislavery sentiments. Only in understanding his larger intellectual framework can we properly position his antislavery critique. Wayland's intellectual views remained remarkably consistent over a fifty year period of writing, but we also glimpse the limitations and self-imposed boundaries restraining his shift from thought to action. It is only in the working and labyrinth of his complex yet measured thinking that can we understand this.

Wayland's political thought is instructive because it establishes the premises and limitations of human responsibility in society. Grasping his opinion helps to qualify his predisposition toward non-involvement in antislavery activism despite his personal views. However, his political thought cannot be fully analyzed here because his political commentary was written over several decades and many of these writings will be analyzed in later chapters. Two key sources however, provide early insight into his viewpoints. His *The Duties of an American Citizen* (1825) is one of his earliest political statements and equally one of his best known. Delivered as a fast day sermon, its political nature naturally departed from his usual theological sermonizing.[25] Divided into two parts, Wayland first analyzed European society, then its American context. He argued that global revolutions in commerce, trade, literacy, education, and Christian humanitarianism had swept through Christendom, producing a cross-cultural integration of classes and trading houses since the Reformation. A moral revolution followed on its heels. It was contagious, and led by example. However, this moral revolution, while affecting the masses at large, left rulers untouched. The relationships between the ruler and ruled having changed, the rulers must adapt accordingly. "A form of government to be stable, must be adapted

[25]Fast Days had long been associated with New England culture. They were established for special days of remonstrance or blessings, generally characterized by church attendance, fasting, and abstinence from work. Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of a Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006), 48-51, 75-77, 85-87,133-34, 270-71, 372-73.

to the intellectual and moral condition of the governed; and when from any cause it has ceased to be so adapted, the time has come when it must inevitably be modified or subverted."[26]

Wayland distinguished between governments of will which he associates with state religion and governments of law associated with religious liberty. A government of will divides society into the ruled and ruler, argues that law is nothing more than the will of the ruler, and demands passive obedience by the people. In contrast, a government of law rests on opposite principles. "It supposes," Wayland wrote, "that there is but one class of society, and that this class is the people; that all men are created equal, and therefore that civil institutions are voluntary associations, of which the sole object should be to promote the happiness of the whole." Furthermore, since the people chose their own form of government, they can "modify it at any subsequent time" they deem necessary. Power, being derived from the people, considered rulers a "purely delegated authority," bound at all times by a written code, itself an expression of the people's will. "It teaches," he continued, "that the ruler is nothing more than the intelligent organ of enlightened opinion, and declares that if he ceased to "e so, he shall be a ruler no longer."[27] Moreover, a government of will is generally associated with state-sponsored religion, which trampled individual conscience and liberty of thought under the control of "ambitious statesmen and avaricious priests." In contrast, a government of law elevates the people above the ruler and religious tolerance and liberty above political op religious dogma.[28] Wayland defined oppression in both political and ecclesiastical terms. As political oppression is the (and-maiden of ecclesiastical oppression, so ecclesiastical oppression is the hand-maiden of political

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[26]Francis Wayland, *The Duties of An American Citizen: Two Discourses, Delivered in the First Baptist Meeting House in Boston, on Tuesday, April 7, 1825. The Day of Public Fast*, 2nd edition. (Boston: James Loring, Washington, 1825), 12; Wayland later expanded this theme of post-Reformation opportunity, albeit from less a political than a religious vantage-point; See his *Encouragements to Religious Efforts: A Sermon Delivered at the Request of the American Sunday School Union, May 25, 1830* (Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union, 1830).
[27] Ibid., 12-13.
[28] Ibid., 20.

oppression. Wayland argued equally that civil liberty is the hand-maiden of religious liberty, as religious liberty is the hand-maiden of civil liberty. Progress does not move in isolated in circles but is rather interconnected and co-dependent upon another.

Wayland believed that the United States established the precedent for establishing a popular government of law anchored by religious tolerance. "It is teaching the world," Wayland explained, "that the easiest method of governing an intelligent people is, to allow them to govern themselves." Furthermore, it demonstrated "that a people can be virtuous without an established religion." Consistent with his thinking, Wayland did not argue that people can be virtuous without religion, but that virtue is best cultivated outside an establishment of one. Coercion commands respect only as long as it exceeds popular resistance and promotes an unstable foundation for virtue since it does not proceed from genuine affections. Yet, Wayland cautioned that replacing a bad government with another is no guarantee of a better one. 'The subversion," Wayland explained, "of a bad government is by no means synonymous with the establishment of a better."[29] Wayland charged the U.S. to lead by example as direct intervention was unthinkable. Moral suasion and political rule by the popular will were the best means to affect this example. Political stability is predicated on both virtue and intelligence whereby passion and ignorance breed the end of liberty. In his sermon address *Encouragements to Religious Efforts* (1830), Wayland warned that only "the diffusion of religious principle" can stave off "the wreck of our civil liberties."[30] A moral government then is predicated upon a moral people. Wayland unabashedly suggested that the "happiness of mankind is interwoven with the destinies of this

[29] Ibid., 25-27.
[30] Wayland, *Encouragement to Religious Efforts*, 27.

country" and thus charged the U.S. with spreading these principles abroad through moral and political example.[31]

Wayland's lengthy and most original work, *The Limitations of Human Responsibility* (1838) expanded his political philosophy. Wayland published this work because he felt that institutional philanthropic, reform and religious organizations exaggerated the moral accountability of reform work.[32] Wayland argued that society functioned best when the government machinery and its citizens were kept in their proper relationship. Power is always delegated "for a *particular* and *specified* purpose."[33] Wayland explained: "One party is authorized to make laws, another to administer justice under them, and a third to put them into execution. Each party is responsible to society, for the discharge of precisely those duties which have been assigned to it." No power, except that which is entrusted to it, may exceed its authority, or it is guilty of "usurpation."[34]

In his *Elements of Moral Science* (1835), Wayland distinguished between society and government by arguing that "Government is the *agent*. Society is the *principal*. Government in this sense, is the political framework in which society exists. Wayland defined government "to be that system of delegated agencies, by which these obligations of society to the individual are fulfilled."[35] Government power then, is both "delegated" and under "obligation" to society and its citizens. [36] The individual citizen or society in general was to reciprocate these responsibilities through paying taxes and respecting the "law of reciprocity" whereby citizens both promoted the happiness of others and did nothing to violate them. Yet, what if the government failed in its

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[31] Wayland., *Duties of an American*, 43.
[32]Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, I:389.
[33] Francis Wayland, *The Limitations of Human Responsibility* (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1838), 35.
[34] Ibid., 149.
[35]Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1835; reprint 1857, 337; 351.
[36] These obligations are best defined in Ibid., 356-360.

obligations and responsibilities? What if it threatened civil liberties? Wayland foresaw this possibility, and further explained this is his sermon, *The Church: A Society For the Conversion of the World*, Wayland flatly stated that "The want of principle in our public men is periling the very existence of our republic," but equally indicts the church for being "faithless in her trust."[37] However, Wayland rejected the twin of courses of passive obedience, because citizens "have no right to obey an unrighteous law," yet also rejected resistance by force as self-destructive. Rather, he advocated a third course of "suffering in the cause of right." "Here we act as we believe to be right," he explained, "in defiance of oppression, and bear patiently whatever an oppressor may inflict upon us." This course avoided both the moral temptation to obey unrighteous laws and avoids the self-destructive act of physical force and appealed to the "reason and conscience of men." It is also predicated on higher moral principles. "Passive obedience," he argued, "may arise from servile fear; resistance, from vain-glory, ambition, or desire of revolution. Suffering for the sake of right can only arise from a love of justice and a hatred of oppression."[38]

The above analysis is of course not the sum total of his political philosophy. Wayland's political thought is further captured in *The Limits of Human Responsibility* (1838), *The Affairs of Rhode Island* (1842) and *The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate* (1847). However, as these bear directly on later political questions and slavery, they will be analyzed in later chapters. His *Duties of an American Citizen,* however, established Wayland's core principle that a good government is inseparable from moral and intellectual cultivation. As will be readily argued throughout this chapter, this philosophy underlined his *entire* social, political, economic, and religious thinking. Whatever his sphere of analysis, Wayland prescribed moral and intellectual

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[37] Francis Wayland, "The Church A Society For the Conversion of the World," in *Sermons to the Churches* (New York, 1858), 99.
[38] Ibid., 361-366.

improvement as the cure and its lack of cultivation as its curse. His thinking however, rather than being naively simplistic or reductionistic, assumes that fixed natural laws, established by the Creator underlie all spheres of inquiry, no less so than natural laws govern the scientific realm. Although his works rarely engaged in serious historiography, his writings, rather than lacking substance or depth, aimed to establish "generalized principles" applicable for universal application.

Moral science texts of the mid-nineteenth century were voluminous, generally one-third of the text devoted to theoretical ethics and the remaining two-thirds devoted to practical ethics. Moral philosophy derived its ethic from God, but it could take multiple forms. William Paley, the renowned Scottish divine, grounded virtue in its utilitarian consequences and possible future rewards and punishments. Moral philosophers of the antebellum period shifted to an intuitive based-ethic, where actions were right or wrong in their essentialness. Consequences or their utilitarian effect were irrelevant in judging actions morally right or wrong. To be sure, virtuous behavior produced healthy consequences, just as poor behavior portended unhealthy consequences. Moral philosophers of the nineteenth century did not divorce personal virtue from public virtue. No fine existed between private and public character.

The ethical foundation laid down by these moral philosophers implied obligation, duty, necessity, responsibility, and moral accountability. Ethical duties were personalized, but had far-reaching public consequences. The good society was good or attainable only so much as man fulfilled his duty or obligation toward his fellow man. Virtue, character, and personal integrity, were the only safeguards against moral and political despotism. The course in moral philosophy was reserved for the senior year, usually taught by the college president. It was the binding theoretical glue that held all the other subjects together. Seeing that ninety-percent of all college

presidents prior to the Civil War were clergymen, these naturally were theologically oriented. Ethics had social and political implications, and were useless if they existed only in the theoretical realm. Much time was devoted to their external consequences in law, politics, religion, government, and economic theory.[39]

"Ethics, or Moral Philosophy, is the Science of Moral Law."[40] His idea of law is key to unlocking much of his intellectual thinking. Wayland grounded his moral theory in prefixed laws and sound moral conduct. Law, he wrote, "expresses an order of sequence between a specified action, and a particular mode of reward or of punishment." The "order of sequence" is simply the connection between the action and the result, a sort of chain reaction. Moral philosophy or law perceived within this "order of sequence" or "actions" a moral quality. "Moral Philosophy," as Wayland explained it, "takes it for granted that there is in human action a moral quality; that is, a human action may be either right or wrong." Furthermore, "A moral law is, therefore, a form of expression denoting an order of sequence established between the moral quality of actions, and their results."[41]

Yet from where do these laws derive or who determines the consequences of violating them? "Here it may be worthwhile to remark," Wayland explained, "that an order of sequence established, supposes, of necessity, an Establisher. Hence Moral Philosophy, as well as every other science, proceeds upon the supposition of the existence of a universal cause, the Creator of all things, who has made everything as it is, and who has subjected all things to the relations

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[39] Two especially important works on moral science & moral improvement are: Wilson Smith, *Professors & Public Ethics: Studies of Northern Moral Philosophers before the Civil War* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1956); and Daniel Walker Howe, *Making the American Self: Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[40]Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science* ,23; this textbook sold ninety-five thousand copies by the late 1860s; see Francis Wayland and H.L. Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of Francis Wayland*, 2 vols. (New York: Sheldon and Company 1867; reprint 1972), 385; John L. Dagg, President of Mercer University, noted in his own *Elements of Moral Science* (1859) that Wayland's work "has been justly esteemed as the best text-book extant on the subject," see John L. Dagg, *The Elements of Moral Science* (New York: Sheldon & Company, 1860), iv.

[41] Ibid., 24.

which they sustain." These laws, being fixed by God, are inviolable by man. "Such being the fact, it is evident, that the moral laws of God can never be varied by the institutions of man, any more than the physical laws." Is it therefore hopeless to attempt to circumvent these laws or derive ethical standards from alternative foundations. Wayland suggested otherwise: "Everyone who believes God to have established an order of sequences in morals, must see that it is equally absurd, to expect to violate, with impunity, any moral law of the Creator."[42]

Actions have no meaning unless they imply a *will* to create them and in turn are possessed by *intelligence*. Wayland conceded that animals possess intelligence and yet we do not speak of their actions of right or wrong. We do not speak of them as if they *ought to do this*, or *ought not to do that*. Though we pity the animal, we do not condemn him. Why do we do so with humans? What separated the two? Wayland responded that it is the moral quality or moral nature of man that separates man from the animal. Man is a *moral* agent. Humans perceived the rightness or wrongness of an action *before* they commit it, and share a sense of *self-reproach* in wrong doing.[43] Yet, actions alone are not right or wrong in themselves. "Now the moral quality does not belong to the external act;" Wayland explained, "for the same external act may be performed by two men, while its moral character is, in the two cases, entirely dissimilar." The moral rightness or wrongness of an action resides in the *intentions*. "We are conscious of guilt or innocence," he argued, "not from the result of an action, but from the intention by which we were actuated."[44]

He elaborated further that good intentions are equally right even if never actualized in action, much the same as bad intentions are morally wrong if never acted upon. For example, one may have the intent to assist one's elderly neighbor with his outdoor chores, but be prevented

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[42] Ibid., 25.
[43] See Ibid., 26-30 for an extended discussion.
[44] Ibid.,30-31.

from doing so by poor weather. The intent, although never actualized, is still right. Equally, if one is fouled in his attempt to commit murder, the intent is still wrong, although the act was never actualized. Yet, even wrong acts can be produced by good intentions and good acts by poor intentions. Although the actions externally may be judged right or wrong, the guilt or innocence lies in his intentions. Perhaps this is better explained by Wayland's warning against guarding the imagination. Actions, whether right or wrong, begin first in the imagination or premeditation in the mind. Simply put, thought precedes action, not the other way around.[45]

The larger question however, is where do our notions of right or wrong derive? Wayland grounded them in the Creator, but how is His will translated to man? Ethics, first and foremost, proceed from the will of God. Wayland wrote: "I believe the idea of a moral quality in actions to be ultimate, to arise under such circumstances as have been appointed by our Creator, and that we can assign for it no other reason, than that such is his will concerning us."[46] Yet, how do we know what God's will is toward us? Wayland grounded his theory in natural law arguments that conscience and man's intuitive nature teach us right from wrong. This intuitiveness teaches us not only our obligations from man to God, but our obligations from man to man. Wayland explained: "And hence, in general, our feeling of moral obligation is a peculiar and instinctive impulse, arising at once by the principles of our constitution, as soon as the relations are perceived in which we stand to the beings, created and uncreated, with whom we are connected."[47]

From this knowledge, arise certain obligations and duties. Wayland, as stated, divided our obligations between man to God and man to man. Wayland argued that the faculty of conscience

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[45] See Ibid., 31-33 for and expanded discussion.
[46] Ibid., 44.
[47] Ibid., 46; For more on this theme see his sermon series: Francis Wayland, "The Moral Character of Man. Love to God," and "The Moral Character of Man. Love to Man" in *Salvation by Christ: A Series of Discourses on some of the most Important Doctrines of the Gospel* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1859), 31-85.

is universal and refuted William Paley's suggestion that "a system of morality, built upon instincts" is too easily confused with custom and tradition. If the moral law, Paley argued, informs man that certain actions be wrong, and yet he is willing to accept the consequences, how binding then are instincts in guiding human behavior? Wayland argued that Paley confused the purpose of the conscience with its functions. Actors possess free will and how or if one responds to the conscience is irrelevant to its existence. The mere presence of a moral conflict presupposes its existence.[48]

Intense passion disturbed the "impulse of conscience" and if ignored, the conscience was deadened by its temporary submergence. In fact, the conscience acts to "restrain the appetite and passions." The conscience, like all other human faculties, "is strengthened by use, and weakened by disuse." Wayland further distinguished between "virtuous" and "pious" acts. If actions are done "in obedience to our obligations to man" they are virtuous; if actions are performed "in obedience to our obligations to God" they are pious. The distinguishing trait again is the *motive* and *intention* behind the act.[49] Intentions also factor into guilt or innocence. In Wayland's scheme, rightness and wrongness are fixed and unchanging, but guilt or innocence were susceptible to variation. The former corresponded to our God given obligations, but the latter was predicated upon "the knowledge of these relations, and of the obligations arising from them." An individual may possess an incomplete understanding of these obligations or how best to fulfill them. One may commit a wrong act out of pure motives and be guiltless, even virtuous, while another may commit a virtuous act without regard to his obligations to God, and be guilty. Also, "a consciousness of innocence, or our not being conscious of guilt" does not by itself imply innocence. Moral improvement and character development were essential to understand our

[48] Ibid., 53; See William Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (Boston: John West and Co., 1785; reprint 1810), 28-35.
[49] Ibid., 48.

obligations of man to God, and man to man; although those with more knowledge will be judged more harshly, ignorance alone is no excuse for non-compliance. *Repetition* of virtuous acts increases our *tendencies* to act virtuously, while *repetition* of immoral acts sharpens our *tendencies* to blunt or deafen our consciences.[50]

Although Wayland conceded that "human happiness consists in the gratification of our desires," he argued that it consisted in the "*gratification of our desires within the limits assigned to them by our Creator*." If everyone pursued unequivocally their own gratification, this would naturally infringe upon another's happiness. Acts then are not singular, but rather corporate in effect. Individual gratification may produce "social misery."[51] "And, hence, the greatest happiness of which man is, in his present state, capable, is to be attained by conforming his whole conduct to the laws of virtue, that is, to the will of God." Wayland rather brackets human happiness within God-given boundaries. Happiness, then, is less the fulfillment of desires, than the reward for virtuous living. His argument rejected the popularization of utilitarian ethical systems emerging in European circles. Human happiness was neither the chief good nor the highest end. Actions are right or wrong because they have *intrinsic value* irrespective of the happiness they produce.[52]

Wayland suggested a ranking-system of gratifications. The basest motives were driven by the appetites or passions. It seeks immediate fulfillment without reflection or fear of consequences. Self-love, was the second tier. Its defining characteristic was its willingness to reflect, measure, and weigh punishments and rewards, forsaking immediate gratification for a future pay-off, yet it is still driven by self-fulfillment. Conscience was the third and highest tier, informing man of the *rightness* or *wrongness* of actions, devoid of gratification. It is self-

[50] Ibid., 91-98.
[51] Ibid., 121.
[52] Ibid., 103; 159.

sacrificing and puts others needs first.[53] Lastly, how could man know precisely his duties and obligations to God? Wayland distinguished between natural and revealed religion. Natural religion established laws and tendencies, not facts; revealed religion established facts and specifics. Natural religion is communicated through nature, experience, and observation; revealed religion by way of language through the Scriptures. Natural religion, filtering through our conscience, gave us our sense of right and wrong; revealed religion specifies how best to fulfill these obligations.[54] "An, hence, there is not a single act which we are under obligation to perform, which we are not also under obligation to perform from the principle of obedience to the Creator."[55]

Wayland's ethics shed much insight on his views of slavery. His idea of "duties" and "obligations" factored heavily into his antislavery arguments, but his economic text equally expanded this insight. *Elements of Political Economy* (1837), his major text on economics, endorsed a free-market, free trade position. His biographers record that Wayland felt the leading economic texts were too weighty and impracticable for the typical merchant or interested readers. "He believed," his sons wrote, "that the great truths of political economy were simply the maxims of common life and every-day experience in private life applied to the regulation of the affairs of communities."[56] Other scholars have treated his economic theories elsewhere and I will not attempt to repeat it here.[57] The intent here is to understand his overall moral framework

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[53] Ibid.,104-105.
[54] Ibid., 118-138; 142-149.
[55] Ibid., 155; Wayland expanded this theme in Wayland, "The Benevolence of the Gospel," in *Salvation by Christ*,. 251-264.
[56] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, I:387-388.
[57] For analysis of his economic policy see: M.L. O'Connor, *Origins of Academic Economics in the United States* (New York:, 1944), 172-190; Joseph Dorfman. *The Economic Mind in American Civilization, 1606-1865* (New York: Viking, 1946), II, ch. 27; John Bell. *A History of Economic Thought*. (New York: Ronald Press, 1953); Laurence M. Vance, "Francis Wayland: The Preacher-Economist," *The Independent Review*, v. X, no. 3, Winter 2005, 401-410; Stewart Davenport, *Friends of the Unrighteous Mammon: Northern Christians and Market Capitalism, 1815-1860*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); For a general discussion of evangelicals and

binding his economic theory. It is important to note that Wayland proceeded upon the same ideological foundation that defined his moral philosophy. Economic laws, like moral laws, were subject to the designs of the Creator and in this sense, are less *prescriptive* than *descriptive* of *His* design. In the best of the Jeffersonian tradition, Wayland suggested that agricultural labor "is attended by the fewest moral temptations," and that "it seemed to be the will of the Creator that a large portion of the human race should always be thus employed, and that whatever effects may result from social improvement, the proportion of men required for tilling the earth should never be essentially diminished."[58] Of course the trend in mid-nineteenth century America was movement away from agriculture, yet its simplistic lifestyle still maintained such sentiments that it best protected virtue.

Social improvement, morality, sound ethics, and character building are key elements in his economic thinking.[59] In his scheme, the "inculcation of those moral and religious principles" provide the surest foundation "which teach men to respect the rights of others," being the "most certain method of preventing the violation of the right of property, as it aims to eradicate those dispositions of the mind from with the violation proceeds." Indeed, "it is also the cheapest, as it aims at *prevention*, which is always more economical than *cure*." Good laws could never be enacted or obeyed unless there "exists a moral character in the community sufficiently pure to sustain them." High morality and religiosity helped the nation itself proper in that is provided " feelings of perfect tranquility and security, which a high social morality diffuses over a whole community, is one of the strongest stimulants to universal industry." Hence "inasmuch as all

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economics see; Mark A. Noll. ed. *God and Mammon: Protestants, Money, and the Market, 1790-1860*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[58] Francis Wayland. *The Elements of Political Economy*. (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Company, 1837), 40.

[59] Interestingly, Wayland noted in his 1830 sermon *Encouragements to Religious Efforts* that the science of political economy had largely been developed by men with little regard for Christian principles. See, Wayland, *Encouragements to Religious Efforts*, 16.

men are not influenced in their conduct by moral and religious principles" this suggests the need for "wholesome and equitable laws, of an independent and firm judiciary, and an executive, which shall carry the law faithfully into effect" for the "expense necessary for the most perfect administration of justice, is among the more productive of all the expenditures of society." [60] Without individual and national character, and "immunity not only from private, but also public oppression" industry will not flourish. He concluded: "It is almost superfluous, however, to add, that a free constitution is of no value, unless the moral and intellectual character of a people be sufficiently elevated to avail itself of the advantages which it offers. It is merely an *instrument* of good, which will accomplish nothing, unless there exist the moral disposition to use it aright." Later he added a similar note: "On the moral character of a nation depends the justice of its laws, its respect for individual right, security of property, individual and social virtue, together with the industry and frugality which are their invariable attendants."[61]

No less than the moral, but the intellectual cultivation of the nation was essential to sound economic management. Intellectual cultivation is a natural outgrowth of moral character, but if it exists "without the existence of virtue or love or right" it can only "stimulate desire" and "unrestrained by the love of right" it "must eventually overturn the social fabric which it was first erected." Wayland concludes that "the surest means of promoting the welfare of a country is, to cultivate its intellectual, but especially its moral character. Until this have been done, no permanent foundation for a nation's prosperity has yet been laid."[62] Reminiscent of George Washington's Farewell Address, Wayland restated his central thesis of sound government and economic management.

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[60] Wayland, *Elements of Political Economy*, 114-115.
[61] Ibid., 116.
[62] Ibid., 138.

"On the morality and intelligence of a people, will greatly depend the freedom of it civil constitution; that is, the accuracy which it limits the power of the society, that is, of the government, over the person and property of the individual."[63]

If virtue, intelligence, and high moral character were essential to good government, what about government support of religion? Although Wayland advocated government funding of education,[64] he disavowed the need for compulsory government taxation for religious purposes. Wayland argued that good government required the props of religion, but argued that "it cannot be proved that the Christian religion needs the support of civil government." Indeed only in 1833, did Massachusetts become the last remaining state to disestablish its tax supported Congregationalist church. Although religion improves the moral and intellectual character of a people, religious instruction is pursued for the benefit of oneself, not for the benefit of others. It may in fact serve a residual effect if men become better neighbors, yet the populace at large should not be compelled to pay for the religious instruction of others. Although Wayland conceded that religion is essential for the support of civil government, he did not concede that it can only be achieved through compulsory actions and "we do not believe that any taxation is necessary for this purpose." Religious societies, enjoying the same rights and privileges of any other citizens, have the right to engage with the civil government, not because they are religious societies, "but, because the exercise of religion is an innocent mode of pursuing happiness." He ended with a warning that, "If these be not granted, religious men are oppressed, and the country where such oppression prevails, let it call itself what it may, is not free." [65]

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[63] Ibid., 194.
[64] Ibid., 134-137.
[65] Ibid., 459-460.

Wayland was no simpleton in *laissez-faire* economics. In his *Moral Law of Accumulation*, written in the wake of the Panic of 1837[66], he chastised the American people for their *moral* failure both in accumulating wealth and in their use of it. He did not condemn wealth, but rather the growing obsession only to accumulate wealth. Wayland stated flatly that "this whole community has, for some time past, been pervaded by an excessive avidity for the accumulation of property." He did not condemn "as unchristian the accumulation of property in general,"[67] but in his sermon address, *A Consistent Piety, The Demand of the Age*, he chastised the Christian who "yields to the authority of Mammon, and yet flatters himself that he is a disciple of Christ,[68]" and similarly in his *The Perils of Riches* sermon, he saliently warned that "Rich Christians" often posed "obstacles to the progress of the gospel." [69] "The demand for every object," he warned, "either of luxury or convenience, is immense." Economic accumulation, like all else in his thinking, reduced itself to a moral problem. Wayland warned that the Creator never intended accumulation to proceed unrestrained, and like all else, it had prescribed limits. Violations of these limits, like natural laws themselves, portended "calamity" and "consequences" equally prescribed by the Creator.

Wayland lamented that ill-gotten gain was exploitative and used in "grinding the faces of the poor" and derived profits "from the necessities of starving multitudes." The "love of gain becomes the ruling passion," and renders men "morally thoughtless," and even his own city had

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[66]Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, I:352. For economic interpretations of the Panic of 1837 see: Charles Sellers, *The Marketplace Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 343-345; 353-355; Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 61-88; Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York: W.W. & Norton & Company, 2005), 456-481; David Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought? The Transformation of America: 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 502-508.
[67] Francis Wayland, *The Moral Law of Accumulation* (Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1837), 8.
[68] Francis Wayland, "A Consistent Piety, The Demand of the Age," in *Sermons*, 161.
[69] Francis Wayland, "The Perils of Riches," in *Sermons*, 240.

become "infected with the mania of thus hastening to be rich."[70] "Frivolous self-indulgence" and "ostentatious display" were shameful replacements for spiritual piety. "Lavish expenditure and self-indulgence," Wayland warned, "lead by natural consequence, to indulgence and licentiousness."[71] Wayland did not minimize the economic realties of the depression, but rather equated the economic crisis with a moral crisis. He suggested its prescription lay honorably in paying off accumulated debt and forsaking the covetous spirit that prompted it, warning that: "The love of acquisition occupies every thought, and occupies it without cessation." [72]

Wayland served as the 4th president of Brown University (1827-1855), a position he held for twenty-eight years. After a return trip from touring British universities in 1842, Wayland penned his grievances of American collegiate education in his *Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System of the United States* (1842). A solid proponent of the tax-supported common school system, Wayland argued that sound education begins with effective teachers. Ignorant teachers likewise produced ignorant students. Wayland feared that poorly trained students discourage the yeomanry from sending their children to school. The less well-to-do have less incentive to support the common school system if the quality of instruction is poor. More accustomed to working their children on family farms rather than sending them to school, they would be even less likely to do so if their time were wasted. "It is manifest then," Wayland added, "that if a system of general education be adopted, it can only be sustained by providing a competent supply of well instructed teachers."[73] Lest his statements sound too obvious, his chief concern was encouraging the poor and less well-to-do on in common schools. How does one

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[70] Wayland, *The Moral Law*, 14-15.
[71] Ibid., 18-19.
[72] Ibid., 21-22; 26-32.
[73] Francis Wayland, *Thoughts on the Present Collegiate System in the United States* (New York: Arno Press & the New York Times, 1842; reprint 1969).

convince a yeoman to surrender his workforce, chiefly which is his children, to send them school in which the quality of instruction is poor?

After paying homage to the "integrity and good sense" of machinists, ship-builders, and the yeomanry, Wayland contended that only men who have labored with their minds are qualified to serve as instructors. This is a responsibility he took seriously as this following statement implies: "Whatever be the form of government, the very existence of society supposes that offices must exist, demanding the highest order of intellect, cultivated by thorough discipline, and enlarged and ripened by profound acquaintance with whatever of truth the history of past ages has revealed for the instruction of man."[74]

The difficulty was in finding a curriculum acceptable to both scholars and lay learners. The latter sought education narrowly to improve their vocational skills, while the former demanded more elite instruction. The solution was to broaden the curriculum, offering both a classical and scientific course. Essentially an elective strategy, modern languages could be taken in lieu of classical ones and so forth. Although these changes reflected public wishes, the changes not only failed to increase enrollment, but actually decreased it. "So must easier is it to discover faults," Wayland complained, "than to amend them; to point out evils than to remove them." Even sarcastically he added: "And thus have we been taught that the public does not always know what it wants, and that it is not always wise to take it at its word."[75] Yet, the problem went beyond this. The curriculum had doubled, even tripled since the colonial days, but the time allotted for completion, four years, remained the same. Students, professors, and resources became stretched beyond their limit. The student simply could not absorb it all, and unlike their predecessors who studied fewer subjects more intensely, the antebellum student

[74] Ibid., 6-7.
[75] Ibid., 13.

"knows a little of every thing, but knows nothing well." Colleges must move beyond "learning *many* things *imperfectly* and toward learning a *smaller* number of things *as well*."[76]

Wayland lamented that European schools, notably Oxford and Cambridge, kept alumni and financial supporters better connected to school functions. He argued that both alumni and financial contributors were too detached. He cited the endowment of the Institution in Boston, whereby a series of lectures are given to the citizens of Boston on the latest scientific research. Programs like this provide more direct dialogue between the nation's universities and the citizens. Wayland had stressed the interdependent role of "public patronage" earlier in a speech given to the American Institute of Instruction in 1830.[77] American colleges had become too vocationally driven, mere training grounds for specific professions. Students were admitted too young, and he suggested either raising the admittance age or lengthening the school terms beyond four years. Wayland also noted that schools wasted excessive money on the exterior the university, in constant renovations and expansions, and less in investing in the quality of its resources, be it libraries or modern scientific research equipment. He further instituted monetary incentives for academic achievements. The low pay of professors gave colleges too little leverage in recruiting the brightest minds away from the higher paid professions of law, medicine, and even the clergy. This of course fed back into the quality of instructors. Part of this problem stemmed from the recent obsession to render tuition excessively cheap to boost enrollment. Yet, to do so only rendered the facilities inadequate and provided too little compensation for professors. Wayland argued that the current fashion to make education cheap and secondarily good is inverted, for education should be first good and secondarily cheap.[78]

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[76] Ibid., 83; 108.
[77]Wayland, *An Introductory Address*, 14.
[78] Wayland, *Thoughts on the Present*,132-149.

The heart of his grievances spoke to the need to better integrate American colleges into the community at large. In one respect, he argued the four-year curriculum was too broad to be of utilitarian use. In another, he argued for broadening the areas of specialization to meet community needs. Given that Providence, Rhode Island was largely a mechanical-trade, port city, it made sense to boost enrollment by tailoring curriculum to meet community needs. Frustrated that progress was too slow, Wayland presented his "Report to the Corporation of Brown University on Changes in the System of Collegiate Education"[79] in 1850 to the Corporation, and threatened to resign unless his blueprint was met. His sons suggested that Wayland had decided to retire 4-5 years previously, but may have delayed it until his older two sons graduated. Beyond wanting leisure time to write, enrollment at Brown had tapered off and subsequently and so had funding. In the 1835-36 school year, for example, enrollment stood at 195 pupils, but had steadily declined until reaching a low of 141 for 1847-48 and hitting 150 for 1848-49, the year he threatened to resign. The college, he argued, offered nothing different than what the other New England colleges offered, and while he wanted to solicit the community in fund-raising, until the curriculum was revised to meet community needs, it remained too detached from the people at large and thus it was not in their interest to invest in Brown. His threatened resignation, in short, was partially designed to provoke this change.[80]

His themes outlined in this report largely rehashed his earlier thinking, except with greater specificity in *how* to implement these changes. The report began with a cursory overview of the origin of English universities, but Wayland argued that the American collegiate system must adapt according to the emerging needs of the nation. The practicality of forging a new nation out of an underdeveloped wilderness required technical expertise and ingenuity. If the

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[79] *Report to the Corporation of Brown University on Changes in the System of Collegiate Education*. (Providence, 1850).
[80] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2:79-80.

United States was to compete with more developed nations, it must utilize science as its means of doing so.[81] Classical studies could not accomplish this alone. "What, Wayland asked, "could Virgil and Horace and Homer and Demosthenes, with a little mathematics and natural philosophy, do towards developing the untold resources of this continent?" Wayland referred to this tension between severing the old and embracing the new as "an important crisis in the history of collegiate education in this country."[82] Indeed the crisis was that the old curriculum no longer fit the new economic realities and individualistic nature of the enterprising American. Indeed, his strongest statement reflecting this sentiment is that the present collegiate system in the United States had over utilized an outdated methodology and produced flimsy results. He wrote:

> All of them teach Greek and Latin, but where are our classical scholars? All teach mathematics, but where are our mathematicians? We might ask the same questions concerning the other sciences taught among us. There has existed for the last twenty years a great demand for civil engineers. Has this demand been supplied by our colleges? We presume the single academy at West Point, graduating annually a smaller number than many of our colleges, has done more towards the construction of railroads than all our one hundred and twenty colleges united.[83]

Yet the newer sciences were added to the curriculum without either reducing prior requirements or extending the time allotted to accomplish them. Both the teacher and student alike were overburnded, and study less carefully pursued than task oriented. Wayland noted that trends moved toward the "useful arts" and that men engaged in "steam, machinery and commerce" competed equally in usefulness with those who pursue the "learned professions."[84]

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[81] For an his views on science in religion see: Francis Wayland, *The Dependence of Science upon Religion: A Discourse Delivered at the Dedication of Manning Hall, the Chapel and Library of Brown University*, February 4, 1835 (Providence: Marshall, Brown & Co., 1835).
[82]Wayland, *Report to the Corporation*, 12-13.
[83] Ibid., 18.
[84] Ibid., 17; 21.

Collegiate education then, was too elitist to engage the common masses. It had become a leisure activity, not a necessity.

Wayland flatly noted that the decline in student enrollment at Brown had become an "embarrassment." He rehashed similar arguments of low pay for professors, the luring away from the professions for the more "useful arts." Fundraising remained a constant problem, but Wayland believed that if collegiate education became demonstratively more relevant to the public at large, the community would more readily contribute financially to the college. This point of view reinforced his vision and appreciation for the English university model whereby the interests of the community and university were intertwined. However, both parties might benefit from this relationship. If the college curriculum remained too irrelevant for the non-professional, then community interest *and* financial support would be minimal. He wrote:

> And yet we have in this country, one hundred and twenty colleges, forty-two theological seminaries, and forty-seven law schools, and we have not a single institution designed to furnish the agriculturalist, the manufacturer, the mechanic, or the merchant with the education that will prepare him for the profession to which his life is to be devoted.[85]

In outlining what a revamped curriculum would resemble it if were designed for the whole community, student choice became the key component. Gone, for example, would be the four year allotted time for a degree program. The allotted time would depend on the course of study. Furthermore, "every student might study what he chose, all that he chose, and nothing but what he chose." In fact, Wayland argued that colleges "should consult the wants of its own locality" and arrange its course offerings selectively to fit individual community needs. This idea of course, presupposed that colleges would not longer offer uniform instruction.[86] Wayland

[85] Ibid., 57.
[86] Ibid., 51, 53.

assumed, rather optimistically, that these changes, if implemented, would naturally draw in previously disinterested citizens.

Richard Hofstadter suggested that this document "probably deserves to be ranked as the most significant document of the period on the changing relation between higher education and the community."[87] Donald Fleming concurred: "Taken together the *Thoughts* of 1842 and the *Report* of 1850 constitute one of the chief documents of the nineteenth century in the history of higher education in America. They embody a devastating analysis of the plight of the American college; and a prescription for its cure."[88] Walter Bronson, in his history of Brown University, noted that the report "made a stir throughout the country" but "contained little or nothing that was new in theory."[89] Although other colleges proposed similar plans, Wayland's gained wider notoriety and favorable press coverage. Bronson's summary explains why: "It was a trenchant criticism of the collegiate system of the United States; it struck the democratic note strongly in its plea for an education that would fit the needs of all classes; and it sought to bring lecture-room and laboratory into vital relations with the material welfare of an immense new country awaiting development."[90]

Unanimously asked to remain after his threatened resignation, his changes were implemented haphazardly, if not reluctantly, and he resigned permanently in 1855, frustrated in his ambitions. Hofstadter's quip that his blueprint "was somewhat ahead of the times and a good deal ahead of the resources of the institution" aptly sums up intellectual and financial obstacles at Brown.[91] Charles Bronson expressed similar sentiments when he judged Wayland "one of the

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[87]Richard Hofstadter and C. DeWitt Hardy, *The Development and Scope of Higher Education in the United States*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 24.
[88]Donald Fleming, *Science and Technology in Providence, 1760-1914: An Essay in the History of Brown University in the Metropolitan Area*. (Providence: Brown University, 1952).
[89] Walter C. Bronson, *The History of Brown University, 1764-1914*. (Providence, 1914), 267.
[90] Ibid., 275.
[91]Hofstadter and Hardy, *The Development and Scope*, 26.

greatest college presidents of his century."[92] Despite his mixed record of reform, Wayland's overall philosophy of education, remained consistent with his economic and moral science theories as outlined above. "I grant, at once," Wayland explained, "that the intellectual motive for study is the love of knowledge; and the moral motive, the desire to love God in the way which his Providence has marked out for us."[93] Again, he reiterated the role of character development and moral improvement in education: "The most important end to be secured in the education of the young, is moral character. Without this, brilliancy of intellect will only plunge its possessor more deeply in temporal disgrace and eternal misery."[94]

Historian Theodore Crane suggested that Wayland was first and foremost a moralist before he was either an economist or educator and that his goals of turning Brown into a "democratic and vocational" school were incompatible with boosting academic standards. Lowering tuition costs and broadening the program to enroll mechanics and craftsman further depleted university funds. Crane argued that Wayland "paid too little attention to the historical development of human institutions" and assumed that college administration, like all human activity, flowed from adherence to "the laws of a sovereign Creator" and if followed properly, would prosper.[95] "Wayland's educational philosophy," as Crane described it, "was derived from these beliefs in the primacy of religious and moral purpose, the unique opportunities offered middle-class Americans, and the efficacy of dedicated individual effort to achieve any objective which mortals might accomplish."[96] Indeed, Wayland ranked science education as second in rank

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[92] Bronson, *A History of Brown*, 204.
[93] Wayland, *Thoughts on the Present*, 90.
[94] Ibid., p. 115; for further analysis of Wayland's role at Brown see; Bronson, *History of Brown*, 204-316; and William G. Roelker, *Francis Wayland, A Neglected Pioneer of Higher Education*, American Antiquarian Society, *Proceedings*, LIII (1943), pt. I, 27-78.
[95] Theodore R. Crane, *Political Economist as Educator* (Providence, R.I., 1962), 5-7
[96] Ibid., 9.

only to "the science of morals."[97] Crane has a point. Of course Wayland never felt that his model was strictly followed, but Wayland missed the larger point that principles or not, that there was nothing inevitable about prosperity either in economics or college management. Wayland's devotion to democratizing collegiate education was admirable, but he faced the classic dilemma of trading meritorious academic achievement for generalized learning. The two, in the end, proved incompatible, at least in the time it was given to work.[98]

Although not an educational work, Wayland's educational methodology is best captured in his *Elements of Intellectual Philosophy* (1854). This work, largely neglected by historians, is a real gem for educational theory and practice. Consistent with the self-disciplinary focus of the age, Wayland argued that the goal of education was to render "the various faculties of the mind obedient to the will."[99] "Our minds," Wayland further stressed, "are comparatively useless to us, unless we can render them obedient servants to the will…."[100] Wayland's core philosophy rested on his conviction that mastering generalized principles, rather than amassing facts for facts sake, or knowledge for knowledge's sake, and provided better long-term benefits. Reflection on learning, organizational thinking, generalizing from particulars, creating coherency from isolated facts, and associating one idea to another form his chief strategies for doing so. How best to

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[97] Francis Wayland, *An Introductory Address, Delivered in Boston, Before the Convention of Teachers, and Other Friends of Education, Assembled to Form the American Institute of Instruction, August 19th, 1830* (Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, 1830), 13; see also his speech on education in 1854 delivered before the American Institute of Instruction in Francis Wayland, *The Introductory Discourse Delivered Before the American Institute of Instruction, at their Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting in Providence, R.I., August 8, 1854* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1855).

[98] For the intellectual climate and changes in 19th century colleges see: Stanley M. Guralnick, *Science and the Antebellum College* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical College, 1975); George Marsden and Bradley J. Longfield, eds., *The Secularization of the Academy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Roger Geiger, ed., *The American College in the Nineteenth Century* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University, 2000); Caroline Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 2002).

[99] Francis Wayland. *The Elements of Intellectual Philosophy*. (New York: Sheldon & Company, Publishers, 1854; 1864), 121.

[100] Ibid., 122-123.

accomplish this? "The most important means of cultivation, if we desire to improve ourselves, lies in the will itself."[101]

Wayland cautioned youth about wasting their "spring-time of life" in "frivolity and sin," for in the "the winter of age" the mind "sinks into decrepitude." Strenuous exertion and rigorous mental activity while young was the best protection against mental decadence in old age. He summarized; "It may then be worth while for the young to remember, that while diligence and mental discipline afford the only reasonable hope for success in manhood, they present the only security against the evils of an imbecile, unhappy, and neglected old age." [102] In his discourse on *The Philosophy of Analogy* (1831) Wayland quipped that "The pearl may be had, but the price must be paid for it." Desire is meaningless without action. Only through hard-work and the "employment of means" can someone proper. There were no short-cuts in collegiate education, but Wayland equally applied this mentality beyond the university to the general public. [103]

Yet, how does one protect against these youthful temptations? Wayland answered consistently with his economic policy: character. Wayland rejected environmentalism as the key to interpreting character, but argued rather that "the formation of our characters, whether intellectual or moral, is dependent upon ourselves," and it "depends upon energy of the will."[104] In fact, moral courage, as it frees one from disruptive prejudices and biases in research is essential for reaching sound conclusions. "Moral qualities," then as Wayland stated it, "form the most important elements of human character." Even artistic taste was influenced by the same factors. "Hence it is that moral and intellectual cultivation have so powerful an effect in

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[101] Ibid., 126; This theme is reiterated in Wayland's, *An Introductory Address*.
[102] Ibid., 234-235.
[103] Francis Wayland, *A Discourse on The Philosophy of Analogy, Delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Rhode Island, September 7, 1831* (Boston: Hillard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins, 1831), 9.
[104] Wayland, *Intellectual Philosophy*., 222.

improving the human countenance. It is only when the material and spiritual elements are united, that we observe the highest style of human beauty."[105]

Although institutionally, Wayland helped broaden Brown's curriculum in a liberal arts fashion, he criticized the educational focus on universal learning of multiple subjects or facts. Rather, he insisted that the mastery or specialization of narrower field provided greater progress in education. Generalization of principles guaranteed a greater means of application than a motley collection of facts disconnected by lack of association to prior learning. "Every general law acquired in youth thus becomes a nucleus," Wayland wrote "on which our additional attainments crystallize, and the mass increases by continued attainments."[106]

The best students, researchers, scholars, and individual achievers, however, were those who could blend idealism into action. Again this was linked to "great diversities of character." Men without ideals "follow instinctively the beaten track," and tend to "yield with unquestioning submission to the opinion of others," and "implicitly follow their leader." Others, however, are "overburdened with imaginings." They "do nothing but form plans" and are "the builders of castles in the air," in their inability to ground their idealism in solid action. The one "is rarely endowed" who is able to achieve both.[107] No better summary of his educational philosophy cannot be found than:

> If a system of education, besides cultivating the habit of attention, cultivates also the habit of reflection and generalization, so that the student learns not only to acquire but from his acquisitions to arise to general principles, observe the operations of his own mind, and compare what he has learned with the instinctive teachings of his own understanding, the great object of the instructor will be successfully accomplished.[108]

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[105] Ibid., 251-252; 407.
[106] Ibid., 265-266.
[107] Ibid., 379.
[108] Ibid., 122.

Testimony from students and fellow educators confirmed his reputation in the education field. One former student and later professor at Brown University, James Burrill Angell, thought that Wayland "deserved to be ranked with the strongest men our country has produced." He further suggested that the only instructor who could "take rank" with Wayland was Mark Hopkins of Williams College.[109] These remarks could easily be written off as blatantly partisan. Yet, his overall depiction of Wayland as an instructor, no less so than as his colleague, reflected Wayland's educational philosophy. Angell noted Wayland's focus on incorporating into his students the power of memory and analysis, explaining lessons without notes or teacher assistance, his method of breaking down arguments to their most fundamental parts, only to reassemble them into a coherent whole, and his methods of connecting one idea to another. Angell's summary of his teaching method is aptly summed up in a single sentence: "The discipline which was administered exclusively by him was unnecessarily rigorous, the standard of scholarship was high, the intellectual demands upon the student exacting," though Angell notes that Wayland "was not a great scholar; he was imperious, sometimes prejudiced, but his mind was singularly penetrating and lucid." [110]

Journalist Charles Congdon was also a student at Brown. Congdon described Wayland as "thoroughly respected and even reverenced," a stern disciplinarian, though that the poor state of the university upon Wayland's arrival warranted it, "for he had to deal with thoughtless young people, who were none the worse for feeling the heavy hand of the master." Other commentators also mentioned the poor state of the university before his arrival and its subsequent improvement under his leadership. "There were those," Congdon continued, "who thought his firmness akin to

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[109] James Burrill Angell, *The Reminiscences of James Burrill Angell* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912) 27; 38.
[110] Ibid., 28; 30; Angell's views on Wayland as an instructor see his extended discussion 27-38; for his views on Wayland as an educational reformer see 105-108.

obstinacy; but it must be remembered that he was a man of profound convictions, of fastidious conscience, and of opinions not lazily arrived at."[111] Consistent with Angell's portrait, Congdon perceived Wayland as a rigorous disciplinarian, yet equally motivated by conviction and intellectual commitment. "But the soul of the new moral regimen, Walter Bronson concurred, "was not a code but a man-intense, fearless, strong in intellect and will."[112] Disciplinarian or not, Wayland had a sense of humor. Congdon described an incident in which a terrified young student, apparently prone to misdemeanors, was suddenly summoned from across campus by Wayland, only to be asked whether he had any chewing tobacco. Congdon described Wayland as a habitual tobacco chewer and "a shameless consumer of the Indian weed." [113]

New York Senator Andrew White held his own opinions of Wayland although never his student. Wayland delivered the 1856 graduate commencement address at Yale and suggested a geographic realignment for students: "The best field of work for graduates is now in the *West*; our country is shortly to arrive at a switching-off place for good or evil; our Western States are to hold the balance of power in the Union, and to determine whether the country shall become a blessing or a curse in human history." White, rejecting a professorship at his alma mater Yale in the newly created School of Art, bolted for a professorship in history at the University of Michigan, noting that: "The words of Wayland rang in my ears, and I went gladly into the new field."[114]

Wayland's theological mindset and doctrinal preferences are best laid out in his *Notes on the Principles and Practices of the Baptist Church*. Although the scholar-pastor, Wayland was

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[111] Charles T. Congdon, *Reminiscences of a Journalist.* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1880), 92-93.
[112] Bronson, *A History of Brown*, 206.
[113] Congdon, *Reminiscences*, 94; For complete references see 92-94; 175.
[114] Andrew D. White, *Autobiography of Andrew D. White*, vol. 1 (New York: The Century Co., 1905), 257; see also 256-257 for full discussion; for more student opinion, see Wayland and Wayland, *A Memoir of the Life and Labors*, I:220-226.

no theologian and never claimed such. He constructed this work from a series of lectures first circulated in *The Examiner* under the signature "Roger Williams." A strong admirer of Williams as noted in his repeated praise of Williams throughout this work, Wayland printed these articles in expanded book form in 1856. This work formed the bulk of his theological positions and more than any source reinforces his orthodox Baptist theology. Below is not a complete analysis of his thought, but rather selected portions as it relates to his larger intellectual makeup.

Wayland's theological beliefs represented conservative Baptist theology. Affirming his belief in Trinitarian theology he noted that "Unitarianism to be a grave and radical error." The doctrine of total depravity and imputation had under gone changes in American theological circles as Calvinist theology gave way to Arminian theologies.[115] Outside conservative Calvinistic circles, theologians suggested that men were not born in sin, but rather *became* sinful by the act of sinning. Wayland argued rather that men were "born *with* a sinful nature." Regarding the atonement, Wayland argued that Baptists argued not over the *purpose* of the atonement, but rather the *extent* of it. Acknowledging a general geographical difference in beliefs, he reasserted his general belief that salvation "was opened for the whole race" but that God "in infinite mercy has elected some to everlasting life." The atonement is offered to all, "…for the feast has been provided, and it is spread for all." God saved whosoever he chose, for in his sovereignty there is "no partiality." This does not negate man's responsibility, for "if any one parishes, it is not from the want of a full and free provision, but from his own willful perverseness." He defines Regeneration in classic nineteenth prose as "an entire renovation of

[115] Prominent theologians include Moses Stuart, Nathaniel William Taylor, and Charles Finney.

the moral character in consequence of a change in affections." Regeneration then, produces a general change in the moral improvement of man.[116]

Despite noted minor variations in Baptist doctrine, Wayland argued that Baptist unity could be best preserved precisely because of its lack of confessional or creedal heritage. "Every church," he wrote, "when it expresses its own beliefs, expresses the belief of no other than its own members." Baptist doctrine remains coherent and consistent, not because church tribunals or councils have mandated specific doctrinal creeds, but rather unity exists because multiple churches understand the Scriptures in the same manner. The Scriptures, being "a revelation from God" are applicable to individuals, and "we have no standards which claim to be of any authority over us."[117] How did Baptists prevent heretical doctrine without formalized statements? "I do not believe that any denomination of Christians exists," Wayland noted, "which, for so long a period as the Baptists, have maintained so invariably the truth of their early confessions." He argued that confessional denominations had not been spared such doctrinal disputes, and if anything, Baptist theology had maintained remarkable consistency since Charles II, "…though probably not one in ten thousand of our members ever heard of their existence." If anything, Baptist unity is maintained because of, not despite of, it's individualistic interpretative approach which affords "a solid and definite basis for unity."[118]

His most interesting analysis in this work and one of his longest, is his critique of the quality of Baptist pastoral leadership in mid-nineteenth century America.[119] Wayland, unequivocally, argued that its overall quality declined since the Colonial era. He cataloged what

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[116] These theological points are discussed in Ibid., p. 16-21; See also Wayland, "The Fall of Man," Justification by Works Impossible," and "Justification by Faith" in *Salvation by Christ*, 80-93; 94-105; 173-186.
[117] Francis Wayland. *Notes on the Principles and Practices of the Baptist Church*. (New York: Sheldon, Blackman & Co., 1857), 14.
[118] Ibid., 15-16.
[119] Wayland gave two key sermons on this theme. See: "The Church of Christ" and "The Unity of the Church" in *University Sermons. Sermons Delivered in the Chapel of Brown University* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1849), 220-236; 237-252.

he felt to be their respective differences. He noted that Baptist ministers fifty years ago were men of "no classical education" and generally drawn from "mechanical-employment." Motivated from genuine pietistic conviction, they left their worldly pursuits and preached with "a simplicity and reliance on the power and grace of Christ to aid them, and render their work effectual, which have not been so apparent in later times." He admitted that they held 'a prejudice against learning" and that "education, rather than piety" for many denominations, became "the test for ministerial qualifications." The colonial Baptist then, Wayland noted, developed a general suspicion of the "college learned," something he argues was mistaken.[120]

Wayland, reveled in the simplicity of the unschooled Baptist preacher. He suggested that the unlearned men preached extemporaneously with a greater passion, than did the educated minister who preached with carefully crafted notes. The unschooled minister, motivated by greater passion and piety, was more in tuned to his parishioners' needs, than the educated clergyman too attentive to pulpit eloquence and doctrinal precision. In regards to the latter he asked rhetorically: "Where is there here the room for burning enthusiasm, for that power which transports men? No one could move others without being deeply moved himself. It is in this early and deep-felt trust in God that the power of the old ministers consisted." Learning, then, did not alone afford greater communication skills, but rather speaking a common medium that the audience understands. The old preachers spoke "not the English of books, but the English of common conversation" and more easily conversed with their audiences, for it is the language in which "the masses of men are to be moved." Wayland, granting the superior education and skills of the scholar-pastor notes: "You may explain a doctrine, or enforce a duty in so refined and eloquent English, that not one in ten of a common audience will ever understand you."[121]

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[120] Wayland, *Notes on the Principles*, 22.
[121] Ibid., 23-26; 32.

Although Wayland unabashedly favored the old-style ministers, he did make criticisms. Their sermons were generally too anecdotal, humorous, imaginative, emotionally driven, too frequently moved the audiences to tears, lacked sobriety, and "strongly tinctured with the ludicrous." These unschooled pastors fell into the same error that educated ministers in his day did, each one being guilty of crafting their sermons too narrowly to their respective audiences. The educated gentleman was unmoved by the crassness of the colonial Baptist minister, as the masses in mid-nineteenth century America remained unmoved by the learned discourses of the classically trained minister. 'We should," Wayland suggested, "study such a mode of address as will be acceptable and useful to all."[122]

Given his academic background, his analysis of pastoral preparation, sermon delivery and pulpit eloquence strikes the reader as surprising. Wayland lamented that Baptist pastoral excellence declined *because* it has become too learned. The quality of leadership was greater in the past fifty years because the pastors arose from the middling-ranks, were less educated, generally unschooled in classical learning, and ignorant of modern secular theories. He heartily acknowledged that the collegiate system was better today than it was fifty years ago, and that pastors were better trained, but he would rather sacrifice pastoral collegiate training for more familiarity with "the language of the common people."[123] Hardly the typical recipe for pastoral leadership, these statements appear at odds with his entire educational philosophy and background. It appears on the surface, that Wayland was advocating an unlearned and unschooled clergy. How do we square these statements with his role as university president, leading textbook writer, author of numerous lectures and treatises, and promoter of intellectual improvement as essential for a robust economy and for academic and professional excellence?

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[122] Ibid., 37.
[123] Ibid., 36.

Wayland recognized this tension and assumed the role of apologist for his own critics. He dismissed arguments that learned assaults mounted against the church today required learned clergy to respond. The first century culture in which the Christian church was founded was unequalled in its intellectual attainments. "Never was the cultivation of the intellect and the taste carried to higher perfection." "The poets and orators," Wayland continued, "the historians, sculptors, and the architects of this heathen world, are at the present day, our acknowledged masters." The church sent men "stigmatized as unlearned an ignorant" to combat them. 'The intellectual difference," he noted, "between them and the men whom they were called to meet, was as great in the times of the apostles as it has ever been since."[124] His response was very simple and binding on all Baptists: "The essential principle of Baptist belief is, that in all matters relating to religion, we know no authority but the Bible. In matters relating to the Christian church, we know no authority but the New Testament. We renounce the authority of tradition. We eschew all worldly policy, and resist the encroachment of precedent which would turn us away from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus."[125] Here lies his definitive statement as why the church must eschew a learned ministry. Popularity, church tradition, century's long custom and habit were irrelevant in scriptural interpretation. Earlier he alluded to Catholicism with these remarks: "It is our essential belief that the Scriptures are a revelation from God, given not to a Pope, or a congregation of Cardinals, or an Archbishop, or a bench of Bishops, or a General Assembly, or a Synod, but to every individual man." "It is hence evident," he continued, "that we can have no standards which claim to be of any authority over us."[126] Elsewhere, he wrote that "The age of authority, of precedent, and of formalism, both in church

[124] Ibid., 50; 51.
[125] Ibid., 47-49.
[126] Ibid., 14.

and state, is, we hope, fast passing away." [127] Wayland argued similarly in his chapter on "Ecclesiastical Associations" in *The Limits of Human Responsibility* (1838) when he writes: "If we surrender the doctrine that Christ is the *sole* legislator for every individual of his church, and allow that the church may itself make laws binding on the conscience of the individual, what is the result? We become Catholics at once. This is the essence of the Romish error."[128] These "Romish" remarks were typical of his era, but they clearly mark the individualistic Baptist theology that he championed.

As Wayland outlined the biblical passages regarding ministerial qualifications,[129] his rationale became clear. New Testament doctrine was the only guide acceptable for Baptist practice. Spiritual and moral attainment were *the* criteria that Wayland found biblical warrant for in ministerial qualifications. In his view, intellectual achievements are *absent* from these qualifications. Yet, his focus on moral improvement is hardly inconsistent with his overall viewpoints. Wayland argued for example, that moral character *and* intellect were essential for sound economic policy, but that intellectual advancement *devoid* of moral restraint is subject to abuse. At the heart of his analysis, is his contention that the gospel is teachable *for* all and teachable *by* all. Speaking from the vantage point of those who suggested that the ministry should be sealed from such unlearned men, he wrote as if he were speaking for them. Although these statements are lengthy, they are important for Wayland, known for refined and gentile manner, clearly showed for his passion here:

> But if it be true that no man is capable of explaining the gospel to men, and calling them to repentance, unless he be what is called liberally educated, we must carry out our doctrine to its results. We must add that a man not having enjoyed these advantages, cannot understand the gospel for himself; for, the precise reason why a man can not explain anything to another is, that he himself

[127] Francis Wayland, "The Recent Revolutions in Europe," in *University Sermons*, 327.
[128] Wayland, *The Limits of Human Responsibility*, 129.
[129] See his analysis of I Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9 in Wayland, *Notes on the Principles*, 47-52.

> does not understand it. We then come to the conclusion that the Bible is a sealed book to the laity, and that we must have a separate order of men to unfold its mysteries to us. It is not, then, a book given to *man*, but only to the *priesthood*, and we, as Romanists, must receive it as it filters through the stupid brains and corrupt hearts of lazy, licentious, and bloated ecclesiastics.[130]

Rarely do we get a glimpse of Wayland speaking so eloquently and passionately from both the heart and head. Admittedly, there may be a slight bit of pragmatism in his reasoning, for he noted repeatedly that the Baptist churches were constantly understaffed, that the nation's seminaries were not producing graduates fast enough to meet the demand, and he estimated the current shortage to be at four thousand churches.[131] Yet, this would be to minimize his genuine conviction that ministerial qualifications were open to everyone of high spiritual and moral character, regardless of their intellectual qualifications. New Testament instructions are the only guidelines that Baptist churches have and therefore these are the only guidelines allowable. Yet, this is not the sum of his thinking on this subject. In fact, Wayland encouraged ministers to pursue higher education and particularly seminary training. If not formal training, he encouraged educated elders in the church to tutor the young pastors in broader learning. If a young man forsook this, he has "but small knowledge of himself, if he does not improve himself to the utmost." Education then became necessary to improve the pastoral role, only not as a qualification for it. He reiterates this, lest he be misunderstood: "But let him remember that these can not make him a minister of Jesus Christ. They confer none of the qualifications which Christ has required. They are merely accessories which may give him increased efficiency to the essential qualifications." He warns against making the "accessory into the principle" and assuming that intellectual cultivation alone can make him a good minister.[132]

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[130] Ibid., 60.
[131] Ibid., 61; Wayland cites statistics on this in Wayland, *Report to the Corporation*, 32-33.
[132] Wayland. *Notes on the Principles*, 75-76.

If churches were for everyone, and the ministry be opened to all who meet New Testament qualifications, surely he warned: "If some consider it their duty to labor for the good of the *few*, they surely cannot be grieved with us, if we desire to labor for the good of the *many*." Perhaps no statement better summarizes his viewpoints of the church than the following warning that the church has become the institution of the educated and wealthy. "It can scarcely be denied that, at the present moment," Wayland warned, "Christianity is everywhere losing its hold upon the masses of the population, Our ministry and our houses of worship are becoming the ministry and houses of worship of the rich and the educated, while the whole body of the people is uncared for and forgotten." Furthermore, "If we do not preach to the poor as well as the rich," he added, "we lose this badge of discipleship."[133]

Lastly, Wayland warned that the ministry was being spoiled by ministers who saw the ministry as little more than one vocational choice among many. This is a far cry from the colonial merchant-class who left their secular pursuits because of their "calling" to the ministry.[134] Many colonial-era ministers served part-time, dividing their time between secular and ministerial pursuits, but only from economic necessity. The wealthy today, he argues, are too content to support the church financially, while sharing none of the burden of ministry. Why should the ministry be restricted to the wise, educated, and wealthy, when they give only of their money, but none of their time? His response strikes at the heart of his theological convictions and provides the clue to his advocacy of an unlearned ministry while himself an educator by profession so is thus quoted at length:

> The fundamental principle on which our difference from other evangelical denominations depends, is this: we profess to take for our guide, in all matters of religious belief and practice, the *New Testament*, the *whole* New Testament, and

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[133] Ibid.,78; 80.

[134] Donald Scott judiciously expands this theme. See, *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750-1850* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).

> *nothing but* the New Testament. Whatever we find there we esteem binding upon the conscience. What is not there commanded, is not binding. No matter by what reverence for antiquity, by what tradition, by what councils, by what consent of any branches of the church, or of the whole church, at any particular period, an opinion or practice may be sustained, if it be not sustained by the command or the example of Christ, or of his apostles, we value it only as an opinion or a precept of man, and we treat it accordingly. We disavow the authority of man to add to, or take from the teachings of inspiration as they are found in the New Testament. Hence, to a Baptist, all appeals to the Fathers, or to antiquity, or general practice in the early centuries, or in later times, are irrelevant and frivolous.[135]

Wayland's views can be summarized best under three premises; first, that education and pulpit eloquence are no replacement for piety and passion; second, that education was often an obstacle to effective communication ; third, New Testament criteria for pastoral qualifications privileged moral character over learning. This last point in consistent with his own philosophical bent. If a singular theme run through his writings it is the necessity for moral character development. His works on moral science, political economy, and intellectual philosophy reinforce these themes. But what of intellectual cultivation? This theme similarly runs through his works. Here Wayland appears to divorce learning from theology for the sake of evangelicalism. Strange that such a learned and prodigious scholar, a respected university president advocated lay activism in the pastoral role. His individualistic theological approach certainly fit the framework of the mass-and-tumble of mid-nineteenth America, but it hardly bode well for the direction in which theological training was moving.

The early Methodists shared a similar history of lay evangelicalism, but they tightened their ministerial qualification requirements. Wayland feared that the Baptists had become "thoughtless imitators of others" and were losing their evangelistic saliency.[136] Ironic indeed, that the learned Puritans lamented the loss of piety and influence to their less sophisticated Methodists and Baptists brethren, while Wayland lamented the loss of piety and influence

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[135] Wayland, *Notes on the Principles*, 85-86.
[136] Ibid.,165.

because of excessive learning. One must be careful not to adduce too much from his statements however. Wayland did not *endorse* an unlettered clergy, but rather argued that lack of formal training should not *exempt* someone from pastoral positions. He did not advocate their candidacy *because* they were unlearned, but rather because the New Testament *did not* count it as a qualification. Character, not education, was the determining factor.

Donald Tewksbury's study of American colleges before the Civil War may help shed further light on this subject. Tewksbury notes that one hundred and eighty-two permanent colleges were founded before the Civil War.[137] Yet, although Brown University was founded in 1764, it was another fifty-five years before another permanent Baptist college was founded in 1820, with Baptist colleges reaching a total of twenty-five before the Civil War. The general trend toward establishing Baptist colleges was not begun until the Second Triennial Baptist Convention of 1817. Home and foreign missions soon became linked with the college movement and Baptist colleges were founded in rapid succession. Several factors worked against the movement. Baptists had to overcome prior generational suspicions of ministerial education, the scattering of Baptists ministers evangelizing the burgeoning American West, and rise of the "anti-mission" Baptists. Tewksbury noted that given these obstacles, it was remarkable that Baptists were able to accomplish much at all in higher education before the Civil War.[138] In this light, given the sluggish nature of developing Baptist colleges, Wayland's contention that colleges were not producing Baptist ministers quickly enough to fit contemporary needs had merit. Even given this practicality however, Wayland insisted that the larger issue remained one of New Testament teaching.

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[137] Donald G. Tewksbury, *The Founding of American Colleges and University Before the Civil War* (New York: Bureau of Publications, 1932), 15.
[138] Ibid.,112-113.

It is somewhat difficult to sum up Wayland's intellectual thought due to his voluminous writings. Rarely does someone write extensively over such a broad range of subjects. A prodigious writer, Wayland was the consummate pastor-scholar, though he never ranked himself among the leading thinkers of his day. For example, Wayland rarely engaged other writings in his chief works and his writings lack a certain amount of historiography. He did reference William Paley in his *Elements of Moral Science* and similarly Adam Smith and the French economist Jean Baptiste Say in his *Elements of Political Economy*, but they are little more than cursory nods. His works lack originality, but their popularity resides in their communicable value. Yet, certain "fixed" principles are easily derived from these writings. First, be it moral science, economics, education, or general philosophy, Wayland argued that there exists certain laws or principles which govern these subjects which are "fixed" by the Creator. Second, once these general principles are discovered, their application is nearly beyond limit. Third, any violation of them portends predictable consequences no less so than violating the physical laws of nature. Fourth, moral character and intellectual improvement binds these together, gives them meaning, and secured their workability. Lack of character in economics damages the trust between producer and consumer, much the same as political malfeasance creates distrust between the citizen and the state. Fifth, the purpose of education is to teach these general principles rather than cumulated facts, demonstrate their malleability, and infuse the student with a sense of moral duty.

From this analysis we gain a more transparent understanding of his intellectual thought. This helps to contextualize his antislavery thought and place it within his broader range of thinking. His antislavery thinking no doubt was a mixture of his intellectual makeup, his theological convictions, and political expediency, but overall, they were consistent with his

general interpretative schemes. Yet if his theological and intellectual views can be considered "conservative," his antislavery convictions carried the seed of radicalism. To equate abolitionism with radicalism and to associate non-activism with conservatism minimizes the role of ideas in shaping history. If action is all that counted, and ideas were minimal, neither party in the slavery debate would have suffered the burden of trying to change one another's mind. Theologically, his views carried the conviction that slavery had no warrant in scripture, and philosophically that it violated his doctrine of man's obligation to man. In contrast to two leading contemporary theologians, Moses Stuart or Charles Hodge, who while antislavery in conviction, were not so in biblical interpretation, Wayland's antislavery convictions carried the twin burden of both. Collectively these sentiments worked a powerful two-punch. While his biblical convictions may appear to stigmatize the slaveholder, it was not so. Ever the diplomat, Wayland was quick to condemn slavery but less certain in condemning slaveholding. The reality is more complicated. It is to his antislavery view that we turn.

CHAPTER TWO

Francis Wayland's Antislavery Arguments: Champions and Critics

On November 1, 1831, Francis Wayland penned a letter to William Lloyd Garrison is response to having been sent a complimentary copy of his abolitionist paper, *The Liberator*. The publication of this paper ignited a national debate on slavery and abolitionism. Although many sympathized with the ends to which Garrison sought, many were repelled by the brash and impolite manner in which he castigated all slaveholders. His demand for immediate emancipation was also more than many could accommodate. Politely, Wayland asked that the subscription be discontinued, but Wayland felt compelled "to state to you my reasons for have done so."[139] "I believe as strongly as any other man," Wayland responded, "that slavery is very wicked, and very destructive to the best interests both of master and slave. But this does not seem to me to decide that immediate emancipation of all slaves in the U.S. should be either wise or unjust. Very much may be required to be done before liberty would be a blessing to the slave." His antislavery remarks, though rejecting of immediatism, stamped Wayland in the antislavery camp rather than its abolitionist counterpart.[140]

Wayland warned that entrusting the slave with responsibility for which he was unprepared led to moral "temptation" and was irresponsible. Wayland conceded the propriety of immediate emancipation, but asked a clarifying question: "Shall we seek to bring about this event by enlightening, convincing, and persuading the masters, or by exciting to rebellion the slaves?" If the former is feasible, it would "prevent bloodshed," work to "improve the moral

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[139] This letter is reprinted in Wendell P. and Francis J. Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison*, *The Story of His Life Told by His Children*, 1805-1879, 4 vols, New York: The Century Co., 1885-89), I: 242-244. Henry Mayer suggested that Wayland was not alone. Garrison's friend, *Boston Courier* editor Joseph Buckingham noted that Southerners could construe such inflammatory literature as seditious and treasonous and subject them to censor; see Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 124.

[140] Note: In general, immediatism was associated with abolitionists who argued for the immediate emancipation of slavery without delay. Antislavery advocates promoted gradualism, rather than immediatism, for fear that the social and economic fallout would be too destabilizing.

character of both parties," and "bind them together" by feelings of "benevolence" and "gratitude." Furthermore, it would "be permanent in its effects" and be a "glorious triumph" to the cause of philanthropic voluntarism by encouraging slaveholders "to perform a great and noble action." [141]

If servile insurrection occurred, Wayland warned that its self-destructiveness damaged *both* parties, and would leave each in "interminable hatred," and "utterly unfit for any permanently amiable adjustment." Neither party, whether the winner or loser, would be better off. "Men are not often made better," he explained, "or happier by war, specially by servile war, the most destructive and demoralizing of all forms of human massacre." Wayland left no doubt as to his opinion of *The Liberator*. He explained:

> Now I regret to say, my dear sir, that so far as I can judge, the tendency of your paper is to produce the latter of these results. Its attitude to the slave-owners is menacing and vindictive. The tendency of your remarks is to prejudice their minds against a cool discussion of the subject. On the contrary, the miseries of the slaves are set forth in a manner calculated to arouse their most destructive passions {and urge} them on to resistance at all hazards. Should such a catastrophe ever occur, I am sure that you or I would rather have lost our right hand than have written a word which should have contributed in the least degree to hasten it.[142]

These comments indicted Garrison, but note that Wayland did not explicitly charge Garrison with inciting violence, but argued rather that his *tone* suggested such tendencies. Wayland, never one to offend, added "I believe that you, my dear sir, have suffered injustices in consequences of your efforts in this cause." Wayland stressed forgiveness and argued that the biblical injunction "to do *good to all men*" applied equally to "masters as well as slaves." This course is "more useful" and more productive in thought and practice.[143]

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[141] Ibid., 243.
[142] Ibid., 243-244.
[143] Ibid., 244. Note: In 1835, Wayland reiterated these points in a letter to his friend Basil Manly, President of the University of Alabama. He expressed his belief that condemning southern slavery was warranted, but that

These remarks reveal a great deal of the antislavery psychology of Francis Wayland. Several strands of his antislavery position are reflected here. First, Wayland conceded that slavery was self-destructive for both the master and the slave. Second, while conceding immediate emancipation in principle, he opposed it on pragmatic grounds that slaves were ill-prepared for freedom. Third, moral persuasion was the best means of emancipation since it elicited the assistance of slaveholders themselves. Fourth, he opposed all violent remedies for emancipation, either by slaves or sympathetic whites. Fifth, he charged Garrison, and by implication abolitionists, with unwarranted propagandizing of slave-owners as inherently cruel and vindictive and which could produce no other effect than inciting slave revolts. Sixth, Wayland argued that both masters and slaves deserved the same courtesy and respect.

Slavery and abolitionism was the volatile mix that ignited this pointed letter. When the nineteenth century began, slavery was retreating in the North, but rapidly increasing across the deep South, ignited by the explosion of cotton production. Northern culture evolved along industrial lines, Yankee ingenuity and entrepreneurship created new tools for modernization, free labor replaced slave labor, and steady urbanization and foreign immigration created new institutions for cultural, social and political diversity. Southern culture remained tied to land, agriculture, political and religious conservatism, buttressed by Old World devotions to honor, duty, and deferential social relations. Bertram Wyatt-Brown explains: "Whereas the evangelical nineteenth-century ethic stressed conscience and guilt, the southern ethic referred to honor and shame. The former system encouraged self-examination and reform, both personal and social; the latter taught conformity to tradition and subservience to community will." Northern

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interference beyond this was unacceptable meddling. See Letter to Basil Manly, Providence, R.I., December 2, 1835, *Wayland Papers*, Brown University Archives, John Hay MS-IC-4, II:21, 1835 Nov-Dec; although a Whig, in 1839, he expressed thoughts that the Whig unification with the abolitionists would destroy the party. See Letter to Heman Lincoln, Providence, R.I., January 31, 1839, MS-IC-4, and II:31, Hay, 1839, Jan.-Feb. Note: The *Wayland Papers* are housed in the John Hay Library at Brown University. This collection will be hereafter be referred as Hay.

commercialization, urbanization, and industrialization had broken community ties, replacing them with more institutionalized controls. Southern society, even in its cities, remained bound culturally by localism, family ties, and community conformity. Suspicious of external controls and centralized governance, Southerners personalized their fears of abolitionists as subversive to their social order.[144]

Slavery, in fact, "was a bulwark against the corrosive effects of free labor and the loosening of social bonds that nurtured humane social relations." Northern capitalists, fanatical abolitionists, and free labor ideologues, threatened southern social cohesion. Southern intellectuals perceived their dilemma and railed against the callousness of their northern counterparts. While not anti-modern dogmatists, they knew that every innovation, whether in technology, industrialization, or religious and intellectual thought, threatened their traditional, patriarchal, and hierarchal value system. Although they no doubt expressed it differently, from the intellectual to the yeoman farmer, this value system was best protected by slavery. Eugene and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese explain: "The great cultural and political struggles for the soul of the Old South raged between the ideals of a slaveholding southern society and those of the capitalist world in which it was necessarily enmeshed. The same irreconcilable tendencies raged within the plantation world itself, testifying to the Southerners' continuing effort to define and defend their distinct social vision."[145] The rise of antislavery fervor in general and more

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[144] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "From Piety to Fantasy: Proslavery's Troubled Evolution," in *Yankee Saints and Southern Sinners*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1985), 168. For expanded treatment on Southern honor see Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

[145] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders' Worldview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 109; 312. See also Drew Gilpin Faust, *A Sacred Circle: The Dilemma of the Intellectual in the Old South, 1840-1860* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1977) on the dilemma between modernization and traditionalism and *Michael O'Brien, Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860*, 2 vols., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) for southern antebellum thought in general.

particularly the emergence of abolitionist immediatism in the 1830s hurled Southerners on the defensive and unleashed a torrent of proslavery literature.

Abolitionism in America had roots in the eighteenth century, but reemerged with renewed intensity in the mid-nineteenth. "The inherent contradiction of slavery lies not in its cruelty or economic exploitation, but in the underlying conception of man as a conveyable possession with no more autonomy of will and consciousness than a domestic animal." As illustrated by David Brion Davis in the preceding quote, slavery was fundamentally about human rights.[146] Four currents in the mid-eighteenth century helped undercut slavery in the Western world. First, the rise of industrial capitalism assisted by its free labor workforce made slavery an anomaly. Second, Enlightenment rationalism and human rights orientation. Third, Protestant Christianity, led by the Quakers, flatly condemned slavery as a sin. Fourth, the revolutionary movements that struck the Western Hemisphere in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century emancipated slaves throughout the European colonial empire. On the eve of the Civil War, the United States stood nearly alone in the Western World in maintaining slavery.[147]

By 1804, every Northern state had enacted gradual emancipation laws, but the abolitionist movement of the post-Revolutionary era had withered away, resurfacing with William Lloyd Garrison's inaugural edition of *The Liberator* on January 1, 1831. The abolitionists, founded on the pretext of immediate emancipation, largely rejected the American Colonization Society (founded 1816) as an unethical solution. In 1833, the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) was founded in Philadelphia, only to splinter off in 1840 with the

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[146] David Brion Davis, "Slavery and Sin: The Cultural Background," in Martin Duberman, ed., *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 3; for entire text see 3-31.
[147]For a summary of these four abolitionist strands, see James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction, 3rd ed*. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2001), 43-44.

formation of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (AFAAS).[148] The initial reason for the split was the appointment of, Abby Kelley, a Quaker teacher, to the business committee of the AASS, but the larger grievance was the anti-statism of the Garrisonian wing of the movement. The Garrisonian wing favored extending their reform beyond antislavery measures and wanted to maintain moral suasion as their chief weapon against slaveholders. Garrison also felt, unlike the politically oriented abolitionists, that the constitution was hopelessly proslavery.[149] George William Curtis referred to the "national conscience" as "the real citadel of the nation."[150] The AFAAS, oriented toward political activism, broke from Garrison, and formed their own antislavery organization. James Birney, for example, a former Alabama planter turned abolitionist, twice (1840 and 1844) won the nomination of the Liberty Party without electoral success.[151]

It oversimplifies to suggest the split disrupted abolitionist influence. Garrison warned that it would fracture the movement and dilute its purity and its finances. Granted its monetary flow was diffused, but the Panic of 1837 had equally contributed its part; the loss of the wealthy

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[148] For the AASS constitution and a statement against women's participation see: "Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society" and "An Abolitionist Protests Against the Participation of Women in the American Anti-Slavery Society" in Louis Ruchames, *The Abolitionists: A Collection of Their Writings* (New York: Capricon Books, 1963), 78-83 and 160-164.

[149] For a counterpoint to this view, see: Lysander Spooner, *The Unconstitutionality of Slavery* (Boston: Published by Bela Marsh, 1853).

[150] "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" A Lecture Delivered at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., October 18, 1859, in Charles Eliot Norton, ed., *Orations and Addresses of George William Curtis*, Vol.1 (2 vols., New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1894), 65-93; quote on 80.

[151] Key works on the politics of abolitionism include Louis Filler, *The Crusade Against Slavery 1830-1860* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960; Martin Duberman, *The Antislavery Vanguard: New Essays on the Abolitionists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); Dwight Lowell Dumond, *Antislavery: The Crusade for Freedom in America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961); Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967); Ann J. Lane, *The Debate Over Slavery: Stanley Elkins and His Critics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971); James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976); Ronald G. Walters, *The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1976); Richard H. Sewell, Ballots for Bullets: *Antislavery Politics in the United States, 1837-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, ed., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1979); and Alan M. Kraut, ed., *Crusaders and Compromisers: Essays on the Relationship of the Antislavery Struggle to the Antebellum Party System* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983).

Tappan brothers hurt, but their fortunes had already taken a hit in the Panic as well. However, this diffusion of resources and personnel actually broadened its reach. Tight centralization worked best when small, but larger institutions creates excessive bureaucratization and layered sluggishness. Its fracturing helped recruits new members, created new leaders, localized decision-making, provided fresh and untried initiatives, and funneled personnel into community organizational networks, previously unreachable by rigid hierarchies. Also, historians have long overemphasized the most salient conflicts, rather than stressing commonalities. By focusing on the particulars of their differences, historians overlook that their broader goals were compatible. They parted over means, not ends, yet even these frequently overlapped. Political abolitionists still stressed moral suasion, and the anti-statist crowd, often conceded that antislavery voting blocs provided additional tools for abolitionism.[152]

Part of the larger struggle with abolitionism was its public persona. Although evangelicals such as Arthur and Lewis Tappan, Joshua Leavitt, and Theodore Weld were firmly embedded in the movement, the southern charge that abolitionism was equated with theologically heterodoxy had merit. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Theodore Parker, Henry David Thoreau, had long strayed form orthodoxy. William Lloyd Garrison, the nation's most vocal and widely known abolitionist, was also the most rhetorically offensive. His anti-constitutionalism added credence to his radicalism.[153] Although charges that abolitionists were wild-eyed fanatics were fallacious, John Brown being a key exception, the public persona was different. Abolitionists struggled relentlessly in a public relations battle. Gilbert Barnes, for example, suggested that Garrison's closest followers knew his harsh writings derived "from his righteous

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[152] Stewart, *The Antislavery Appeal*, 3-18; Walters, *Holy Warriors*, 74-96; For an example of the political versus non-political abolitionist controversy , see James Gillespie Birney, *A Letter on the Political Obligations of Abolitionists* (New York: Arno Press, 1839; reprint 1969).

[153] See Staughton Lynd, "The Abolitionist Critique of the United States Constitution," in Duberman, *The Antislavery Vanguard*, 209-239.

absolutes of faith, never from vindictiveness," and that his intolerance derived "for the principles that he hated, not for the men who followed them." Nevertheless, in the public mind, Garrison embodied "the incarnation of fanaticism" and a threat to both church and state.[154]

Although not fanatics, Herbert Aptheker argued that they were thoroughly revolutionary. Their goal of immediate emancipation could only have been accomplished through the overthrow of the ruling class through seizing its property and ending in a single stroke, their economic and political power base. Aptheker suggests that this was nothing short of revolutionary. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, in his study of Lewis Tappan, drew similar conclusions. He suggests that although immediate abolitionism worked through peaceful persuasion, rather than coercion, its doctrine "had profound political consequences." Its end result was the overthrow of the entire southern economic and racial order. Nevertheless, Wyatt-Brown argued that abolitionists "grossly overestimated southern goodwill and underrated northern racial prejudice."[155] To be sure, though not in the same degree, abolitionists were associated with women's suffrage, racial egalitarianism, economic inequality, labor unionism, and civil liberties. For many abolitionists, these other concerns remained peripheral until emancipation had been accomplished, but the fact that many prominent abolitionists dedicated themselves into post-emancipation reforms further confirmed this viewpoint.[156]

For our immediate purposes, the key is to analyze the specific evangelical war over abolitionism and to grasp why so many evangelicals rejected abolitionism. Although American Christianity was fractured along denominational lines, Christians worked remarkably well

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[154] Gilbert Hobbs Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse 1830-1844* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933), 98-99.
[155] See Herbert Aptheker, *Abolitionism: A Revolutionary Movement* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989); and Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery* (Cleveland: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1969), 82-83.
[156] See James M. McPherson *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) and James M. McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to the NAACP* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

through interdenominational cooperation in missionary and reform work. Slavery, however, tore at this unity, both geographically and religiously. Although abolitionism in the 1830s grew out of the reforms of the Second Great Awakening, evangelicals remained divided in mind on the issue of slavery. Evangelical abolitionists demanded the church and citizenry admit their complicity in slavery, renounce its sinfulness, and press for immediate emancipation. This "immediatism" did not sit well with Americans, whether evangelical or not. Historian Donald Scott argued that although evangelical clergymen and reformist institutions were guardians of public morality, and though they conceded the sinfulness of slavery, immediate abolitionism for most was "a perversion of clerical public guardianship, a misappropriation of evangelical ideas and institutions in ways that disrupted social order rather than buttressed it."[157]

The single-mindedness and inflammatory nature of abolitionist diatribes shocked their critics. Wedging slavery into every ecclesiastical church and organization, they crossed boundaries long sealed by church tradition to keep politics out of the pulpit. Most offensive for many clergymen however was their excommunication of slaveholders with long-standing ties in the Christian community. "It did not seem to matter," Scott explains, "whether a person had been a faithful Christian all his life, or had acted out of benevolent motives; if a professing churchman or Christian did not embrace and practice immediatism, he was guilty of promoting the cause of slavery."[158]

Rhetorically, immediatists equated slavery with social sins, such as temperance, dueling, prostitution, gambling, and Sabbath-breaking.[159] To equate slavery with these sins elevated to a theological and moral status a practice long associated with moral order and stability. If slavery

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[157]Scott, *From Office to Profession*, 95.
[158]Idid., 96.
[159]John G. West, *The Politics of Revelation of Reason: Religion and Civil Life in the New Nation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996) provides background of pre-abolitionist reform controversies.

was sinful, then slaveholding and the slaveholder stood equally condemned. Antislavery moderates could not accept such reasoning. Many slaveholders for example, inherited their slaves, and argued that since they were not responsible for its origin, they were not responsible for its presence. Many antislavery writers agreed with the former, but argued that the latter *were* responsible for its continuance. Their guilt lay not in the original act, but in their continued participation. "Slavery, by its very age," historian Stanley Elkins explained, "had almost assumed the character of original sin, entailed as it was upon living generations by their predecessors."[160] Yet, even if many had wished to emancipate their slaves, statewide southern anti-emancipation laws made such practices difficult. Also, since American slave owners inherited the institution from their colonial English forefathers, and thus had not initiated the slave-trade, an institution so interwoven into American society could not be overturned overnight, and it was not fair to hold slaveholders morally culpable for such practices. It was easier then to condemn slavery in the abstract than to condemn its actual practice, for though a moral problem, it was equally a political one. Put differently, what was morally wrong, was legally protected and thus *was* political in nature.

Theological categories such as sin, conviction, or repentance made little headway when butted against legal, political, and congressional ones. And this was really the crux of the matter. Moderates accepted gray where abolitionists saw only black-and-white. "The problem, however, was that, unlike intemperance, slavery was not simply a matter of behavior, but an institution with legal and constitutional legitimacy, which, if it was to be abolished, would ultimately have to be removed through political and governmental agencies. Thus, no matter what theological

[160] Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*, 3rd edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 34.

meaning immediatists might give to it, abolitionism was inherently a political matter, at once a religious doctrine and a public program."[161]

Abolitionists equally violated the noncoercive nature of voluntary benevolent associations, by interjecting their viewpoints into every aspect of society, recognizing neither community nor legalized restraints. The anti-immediatists warned that condemning slavery and slaveholders as equally sinful only isolated southern Christians and severed fellowship over such ambiguous practices. While the abolitionists were willing to isolate the slaveholder while condemning slavery, the antislavery moderates worked with the slaveholder to sway his conscience. The abolitionist flatly disavowed church fellowship with all slaveholders, but the moderate avoided outright excommunication of slaveholding members. The abolitionist gave the slaveholder no way out but to condemn *himself* as sinful, while the antislavery anti-immediatists permitted a greater range of options. Yet, as Bertram Wyatt-Brown states: "If antislavery convictions increased one's chances of heaven, then a good many slaveholders would have resigned themselves to an eternity in hell, rather than admit to wrongdoing."[162]

Charges of infidelity cannot be understood apart from the hermeneutical restrictions of mid-nineteenth century America. Biblical interpretation was predicated on Scottish Common-Sense philosophy, which striving to side-step the skepticism of the empiricists, developed a literalism based on common-sense reasoning. Theologically, this favored an extreme literal reading of the Scriptures over a non-literal one. Most evangelical traditions in mid-nineteenth

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[161] Scott, *Office to Profession*, 102.

[162]Wyatt-Brown, *Yankee Saints,* 7; for expanded commentary see John R. McKivigan, *The War Against Proslavery Religion: Abolitionism and the Northern Churches, 1830-1865* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), 18-35; for a non-theological interpretation of northern resistance toward abolitionists see Leonard L. Richard, *"Gentlemen of Property and Standing" Anti-Abolition Mobs in Jacksonian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). For comparisons of the Brazilian and Spanish Church on slavery see: Herbert S. Klein, "Anglicanism, Catholicism, and the Negro Slave," and Stanley E. Elkins, "Slavery and Ideology" in Ann J. Lane, ed. *The Debate Over Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 137-190; and Stanley E. Elkins Slavery and Ideology 325-348. See the opening of Chapter 2.

century America worked within this framework. It translated into a powerful proslavery argument, since the Bible no where explicitly condemned slavery, and even permitted it and regulated it, and to argue for the sinfulness of an institution permitted and regulated in Scripture, was to charge the Scriptures with error.[163] "He who rejects or dispels the plain meaning of the Bible," the proslavery author John Fletcher wrote, "rejects our God, and is an idolater; and God alone can give bound to his wicked conceptions." [164]

Before considering the antislavery writings of Wayland, it is best to present two representative and leading proslavery texts to better contextualize his antislavery position. Thomas R. Dew, Professor of History, Metaphysics, and Political Law, at William and Mary College, Virginia authored the widely read *Review of the Debate in the Virginia Legislature, 1831-1832*. So influential was this piece, that the Northern abolitionist Leonard Bacon, suggested that "all the unqualified and shameless defenses of slavery that have been uttered at the south since 1832" seemed to have derived "directly or indirectly from the great repository and arguments" in Dew's essay.[165] "Slavery," wrote Dew, "was established and sanctioned by divine authority, among even the elect of heaven, the favored children of Israel." Slavery of course had long historical precedent. Dew argued that slavery had arrested the horror of tribal warfare, for it saved those who by custom were slain in battle. The ancient world "never for a moment doubted this right" and slavery in fact, was looked upon by the ancient world as a "mild punishment" compared to what they had a right to inflict. But, the African slave-trade he condemned. "Upon the whole, then," he concluded of the African slave-trade, "we must come to the conclusion, that the slave trade has been disadvantageous to Africa; has caused a violation of

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[163] See Mark A. Noll "The Bible and Slavery" in Randall M. Miller et al., eds, *Religion and American Civil War*, ch.2; For commentary on Noll's analysis of hermeneutics, see Eugene and Elizabeth-Fox Genovese "*The Mind of the Master Class*, 527.
[164] John Fletcher, *Studies on Slavery in Eight Easy Lessons* (Natchez: Jackson Warner, 1852), 17.
[165] Bacon, *Slavery Discussed*, 96.

the principles of humanity, and given rise to much suffering and to considerable destruction of human life. Judging by its effects, we must condemn it, and consequently, agree that slavery in our hemisphere was based upon injustice in the first instance." From this flowed the logical assertion that since the American colonists had not originated the slave-trade, they were not responsible for it. Since they shared no fault in its origin, they shared no guilt in its perpetuation. Dew explained:

> Are we not then fully justified, from a historical review of the part which the colonists took, before and after independence, in relation to the slave trade, in asserting that slavery was forced upon them, and the slave trade continued contrary to their wishes? If ever a nation stood justified before heaven, in regard to an evil, which had become interwoven with her social system, is not that country ours? Are not our hands unpolluted with the original sin, and did we not wish them clean of the contagion the moment our independent existence was established? Where is the stain which rests upon our escutcheon? There is none![166]

It was futile, Dew continued, to condemn slavery in the abstract as sinful. "No set of legislators ever have, or ever can, legislate upon purely abstract principles, entirely independent of circumstances, without the ruin of the body politic, which should have the misfortune to be under the guidance of such quackery." Dew, for example, warned that "the most dangerous of wild doctrines" perpetuated by abolitionists was that property rights were a creation of the state. The truth, he argued, was that property rights were inalienable and preceded the state, and the government existed to protect these rights, not grant them. For the state to seize property (slaves) it must first establish public exigency and secondly provide full compensation. "The fact is," he warned, "it is always a most delicate and dangerous task for one set of people to legislate for another, without any community of interest. It is sure to destroy the great principle of

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[166] Thomas R. Dew "Review of the Debate in the Virginia Legislature, 1831-32" in *The Pro-Slavery Argument, as Maintained by the Most Distinguished Writers of the Southern States, Containing Essays, on the Subject, of Chancellor, Harper, Governor Hammond, Dr. Simms, and Professor Dew* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, & Co., 1853), see 287-490 for complete text; quotes on 295; 304; 347-348; 354.

responsibility, and in the end to lay the weaker interest at the mercy of the stronger. It subverts the very end for which all governments are established, and becomes intolerable, and consequently against the fundamental rights of man, whether prohibited by the constitution or not." The slave did not count. The slave, of course, remained always at the mercy of the stronger.[167]

Yet, Dew warned that nothing short of a *decree* from heaven could compel Southerners to colonize their slaves in Africa. Were the slaves emancipated without due preparation, the worst horrors imaginable would occur from their newly won liberties. He argued that slavery disappeared in Europe because its cities acted as "absorbents" for the excess slave population. The slave population melted into the urban areas and became free laborers, but the American South had none to migrate to. Yet, even if this were possible, "the emancipated black carries a mark which no time can erase; he forever wears the indelible symbol of his inferior condition; *the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots*." The Scriptures, he argued, shielded both institution and the slaveholder from charges of wrongdoing. "With regard to the assertion that slavery is against the spirit of Christianity," Dew conceded, "we are ready to admit the general assertion, but deny most positively, that there is anything in the Old or New Testament, which would go to show that slavery, when once introduced, ought at all events to be abrogated, or that the master commits an offense in holding slaves." As noted above, this proved a common distinction between slavery and slaveholding.[168]

He further warned that interference in the slave-master relationship, either by philanthropists or legislators alike, agitated both parties, and made the slave "more intractable and unhappy" and the master "more cruel and unrelenting." Yet, the benefits of slavery far

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[167] Ibid., 355; 389.
[168] Ibid., 444; 447; 451.

outweighed its weaknesses. Slavery, he argued, was consistent with liberty. Slavery and liberty, for example, flourished side-by-side in the great republics of Greece and Rome. Dew rejected the egalitarianism and social leveling of the Declaration of Independence, and argued that progress was equated, not with racial or social equality, but with talent, merit, and achievement. Slavery, never an economic institution alone, upheld the social and political structure of the Antebellum South. To tamper with slavery, then, was to tamper not with its economic foundation alone, but with its entire social edifice. This edifice, Dew argued, far surpassed the superficiality of the North. Dew explained:

> We believe slavery in the United States has accomplished this, in regard to the whites, as nearly as can be expected or even desired in this world. The menial and low offices being all performed by the blacks, there is at once taken away the greatest cause of distinction and separation of the ranks of society. The man to the north will not shake hands familiarly with his servant, and converse, and laugh and dine with him, no matter how honest and respectable he may be. But go to the south, and you will find that no white man feels such inferiority of rank as to be unworthy of association with those around him. Color alone is here the badge of distinction, the true mark of aristocracy, and all who are white are equal in spite of the variety of occupation.[169]

Another Virginian, Thornton Stringfellow, authored the bestselling proslavery work of the Antebellum era, *The Bible Argument: Or, Slavery in the Light of Divine Revelation* which was republished repeatedly in various journals.[170] Stringfellow, a Baptist recapitulated the familiar Biblical arguments for slavery, but his analysis was particular fluid and tight. He argued that the Old Testament patriarchs possessed slaves and were "held up as *models* for future generations." Their possession however, derived from a degree from God. To Noah, he argued, God blessed the line of Shem and Japheth, but he cursed forever the line of Ham in perpetual bondage. Not all proslavery apologists supported this argument, but Stringfellow alleged that the

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[169] Ibid., 458; 461-461.
[170] See Drew Gilpin Faust, "Evangelicalism and the Meaning of the Proslavery Argument: The Reverend Thornton Stringfellow of Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 85 (1977), 3-17.

non-African races descended from the former and the African races descended from the latter. Slavery, then, was God *decreed* slavery, *before* it existed. God, not man, created the institution. In brief, the Mosaic law permitted slavery, but restricted it to non-Hebrews (Leviticus 25:44-46), freed all Hebrews who sold themselves into slavery after the sixth year or to the fiftieth year of Jubilee (Exodus 21:2), and restricted slavery to non-Hebrews (Leviticus 25:44-46). Non-Hebrew bondage was perpetual and indicative of God's *favor* toward the Hebrews and if they were wrong, the prophets had ample time to condemn them. "For fifteen hundred years," he explained, "during which these laws were in force, God raised up a succession of prophets to reprove that people for the various sins into which they fell; yet there is not a reproof uttered against the institution of *involuntary slavery*, for any species of abuse that ever grew out of it." [171]

Jesus, according to Stringfellow, "revealed in the law of Moses, and decided, that on them to hang all the law and the prophets." The implication was clear. If Mosaic law sanctioned slavery, this implied that Jesus sanctioned slavery. "And really," Stringfellow warned of denying these sanctions, "in view of what is passing in our country, and elsewhere, among men who profess to reference the Bible, it would seem that these must be dreams of a distempered brain, and not the solemn truths of that sacred book." This charge of infidelity proved a repetitive feature of proslavery authors, for to deny the literalism of the Scriptures, was to charge them with error.[172]

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[171] Thornton Stringfellow "The Bible Argument: or, Slavery in the Light of Divine Revelation" in E.N. Elliott, ed., *Cotton is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments: Comprising the Writings of Hammond, Harper, Christy, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright* (Augusta, Ga.: Prichard, Abbott & Looms, 1860), 461-492; quotes on 463; 475. Note: In the judgment of Eugene and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese the curse of Ham theme proved the "scripturally weakest suit" of proslavery arguments. See Genovese, *Mind of the Master Class*, 521; for an extended treatment on "the curse of Ham theme" see Stephen Haynes, *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); for a comparative analysis see David M. Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
[172] Stringfellow, *The Bible Argument*, 475.

The New Testament afforded no such modifications of Mosaic law on slavery. Abolitionists, he noted, falsely asserted that Jesus instituted new moral principles which prohibited slavery, but "without direct prohibitory command." Not so he argued. The commands *to love their neighbor as thyself* and *to do unto others what you would have them do unto you*, are reaffirmed in the New Testament, but first stated in the Old. If God first sanctioned these principles to patriarchal slaveholders, and if they were not perceived to be in violation of them, then these prescriptions in no way interfered with the master-slave relationship. Stringfellow provided a tight summary of his own arguments. First, no prohibitory command was instituted in the New Testament against slavery. Second, Jesus introduced no new moral principle to subvert slavery. The principle governing the master-slave relationship, remained the Mosaic law, "instituted by Jehovah himself." Third, without an explicit prohibition, slavery continued to exist in the New Testament church and its permission extended to the modern church without restrictions. What New Testament regulations existed, were instituted only to prescribe the mutual duties of each party, not to undermine the institution itself. Stringfellow noted these facts were undeniable.[173]

Stringfellow noted that if Jesus had wanted to condemn slavery, no better context existed than to condemn it within the Roman Empire in which the slave population numbered one-half of its residents. Yet, he charged the master and slave with mutual obligations toward each other and never uttered a word toward its abolition. His material point in that the modern abolitionist then, cannot argue from silence, but must argue from the text. The text, however, did not validate their conclusions. Furthermore, slavery proved to be an act of mercy. "The institution," he argued, "when engrafted on the Jewish constitution, was designed primarily, not to enlarge their number, but to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the neighboring nations." It brought into

[173]Ibid., 479; 480.

their charge "millions of Ham's descendants among ourselves" who were it not for slavery "would have sunk down to eternal ruin." He warned that an "officious meddling with the institution, from feeling and sentiments unknown to the Bible, may lead to the extermination of the slave race among us, who, taken as a whole, are utterly unprepared for a higher civil state; but benefit them, it cannot. Their condition, *as a class*, is now better than that of any other equal number of laborers on earth, and is daily improving." He ended his argument by lamenting that slaveholders had to defend themselves against those "who teach that the gain of freedom to the slave, is the only proof of godliness in the master." To the slaveholder, infidelity was charged to those who denied its Biblical sanction, not to those who took its sanctioning literally.[174]

Into this volatile mix of proslavery and antislavery sentiment, Francis Wayland publicized his own viewpoints in his best-selling *Elements of Moral Science* (1835). Wayland's work was an immediate success, dethroning the English divine William Paley's *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785) which had been the leading work for nearly fifty years in most American universities. As the president of Brown, it was Wayland's lot to teach the senior course in moral philosophy, and dissatisfied with the utilitarian ethics of Paley which linked morality to consequences, Wayland preferred a conscience-based ethic where acts were morally right or wrong in or of themselves, and so he replaced Paley's text by writing his own. The popularity of this work ensured its wider readership and commentary by both proslavery and antislavery camps. His slavery arguments will be analyzed both in contrast to and against his critics. As Wayland's work is best understood in the wider context of the slavery debate, it will first be contrasted the work of William Paley.[175]

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[174] Ibid., quotes on 491.
[175] Harvard University Press reprinted Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science* in 1963. See the introductory essay by Joseph L. Blau on the significance of Wayland's text in relation to William Paley, xli-xliii; in Francis Wayland, *Elements of Moral Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963).

Paley defined slavery as "an obligation to labour for the benefit of the master, without the contract or consent of the owner."[176] This obligation, consistent with the "laws of nature," stems from either crimes, captivity, or debt. The slave trade off the coast of Africa fit none of these criteria. European traders faulted when they did not inquire of either their origin or the legal title of the selling merchants. African nations were incited to war to fulfill contracts, families were separated, torn from home and hearth, viciously transported across the Atlantic in appallingly conditions, and subjected for life "in subjection to a dominion and system of laws, the most merciless and tyrannical that ever were tolerated upon the face of the earth." Paley rejected arguments from *necessity*, but noted a great revolution sweeping the Western world on slavery.[177]

Biblical arguments no less than secular ones formed the core of proslavery and antislavery polemics. Paley, no less than his American counterparts of later generations, utilized biblical texts in arguing over slavery. In a familiar antislavery refrain, he argued that silence proved nothing.

> Slavery was a part of the civil constitution of most countries, when Christianity appeared; yet no passage is to be found in the christian scriptures, by which is it condemned or prohibited. This is true; for Christianity, soliciting admission into all nations of the world, abstained, as behoved it, from intermeddling with the civil institutions of any. But does it follow, from the silence of scripture concerning them, that all the civil institutions which then prevailed, were right? or that the bad should not be exchanged for better?[178]

Paley warned that had slavery been explicitly forbidden, it would have led slaves to revolt and pitted master against slaves. Antebellum commentators frequently warned against inciting the slaves for precisely this reason. Yet, they understood the rebellion in more racial terms however. Nevertheless, Paley explained:

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[176] Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (Boston: John West and Co., 1785; reprint 1810), 162.
[177] Ibid,, 162-163.
[178] Ibid., 163.

> Beside this, the discharging of slaves from all obligation to obey their masters, which is the consequence of pronouncing slavery to be unlawful, would have had no better effect, than to let loose one half of mankind upon the other. Slaves would have been tempted to embrace a religion, which asserted their right to freedom. Masters would hardly have been persuaded to consent to claims founded upon such authority. The most calamitous of all contests, a *bellum servile*, might probably have ensued, to the reproach, if not the extinction of the Christian name.[179]

After noting the biblical case and warning of the dangers of immediate emancipation, Paley proposed moral suasion in lieu of immediate action. He suggested gradual emancipation protected by both legal sanction and civil government. "By the mild diffusion of its light and influence," Paley wrote, "the minds of men are insensibly prepared to perceive and correct the enormities, which folly, or wickedness, or accident, have introduced into their public establishments." This statement, that moral influence was the chief weapon in this struggle, rang true for many antislavery polemists. "And we trust that," Paley concluded, "as the knowledge and authority of the same religion advance in the world, they will banish what remains of this odious institution."[180] Revolutionary enthusiasm and legal and civil sanctions are essential for emancipation, but moral suasion and religious sentiment are the twin factors in that change minds.

Wayland's most decided remarks on slavery are elucidated in his *Elements of Moral Science*. His argument is tight and comprehensive. First and foremost, he argued that domestic slavery violated the personal liberty of man. Grounded in the principle that the master has the right to restrict the "actions, physical and intellectual" of the slave, the master denied these in the slave to benefit himself and in pursuing his own happiness at the expense of the slave. Embedded here is the principle that the master denied the slave the very thing the master used to enrich himself. "It supposes, at best, that the relation between master and slave, is not that which

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[179] Ibid., 163-164.
[180] Ibid., 164.

exists between man and man, but is a modification, at least, of that which exists between man and the brutes." Slavery then, was sinful, because it denied the essential humanity of the slave.

Wayland divided violations of personal liberty into individual and societal. Domestic slavery was the chief violation of individual liberty. His opening statement and definition of slavery helped establish his key principles:

> Domestic slavery proceeds upon the principle that the master has a right to control the actions, physical and intellectual, of the slave, for his own, that is, the master's individual benefit; and, of course, that the happiness of the master, when it comes into competition with the happiness of the slave, extinguishes in the latter the right to pursue it. It supposes, at best, that the relation between master and slave, is not that which exists between man and man, but is a modification, at least, of that which exists between man and the brutes.

He continued:

> Now, this manifestly supposes that the two classes of beings are created with dissimilar rights; that the master possesses rights which have never been conceded by the slave; and that the slave has no rights at all over the means of happiness which God has given him, whenever these means of happiness can be rendered available to the service of the master. It supposes that the Creator intended one human being to govern the physical, intellectual and moral actions of as many other human beings as by purchase he can bring within his physical power; and that one human being may thus acquire a right to sacrifice the happiness of any number of other human beings, for the purchase of promoting his own.[181]

Slavery, then, violated the physical, intellectual, and moral personal liberty of man. Wayland argued that these categories were interrelated. Physical restrictions were predicated on the master's right to sacrifice the slave's happiness for his own, and his determination to direct the labor and "remuneration" of this labor according to the master's will alone. Intellectual restrictions kept the slave in "mental imbecility" and purposely retarded his intellectual growth. Intellectual ignorance created moral ignorance of God-given duties, and "It thus subjects the duty of man to God, entirely to will of man; and this for the sake of pecuniary profit. It renders the

[181] Wayland, *Elements of Moral Science*, 206.

eternal happiness of the one party subservient to the temporal happiness of the other." These restrictions in turn led to ill-effects on morals and national wealth.

The master, by satiating his passion without restraint, developed "pride, anger, cruelty, selfishness and licentiousness." The slave, by being the object of another's unrestrained passions, lost his sense of "moral distinctions" and fostered in himself "lying, deceit, hypocrisy, dishonesty" and became an easy target of exploitation. National wealth was equally affected in multiple ways. Slaves lost their motivation to labor for self improvement, and labored solely out of "fear of punishment." Frugality was lost on both, for neither learned the true value of labor, and capital gains accumulate slowly, if at all, because "one party wastes from ignorance of the laws of acquisition, and the other because he can have no motive to economy." National prosperity in turn, could not be built upon slavery, because it exhausted the soil and required excessive mobility. The southern states, he argued, while richer in resources, lagged behind the northern states in capital accumulation.[182]

Wayland next turned to the "doctrine of revelation" on slavery. He wrote: "The moral precepts of the Bible are diametrically opposed to slavery. They are, Thou shalt love thy *neighbor* as *thyself*, and *all things whatsoever* ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." These scriptural passages had universal application: "The application of these precepts is universal. Our neighbor is *every one whom we may benefit*. The obligation respects *all things whatsoever*. The precept, then, manifestly, extended to *men*, as *men*, or *men* in *every condition*; and if to all things whatsoever, certainly to a thing so important as the right to personal liberty." Embedded in these precepts was the reciprocation of mutual respect of others' liberties and rights. "Now were this precept obeyed," Wayland argued, "it is manifest that slavery could not in fact exist for a single instant. The principle of the precept is absolutely

[182] Ibid., 207; 208.

subversive of the principle of slavery. That of the one is the entire equality of right; that of the other, the entire absorption of the rights of one in the rights of the other."[183]

Wayland next raised three key questions that elaborated on his central arguments. First, he asked: "Do the precepts and the spirit of the Gospel allow me to derive my support from a system, which extorts labor from my fellow-men, without allowing them any voice in the equivalent which they shall receive; and which can only be sustained by keeping them in a state of mental degradation, and by shutting them out, in a great degree, from the means of salvation? Secondly, "Would the master be willing that another person should subject him to slavery, for the same reasons, and on the same grounds, that he holds his slave in bondage? Lastly, he asked: "Would the gospel allow us, if it were in our power, to reduce our fellow-citizens of our own color to slavery? But the gospel makes no distinction between men on the ground of color or of race. God has made of *one blood all the nations that shall dwell on the earth*."[184]

Wayland conceded that the gospel did not *forbid* slavery, and that by prescribing the mutual duties of masters and slaves "it tacitly *allows* it." Furthermore, while the "moral *principles*" subvert it, "the gospel *neither commands* masters to manumit their slaves, *nor authorizes* slaves to free themselves from their masters" and further "*prescribes* the duties suited to both parties in their present condition." However, he added, "For if the gospel be diametrically opposed to the *principle* of slavery, it must be opposed to the *practice* of slavery; and, therefore, were the principles of the gospel fully adopted, slavery could not exist." [185] God's decree, he argued, "was binding upon the conscience." God might reveal this *directly* through specific commands, or *indirectly* through general principles. Slavery fit into the latter category, for each represents His will and is equally binding. Slavery violated these God-given

[183] Ibid., 209.
[184] Ibid., 209-210.
[185]Ibid, 207-210.

obligations by imposing undue obstacles to the reception of the gospel by slaves, and violated the marriage contract between husband and wife, or children and parents, by severing these bonds through forced sale or interfering in the relationship. Wayland reiterated that individuals were to refrain from actions that were both indirectly forbidden and explicitly forbidden. He speculated as to why slavery was forbidden by principle, but not by command, suggesting that slavery being a social evil, was best eradicated by a general infusion of a moral change in society rather than by direct command. More specifically, he argued that given the context of the first century church, it could hardly have been otherwise. "The gospel was designed, not for one race, or for one time, but for all races, and for all times. It looked not at the abolition of this form of evil for that age alone, but for its universal abolition."[186]

Wayland's definitive statement on why the New Testament authors did not directly condemn slavery is found in the following quote. Because his argument is so central and so commonplace among antislavery theologians, and equally criticized by proslavery apologists, it will be quoted at length. He wrote:

> The gospel was designed, not for one race, or for one time, but for all races, and for all times. It looked not at the abolition of this form of evil for that age alone, but for its universal abolition. Hence, the important object of its Author was, to gain it a lodgment in every part of the known world; so that, by its universal diffusion among all classes of society, it might quietly and peacefully modify and subdue the evil passions of men; and thus, without violence, work a revolution in the whole mass of mankind. In this manner alone could its object, a universal moral revolution, have been accomplished. For, if it had forbidden the *evil*, instead of subverting the *principle*, if it had proclaimed the unlawfulness of slavery, and taught slaves to *resist* the oppression of their masters; it would instantly have arrayed the two parties in deadly hostility, throughout the civilized world, its announcement would have been the signal of servile war; and the very name of the Christian religion would have been forgotten amidst the agitations of universal bloodshed. Though the gospel does not forbid slavery, it does not follow that it does not prohibit it, much less that it authorizes it.[187]

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[186] Ibid., 210; 212.
[187] Ibid., 212.

Wayland reiterated that morality is grounded in our mutual obligations to both God and man. He explained: "The first is our duty to man, as man; that is, on the ground of the relation which men sustain to each other; the second is our duty to man, as a creature of God; that is, of the ground of the relation which we all sustain to God." Scriptural commands toward slaves to obey their masters, are grounded not in the rightness of slavery, but rather in their duties to God to obey those in honor over them. Obeying earthly rulers is predicated on obedience to God. Yet, obeying a master no more conceded the rightness of slavery, than a citizen obeying his government conceded that the form of government he lived under is legitimate. He explained: "The manner is which the duty of servants or slaves is inculcated, therefore, affords no ground for the assertion, that the gospel authorizes one man to hold another in bondage, any more than the command to honor the king, when that king was Nero, authorized the tyranny of the emperor; or than the command to turn the other cheek, when one is smitten, justifies the infliction of violence by an injurious man."[188]

"In a word," he concluded, "if the gospel rule of conduct be directly at variance with the existence of slavery; if the relations which it established, and the obligations which it enforced, were inconsistent with its existence; if the manner in which it treats it, is the only manner in which it could attempt its utter and universal extermination; and if it inculcates the duty of slaves on principles which have no connection with the question of the right of masters over them; I think it must be conceded that the precepts of the gospel in no manner countenance, but are entirely opposed to, the institution of domestic slavery." Just as Scripture prescribed duties of slaves to masters, it also prescribed duties of masters towards slaves. Wayland then raised an important question that seemed at variance with his overall stance on slavery. "If the system be wrong," he asked, "as we have endeavored to show, if it be at variance with our duty both to God

[188] Ibid., 213- 214.

and to man, it must be abandoned. If it be asked, When? I ask again, When shall a man begin to cease doing wrong? Is not the answer always, *Immediately*? If a man is injuring *us*, do we ever doubt as to the time when *he* ought to cease? There is then no doubt in respect to the time when we ought to cease inflicting injury upon others."[189]

Wayland however quibbled on immediate abolitionism. He argued that while it had not been proven that slaves were unprepared for immediate freedom, that it may or may not be so, he evaded the issue by suggesting the question was outside the boundaries of moral philosophy. That being so, Scripture established the master-slave relationship within slavery. Wayland challenged the slaveholder to remove all obstacles to emancipation. If the slave be ill-prepared for emancipation, it was the master's fault, not the slave's. The master bore the weight of responsibility. Wayland conceded that immediate emancipation might not be feasible, yet the master-slave relationship was changed, if not legally, at least psychologically. Wayland explained: "I answer, supposing such to be the fact, it may be the duty of the master to hold the slave; not however, *on the ground of right over him*, but of *obligation to him*, and of obligation *to him*, *for the purpose of accomplishing a particular and specified good*." "And of course," he warned, "he who holds him for any other purpose, holds him wrongfully, and is guilty of the sin of slavery" His reasoning here, while inconsistent with immediatism, showed consistency with his dichotomy between action and intent in that intentions, not actions, determine right and wrong. Thus while the act of slaveholding (actions) continued, the reasoning (intentions) has been altered. "He thus admits the slave to equality of right. He does unto another as he would that another should to unto him; and, thus acting, though he may *in form* hold a fellow-creature

[189] Ibid., 214.

in bondage, he is *in fact* innocent of the crime of violation of liberty."[190] In fact, in a letter written in 1845, he argued that guilt may vary "from zero to the unpardonable sin."[191]

Slaves of course bore their own moral responsibility in slavery, not "on the ground of *duty to man*, but on the ground of duty to God." He added that this obligation applied to everything except "matters of conscience." The slave was not bound to obey wrongful commands, nor should he violently resist his master. Wayland suggested accepting the consequences of passive disobedience and leaving vengeance to God. "Acting upon the principles," he explained, "the slave may attain to the highest grade of virtue, and may exhibit a sublimity and purity of moral character, which, in the condition of the master, is absolutely unattainable."

Wayland concluded his arguments with his well established principles of non-violence, moral improvement, and his obligatory principle of reciprocity.

> Thus we see that the Christian religion not only forbids slavery, but that it also provides the only method in which, after it has once been established, it may be abolished, and that with entire safety and benefit to both parties. By instilling the right moral dispositions into the bosom of the master and of the slave, it teaches the one the duty of reciprocity, and the other the duty of submission; and thus, without tumult, without disorder, without revenge, but, by the real moral improvement of both parties, restores both to the relation towards each other intended by their Creator.

Wayland warned that the Judge "hears the cry of the oppressed" and will "terribly vindicate right." He concluded that given these principles, the slaveholder must be convinced of the "imperative obligation" to remove slavery "without the delay of a moment," and equally

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[190]Ibid., 214-215.

[191] Letter to Daniel S. Wayland, Providence, Oct 2, 1855, *Wayland Papers*, Brown University Archives, John Hay, MS-IC-4, II 49. Archival material from Brown, will hereafter be cited as Hay.

encouraged the slave to endure his "sufferings with patience" and to commit their souls to the "*faithful Creator*."[192]

Due to the significance of Wayland himself, and the high-profile status of his text, Wayland's antislavery arguments were widely circulated and critiqued by leading scholars, intellectuals and theologians. Reviewers of his work were both charitable and non-charitable. A fairly cordial yet measured review came from Patrick Mell, a Georgia Baptist, and professor of ancient languages at Mercer University and the University of Georgia. Mell argued that Wayland attempted to prove too much by the Scriptural commands to love they neighbor as thyself and to treat others in the same manner as one would wish to be treated. These commands, Mell argued, were best understood within the relations in which individuals sustained between others. It was impossible to invert a relationship or to treat all men equally. If so, words like *equity*, *loyalty*, *reverence*, and *submission* held no meaning. Individuals were to express the *same kind*, but not the *same degree* of love for others. Nor could Wayland prove from the Scriptures that equality of right meant equality of condition or freedom for the slave. Just as the parent and child did not enjoy the same rights, neither did the master and slave. If it did, then Scriptural commands for the slave to submit to their masters held no meaning and all societal distinctions would break down. Happiness was embedded within the "different degrees and dependencies among men" and in the contentment that each individual found within his station in life.[193]

Mell refuted Wayland's contention that slavery excited the passions of the slaveholder toward violence. If this were true, then it followed that the parent, as the legal guardian of the child, was equally tempted by such power. Yet, the slave in fact did enjoy built-in protections.

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[192]Wayland, *Elements*, 216.
[193]Patrick Mell, *Slavery: A Treatise Showing that Slavery is Neither a Moral, Political, Nor Social Evil* (Penfield, GA.: Printed by Benj. Brantly, 1844), 18-21; quote on 21.

First, the master was compelled by self-interest not to injure his slave. Second, public opinion in the South worked against flagrant abuses. Third, southern state laws punished slaveholders for wanton and unusual cruelty. Yet, neither, as it was commonly argued, did the institution cultivate pride, selfishness, or licentiousness. Wealth and property ownership did not create pride, and if it did, then the northern merchant stood equally guilty as the southern slaveholder. Slavery, rather than encouraging selfishness, cultivated quite the opposite in that it imbued the slaveholder with a sense of responsibility toward the slave. Northern people held no monopoly on virtue, and the southern people were equally restrained by parental guidance, public opinion, and the fear of God against licentiousness and illicit sexual behavior toward slaves. Mell concluded that slavery could not cultivate immorality, "since that which the Bible sanctions cannot have an immoral tendency."[194]

A more critical review came from the acid pen of Louisianan John Fletcher, who published a lengthy critique of his slavery arguments in his *Studies on Slavery* (1852). Fletcher argued quite the opposite to Wayland. Rather than restricting the intellectual and moral sensibilities of the slave, bondage conferred his only means of achieving it in light of the "uncivilized" nature of Africa. He further inquired, whether slaveholding, rather than corrupting the slaveholder, might produce in him "a greater degree of humility, placidity or mildness, sympathy or charity for others, and orderly conduct in himself?" Inquiring further, he asked, "Does the reverend moral philosopher make so low an estimate of the value of civilization-of the influence of Christianity-as not to admit the capability of enjoying a blessing without abusing it?" Railing against Northern abolitionists, he laid this charge against Wayland and others: "The most hateful idolatry has never presented to the world a stronger proof of a distorted imagination given vent to the rankest falsehood. It is to be deeply regretted that such intellects are ever

[194]Ibid., 24-28; quote on 28.

permitted to have any influence upon the minds of the young." Fletcher refuted Wayland's argument that slavery "fostered" immorality in the slave. He retorted that behavior is modeled, and if the slave is corrupted, it is because the master has failed in his duties. The fault, however, lay not with the institution, but with the slaveholder.[195]

Fletcher reversed the argument of impoverishment, and blamed inflammatory abolitionist literature laden with "abusive falsehoods" and "designed to incite rebellion among the slaves" for forcing Southern legislators to curtail their education. He suggested that if anyone had improved the lot of the African, it was the slaveholder. "Has he thrown one ray of light," he asked Wayland rhetorically, "into the mental darkness of benighted Africa? Has he removed one pain from the moral disease of her benighted children?" Only slavery, Fletcher answered, changed and improved "the morals of the African" to the "habits of the Christian life." Fletcher charged Wayland's principle over precept argument as a "morass of difficulty" and bluntly charged this argument with "gross error" and noted "its very assertion goes to the extinction, the denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ and his religion." This charge of infidelity of course, was not new, but it was particularly poignant as Wayland so cautiously leveled his charges against slavery, but not slaveholders per se. It mattered little. Fletcher further contended that "The mind is forced to the conclusion that, if the abolitionists are right, Jesus Christ and his apostles are wrong!" Fletcher argued that Wayland's argument reduced to the false proposition that since the New Testament condemned its abuses, it therefore condemned the institution itself. If this were true, he added, this would endlessly apply to every other institution.[196]

The Methodist Rev. William A. Smith, president of Randolph-Macon College, chastised Wayland for assuming that equality of rights meant equality of condition. Smith argued that

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[195] Fletcher, *Studies on Slavery*, 11, 25, 17, 26-27.
[196] Ibid., 34-42; quotes on 42-43 and 46. See Fletcher's complete analysis see 7-57.

rights are not fixed, but conditional. Africans, less civilized than whites, much like barbarians, who were less intellectually and morally advanced than most, were not fit for equal political freedoms since they possessed none of the characteristics fit for a free people. Man has a God-given right to utilize his every advantage to his own happiness, and through no fault of their own, some are made to rule and others made to serve. Equality of right did not imply equality of condition or material, intellectual, or moral advantage. Smith warned that the influence of his textbook in Southern colleges gave the wrong impression that God placed men in circumstances in which they were unable not to do wrong. In short, if slavery is wrong, but yet men inherited slaves through no fault of their own, and were legally restricted from emancipating them, how could they be held responsible for wrongdoing? "If this state of things continue," he concluded, "we must not be surprised if abolition fanaticism should have a still more rapid growth in our land."[197]

New York abolitionist William Goodell was no less charitable. Writing to William Lloyd Garrison in February 1836, Goodell inquired whether Garrison had read Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*, and in so doing, suggested his own thoughts as well.

> Have you read Wayland's 'Elements [of Moral Science]?' There are a few pages in it that squint hard at a support of the authority of Government to judge of and punish incendiary publications. I am astonished that no one has noticed it. But all in good time. I am waiting to see his course in some matters now pending. We shall soon see how far he will go in playing the Lane Seminary game over again![198]

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[197] William A. Smith, *Lectures on the Philosophy and Practice of Slavery, as Exhibited in the Institution of Domestic Slavery in the United States: with the Duties of Masters to Slaves*. (Nashville, Tenn.: Stevenson and Evans, 1856), 60-76; quote on 76.

[198] William Goodell to William Lloyd Garrison, February 23, 1836 in Wendell P. and Francis J. Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison*, 2: 37; Note: The Lane Seminary debates were held over a series of 18 days in February 1834 in which the abolitionist Theodore Dwight Weld persuaded much of the student body of Lane Seminary to convert to abolitionism. While Lyman Beecher, the president of the seminary was absent, the Executive Committee of the trustees, who felt this position too radical, issued a report recommending the abolishment of the campus antislavery society. Beecher attempted to moderate the dispute, but the student body considered his mediating position as conceding too much to the trustees and approximately 40 members of the student body, dubbed the "Lane Rebels" withdrew from Lane and left for Oberlin College.

William Lloyd Garrison was neither more gracious or more sympathetic to Wayland. In a letter penned to William Goodell in February 1836, Garrison expressed his thoughts on Wayland's critique of slavery.

> On the subject of slavery, he is corrupt and oppressive. "If," he says, "the slave be able to take care of himself, {the master is to be the judge and jury, you will observe}, the master will either immediately manumit him,-or,-by allowing him such wages as are just, enable him, *in process of time*, to liberate himself"!! that is, will make him pay roundly for an inalienable right![199]

Garrison was not alone in his frustration. Henry C. Wright, who personally conversed with Wayland on the subject of slavery, recounted his conversation in a letter to Edmund Quincy. His recollection revealed both Wayland's conflicted position on slavery and equally his determination not to sever Christian fellowship with slaveholders.

> I once met *Rev*. Francis Wayland, D.D., President of Brown University, in the presence of several friends, to converse on the subject of slavery. The conversation turned on the question-*Can a slaveholder be a Christian?* To bring it to a point, addressing myself to the Doctor, I asked him-'Can a man be a Christian and claim a right to sunder husbands and wives, parents and children-to compel men to work without wages-to forbid them to read the Bible, and buy and sell them-and who habitually does these things?' 'Yes,' answered the Rev. Dr. and President, 'provided he has the spirit of Christ.' 'Is it possible for [a man] to be governed by the spirit of Christ and claim a right to commit these atrocious deeds, and habitually commit them?' After some turning, he answered, 'Yes, I believe he can.' 'Is there, then, one crime in all the catalogue of crimes, which, of itself, would be evidence to you that a man had not the spirit of Christ?' I asked. 'Yes, thousands,' said the Dr. 'What?' I asked. 'Stealing,' said he. 'Stealing what, a *sheep* or a MAN?' I asked. The Doctor took his hat and left the room, and appeared no more.[200]

E.P. Barrows, pastor of the First Free Presbyterian Church, New York, proved more encouraging. He held Wayland up as proof against inflammatory statements that all abolitionists were raving fanatics and he asked whether anything, "Can be more calm, dispassionate, and free

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[199] William Lloyd Garrison to William Goodell, at Providence Brooklyn, February 26, 1836 in Ibid., 2: 94.
[200] Henry C. Wright to Edmund Quincy, August 30, 1841 in William P. and Francis J. Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison*, III:12-13.

from the charge of incendiarism and fanaticism, than President Wayland's admirable chapter on Personal Liberty?"[201] William E. Channing, Unitarian pastor of Boston's Brattle Street Church and author of the widely read antislavery work, *Slavery* (1835), noted that he largely owed his chapter on "Scripture" to Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*.[202]

Wayland's antislavery text was not the only work of its kind, but it proved one of the more enduring and high-profile. Indeed, the 1830s and 1840s produced a plethora of works addressing the morality of slavery by ministers and lay people alike. Wayland's position is best understood in comparison with other notable antislavery works by leading theologians and pastors. Embedded in all these writings were two essential issues that were inescapable; First, what relationship *did* the church stand in regard to slavery? Second, what role *should* the church play in slavery?

Even a cursory glance at some of their responses helps contextualize Wayland's writings and reinforces the diversity of antislavery thought. For antislavery pastors particularly, their arguments were designed not only to refute proslavery apologists, but to encourage, if not indict, churches to engage in the controversy. Noted evangelist Charles Finney for example, indicted the American church in his *Lectures on Revival* of *Religion* (1835) for their laxity in engaging the slavery issue. Finney charged the church and ministers with the moral responsibility to speak out publicly against slavery. No longer were ignorance and complacency tolerable excuses. Finney argued that "ministers and churches, to a great extent throughout the land, have held their peace, and borne no testimony against this abomination, existing in the church and in the nation." Finney suggested however, that silence speaks volumes; "Consequently, the silence of Christians upon the subject is virtually saying *that they do not* consider slavery a sin. The truth is, it is a

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[201] E.P. Barrows, *A View of the American Slavery Question* (Westport, Conn.: Negro Universities Press, 1836; reprint 1969), 36.
[202] William E. Channing, *Slavery* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1835), 108-115; note on 115.

subject upon which they cannot be silent without guilt." Not only the nation, but the church bore the moral weight of this question. "Two millions," Finney continued, "of degraded heathen in our own land stretch their hands, all shackled and bleeding, and send forth to the church of God the agonizing cry for help. And shall the church, in her efforts to reclaim and save the world, deafen her ears to this voice of agony and despair? God forbid. The church cannot turn away from this question. It is a question for the church to decide, and God will push it to a decision." Finney concluded by linking the poor state of religion to the churches moral failure regarding slavery. He wrote: "It is doubtless true, that one of the reasons for the low state of religion at the present time, is that many churches have taken the wrong side on the subject of slavery, have suffered prejudice to prevail over principle, and have feared to call this abomination by its true name." [203]

James G. Birney, former Alabamian slave-owner turned abolitionist, and two-time presidential nominee of the Liberty Party, published his *The American Churches: The Bulwarks of American Slavery* (1842). "It is done," Birney explained, "with a single view to make the British Christian public acquainted with the real state of the case-in order that it may in the most intelligent and effective manner exert the influence it possesses with the American churches to persuade them to purify themselves from a sin that has greatly debased them, and that threatens in the end wholly to destroy them." This work, a compilation of denominational statements that indicted the American church in proslavery complicity, Birney nevertheless concluded that many religious and denominational bodies in America "maintain a commendable testimony against slavery and its abominations."[204] Even the Englishmen, Frederick Milnes Edge, after residing in the United States for five years in press related work, noted the nation was run by "Slaveholding

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[203] Charles Finney, *Lectures on Revival of Religion* (New York: Leavitt, Lord, & Co., 1835), 265-266.
[204] James Gillespie Birney, *The American Churches: The Bulwarks of American Slavery* (New York: Arno Press, 1842; reprint 1969), 3; 44.

oligarchs" and their "sacrilegious hands." The Southern clergy, complicit in this, "excused" slavery and exalted it "as the duty of every right-thinking being, as the God-ordained means for the conversion of the children of Ham."[205] Reinforcing the Scriptural battle over slavery, J.R. Balme, writing from Edinburgh, noted sourly that "the Christian's greatest trials come not from men of worldly minds" but rather "from those who profess like precious faith and practice with themselves."[206]

The New England poet and abolitionist, James Russell Lowell, reaffirmed the necessity for church action in two indicting essays published in the antislavery paper *The Pennsylvania Freeman* in February and March 1845 in which he chastised the American church for its moral laxity in condemning slavery. Were the church a mere human invention, he argued, its opinion would matter little, but the church, claiming to be of divine origin, should stay one-step ahead of pubic opinion and set a moral example for others. Its failure lay in its complacent unwillingness to move against public opinion and challenge the status quo. In a related article in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in January 1849 he argued against the absurdity of excluding politics from the church on so grave a moral issue.[207]

Leonard Bacon, pastor of The First Church in New Haven, championed direct pulpit involvement. Bacon argued that where "political questions" were at the same time "moral questions of right and wrong" pastors could not avoid them. "To keep such a question as that of slavery out of the pulpit, in such a country as this, must be impossible, as long as the pulpit if faithful to its trust in quickening the moral sensibilities, and in forming and guiding the moral

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[205] Frederick Milnes Edge, *Slavery Doomed: or, The Contest Between Free and Slave Labour in The United States* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1860; reprint 1969), xi; 166-167.
[206] R.H. Balme, *American States, Churches, and Slavery* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1862; reprint 1969), iv.
[207]These essays are reprinted as "The Church and the Clergy" February 27, 1845 (23-28) and "The Church and the Clergy Again" March 27, 1845 (29-34), Vol 1., and "Politics and the Pulpit" January 25, 1849 (17-24), II., in William Belmont Parker, ed., *The Anti-Slavery Papers of James Russell* Lowell, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1902).

judgments of those who sit under its influence." To sit in silence on such great a depravity was to "defile itself" and to "abandon a great moral question."[208]

George Cheever, pastor of the Church of the Puritans, affirmed these sentiments. "Nothing can possibly be more hypocritical," he ranted, "than the outcry about political preaching." He argued that "the moment any sin passes from the individual to the nation, and is sanctioned by law, and becomes what is called organic, then instantly the speech against it is branded as political preaching." Cheever had a point. He argued that *any* moral issue, once elevated to partisan politicking, became political and thus outside the boundaries of the pulpit. Had slavery, like polygamy, been an *individual* practice rather than a *national* one, it would be fair game, but once adopted into politics, it traded its theological status for a political one. However, he argued, that its legality did not strip it of its moral nature, but only elevated the stakes.[209]

Not all Northerners shared these antislavery sentiments, nor condoned the intrusion of pastoral sermonizing on slavery. In general, however, proslavery apologists did not endorse antislavery pastors from *discouraging* slavery, but supported proslavery pastors in *endorsing* slavery. New York clergyman, Samuel Seabury, in his *American Slavery Justified by the Law of Nature* (1861), written on the eve of Civil War, argued opposite to Lowell, and blamed the intrusion of morality and religion into politics for creating the pending crisis. He wrote:

> It is clearly repugnant to the genius of our government to mix up questions of morality, religion, and social life, with our national politics; and, as slavery, in some of its bearings, is a legitimate and often necessary object of municipal legislation, it is the more to be regretted that it should be complicated with questions of morality, religion, and social reputation. Nevertheless, this has been

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[208] Leonard Bacon, *Slavery Discussed in Occasional Essays, 1833-1846* (New York: Arno Press, 1846; reprint 1969), 191-192.
[209] George Cheever, *God Against Slavery: And the Freedom and Duty of the Pulpit to Rebuke it, As a Sin Against God* (New York: Arno Press, 1857; reprint 1969), 47; quote on 51-52.

> done; and the natural consequences have followed;-rancor, and hatred, and deeply rooted alienations such as no merely political discussions could engender.[210]

James Henry Thornwell, whom the historian George Bancroft referred to as "the learned of the learned," in a Circular Letter written "to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth" defended the slaveholder's worldview against their American and European critics. The Church, he warned, had traded "creeds" for "opinions" and had dabbled in "speculation" on slavery. This latter flaw explained the origins of antislavery thought. Abolitionists, he charged, traded Biblical teaching for their own dogma. Having predetermined that slavery was wrong, they then proved from the Scriptures that it was so. Thornwell, conceded that "essential equality" existed, but not "equality of condition." If anything, nature confirmed inequality, not equality. Southern repudiation of natural rights philosophy, Jeffersonian equality, and racial egalitarianism eased the slaveholding dichotomy between maintaining the Biblical doctrine that *men were created in the image of God* with their rejection that this implied equality of condition, servitude, race, or social station. The slave, for example, possessed a physical right to his labor, but possessed no legal right to the fruits of it.

Reverend Fred Ross, reinforced these sentiments and argued that Southerners had "no false ideas of created equality and unalienable right" and stated flatly that these ideas were "contrary to the Bible."[211] Thornwell argued that to suggest this, was to place abolitionists on the same plane as socialists and levelers. The result was that Northern Christians had made slaveholding the basis for excommunication of Christian slaveholders from Church fellowship. It was the former however that stood condemned for this extra-scriptural practice. His bitterness at this practice is clearly visible from his following remarks.

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[210] Samuel Seabury, *American Slavery: Distinguished From the Slavery of English Theorists and Justified by the Law of Nature* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1861; reprint 1969), iii-iv.
[211] Fred A. Ross, *Slavery Ordained of God* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1859; 1969), 102, 104.

> Slavery as a *political* question, is one in regard to which communities and States may honestly differ. But as a *moral* question, the Bible has settled it; and all we contend for is, that as *that* is a matter of liberty, we should not break fellowship for difference upon other grounds. If any man, however, is not content to stand by the Word of God, if any Church will not tolerate the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, that man and that Church cannot be vindicated from the charge of fomenting schism. They become justly exposed to censure. He who would debar a slaveholder from the table of the Lord, upon the simple and naked ground that he is a slaveholder, deserves himself to be excluded for usurping the prerogatives of Christ, and introducing terms of communion which cast reproach upon the conduct of Jesus and the Apostles. He violates the very charter of the Church-is a traitor to its fundamental law.[212]

This latter charge was typical, but unfair. Certainly the most fervent abolitionists advocated severing ties, but not all antislavery moderates did. Wayland repeatedly warned against severing ties based on slaveholding alone. E.P. Barrows argued poignantly that "The man who at the present day maintains his right to buy, sell, or hold his fellow-men as chattels personal, is, in my views unworthy of the fellowship of the saints." Yet, he quickly added that "the numerous and formidable embarrassments" that Southern laws "have wickedly thrown in the way of those masters who are willing to emancipate their slaves" made it unreasonable to sever all fellowship.[213]

The situation of course was more intricate than that. Wayland proved uncompromising when the situation allowed, as least in the judgment of James Burrill Angell, a former student and colleague of his, who recalled that: "One-fourth of my classmates were Southerners. When we came to the subject of slavery in our study of moral philosophy, we discussed it for three weeks." However, Southern parents were rattled and even threatened to pull their children from

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[212] James Henley Thornwell "The Relation of the Church to Slavery" in B.M. Palmer, *The Collected Writings of James Henley Thornwell* (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1871-73), 381-397; quote on 388. See also William H. Freehling, "James Henley Thornwell's Mysterious Antislavery Moment," in *The Journal of Southern History*, 57, No. 3 (Aug. 1991), 383-406.

[213] Barrows, *A View of the American Slavery Question*, 36-37; 112-113.

his classes.[214] Others students however, shared a different experience and many recalled his suppressing the discussion of slavery in his classroom because it proved too disruptive.[215] What then was the responsibility of Christians in regards to slavery? Since Wayland rejected the immediatism of the abolitionists, yet argued for the sinfulness of slavery, how best then, to emancipate the slaves? To answer this question we must look at his own views on civic responsibilities.

One of his earliest and most developed statements on civic responsibility was his *The Limitations of Human Responsibility*. Consistent with his general philosophy, moral principles provided the surest guarantee to influence others. Influence alone, however, was *necessary*, but not *sufficient* to ensure success. God held man responsible for his influence, but given the restrictions in enacting changes, man was not liable for the results. He explained: "If I have never had any thing to do with the system, if I have never sanctioned it, if I have communicated to my fellow men all the light which I possess on the subject, and if God have given me no power to administer a remedy for the evil, I am in no manner responsible for the mischief which it produces." Influence however is derived from different modes. An elector, possessed the power of office, and the intellectual, possessed the power to persuade, for instance. However, this influence was restricted by another's rights. "Or again, this power that I may possess over others, is restricted by the rights of others, and I may exercise it only in accordance with those rights. I think that every one must feel that his responsibility for any particular result, is limited by

[214]James Burrill Angell, *The Reminiscences of James Burrill Angell* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912), 28; Barrows, *A View of the American Slavery Question*, 36-37.
[215] See Deborah Bingham Van Broekhoven "Suffering with Slaveholders: The Limits of Francis Wayland's Antislavery Witness" in John R. McKivigan & Mitchell Snay, eds., *Religion and the Antebellum Debate over Slavery* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998), 196-220; comments on 196-197.

various restrictions of this kind, and that they all deserve to be considered, before he resolves that any particular act is his appropriate duty."[216]

Guilt is attached, not to results, but to the omission of effort. Results are contingent upon "unseen forces" and the will of others. Man for example, is commanded "to preach the gospel" but not to convert. Man is judged by means, not ends. "I think we may therefore conclude," Wayland argued, "that how great soever may be a good which we are desirous of accomplishing, we are not responsible for the accomplishment of it, if it be *out of our power;* and this is equally true whether we use the phrase *out of our power*, to designate the fact that it is *beyond the limit* of an ability which we possess; or requiring a *kind* of ability, which has not been committed to us."[217]

Wayland applied this reasoning specifically to slavery. "Whether or not a particular act is wrong, is one question. In what *manner* it be proper to remove or arrest the evil, is another and very different question." Wayland divided duties between *citizens* of the United States and *human beings*, under the law of God. He stated flatly that citizens possessed no such power to abolish slavery in the Southern states. "Whatever power we possess as citizens of the United States, is conferred upon us by the constitution. This power is *not conferred upon us* by that instrument, and therefore *it does not exist*." "But this instrument," he continued, "has not merely a *positive*, it has also a *negative* power. It not only *grants* certain powers, but it expressly declares that those not enumerated are *not granted*." In this respect, Wayland argued that individuals possessed power "*as citizens of the several States"*, but not "*as citizens of the Untied States*."[218]

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[216] Wayland, *Limitations*, See 1-26; quotes 13-14.
[217] Ibid., 24; 26.
[218] Ibid.,162; 163-164. For his entire analysis on slavery see 161-188. See also *Wayland and Wayland*, 390.

This explained why emancipation occurred on a state-by-state basis, but not nationally. State legislatures and state constitutions restricted slavery, but not the U.S. Constitution. This restriction, he argued, stemmed from the fact that no state manifested any control over any other, and each then, acted on an individual basis. Citizens within the state, conferred their consent to the will of the majority through its state representatives, but whatever was not conferred, was left to citizens to act upon further. Citizens then were restricted by congressional boundaries, but whatever is not restricted, is fair game. Guilt is attached *only* to these limitations. "Who ever supposes himself guilty," Wayland asked, "because Congress does not *pass a law* abolishing slavery in the United States?" If so, "Whether slavery be bad or good, we wash our hands of it, inasmuch as it a matter which the providence of God has never placed within our jurisdiction." His material point is that even though God *forbid* slavery by principle, the State *permitted* it by precept, and as individuals they could condemn it *morally*, but were restricted as citizens to condemn it *legally*. Individuals were held liable before God, not for institutions restrictions, but for their personal failure to preach against it morally.

Furthermore, citizens of the United States pledged to *let it alone*, since this power was conferred to the states, but not to the citizens of the United States. Free States then were restricted from interfering in the affairs of slave states in the same manner that slave states are restricted from interfering in the affairs of free states. This compact, he argued, was equally binding in both *letter* and *spirit*. It would be unfair for example, for free states to apply undue pressure toward masters to liberate their slaves, or to encourage the slave population to civil rebellion. Yet, where Congress had the power to act, for example in the District of Columbia, "we are, therefore, *responsible*, and of course, *under obligation*." Yet, Wayland reiterated that the *power* to act, did not grant the *right* to. "But it is always to be remembered," he stressed,

"that it is *one* thing to say that a man has a *right* to do a particular act, and a very *different thing* to say that it *is right* and just for him to do that particular act. The *right* to do the act may be absolute, but the fitness, and propriety and justice of *exercising* that right, may be *conditional*." Wayland next tied this thinking directly to abolitionism.[219]

> I ask then, in the first place, what is the object of the act of abolition? Is it ultimate within itself? Is it merely because, as citizens of the United States, we are opposed to slavery in any territory over which we exercise jurisdiction? Or, is it for the sake of something ulterior, that is, for the sake of creating such a state of things in the slave-holding States, that the citizens of those States will be obliged, whether they approve of it or not, to abolish slavery. In so far as this latter is the object, I think it unconstitutional; because, we have, by the spirit of the compact, bound ourselves to leave it to their own *free will*. That free will, we have no right, either by ourselves or by others, to control; and we have no right to use our power, either of one kind or another, for this purpose. I think, therefore, we have no right to exercise the power which we possess for the accomplishment of this object.

Wayland cautioned against exceeding appropriate boundaries. Citizens have within their states the right to restrict slavery within their jurisdiction, but have no right, even if they possessed the power, to restrict slavery within other states if they acted against the "free will" of the citizens within that state. This latter violated both the letter and spirit of the compact of non-interference between the States. He even asserted that even though Maryland and Virginia had ceded the District of Columbia to Congress, it had not done so that it would abolish slavery. Even though the *letter* conferred this power, the *spirit* had not conferred this right. To do so was to move beyond the *implied* boundaries of the compact and if it could not be done "*honorably*," it should not be done at all. Power then was continent upon consent and Congress should not interfere with the "*natural course of events*."[220]

Wayland realized the implications of this reasoning and he felt duty-bound to explain himself. "I will bear it with patience, rather than wipe it off by an act of injustice, treachery or

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[219]Wayland, *The Limitations*, 165-170; quotes on 167; 169; 170.
[220] Ibid., 171-175; quote on 174-175.

dishonor. And more than this, were I a southern, as I am a northern man, I never could consent, as a man of honor, to hold my fellow citizens committed to a system, which, whether truly or falsely, they feel to be a national disgrace." He suggested that if Southern rights were protected, that patriotic appeals to chivalry, duty and honor, would compel them to follow the "more noble" course of national moral sentiments. Though he respected their *rights*, they should in turn respect his *feelings.* He would nevertheless, not consent to force it upon them, yet this in no way lessened the national stain of slavery: "I declare that, as a citizen of the United States, I am grieved that the soil in which I have with them a common right of ownership, should have become an universal slave market; that this soil should be polluted with prisons, constructed for the express purpose of collecting together human beings for exportation, and that a regular line of slave ships should sail from the harbors of the District."[221]

Wayland fostered blame upon both Northern and Southern states. The North, he accused of exceeding the proper boundaries of constitutionalism, and the South, he accused of stifling free speech. Referencing the abolitionist mail campaigns, he argued that the right of petition was much abused for effect by the North, just as the South encroached on the constitutional right to petition. He urged "patience and forbearance" and warned that "passion is never decorous" particularly "in legislators." He argued that in lieu impending Texas annexation, that although the constitution protected slavery, it existed only as a local institution, and that "national measures" to foster localized slavery were dishonorable. "The same principle," he explained, "which precludes the North from *opposing* it, also, as it seems to me, precludes the South from *urging* it." He concluded by stating his objections to Texas annexation: "We want no *territory*, since we have, already, more than we need. We need not additional *strength*, and if we did, the

[221] Ibid., 176; 177-178.

annexation of Texas could not give it to us. There is no reason that I can conceive for it, and there are strong constitutional objections against it."[222]

Wayland next analyzed duties in respect to man's relation with man. Individuals were "under common obligation" to appeal to the "understanding and conscience" of men in wrongdoing. Wayland warned that even though they charged men with violating the rights of others, they had to protect their rights equally. He elaborated further, "He will surely labor with very little success, in the propagation of truth, who commences his efforts by uttering a falsehood. And he will labor with as little success in extending the dominion of right, whose first effort is an act of injustice." They were bound at all times not "to infringe upon the rights of the South." They had the right both to change Southern opinion and challenge the slaveholder to emancipate their slaves. Yet, they possessed no right to infringe upon his right through undue pressure, or inciting the slaves to rebellion. They were limited to "*argument"* and prohibited to use "*physical force*." He chastised abolitionists and their societies with deliberate pandering for votes through agitation and becoming the "tools of third rate politicians." He even indicted them for agitating "conversation" and "lectures" and "mail." Wayland suggested that the Quakers fostered a sounder model of for social activism. Less abrasive, they led "both by precept and by example" and never used "opprobrious epithets" but appealed to the "reason and conscience" of men. If slavery enjoyed legal protection and moral suasion failed, what course was left to secure emancipation? "If they still determine to go on," he pondered, "in what we believe to be wrong, we must leave them to God, who is perfectly capable of vindicating his own laws, and executing justice among the children of men. If they will not hear us, the indication is plain, that God does

[222] Ibid., 179-180.

not mean to use *our* instrumentality in the affair. We must retire and leave the case in his hands, and turn our attention to the doing of good, in some other way."[223]

Wayland reiterated that moral responsibility conferred the right to protest, but not the right to force. Commands were bound by mutual respect for obligations which were reciprocal. Both parties in a conflict, had to respect the mutual rights of the other. This of course, restricted options, yet freed individuals of the guilt of omission. Wayland personalized moral accountability whereby man was ultimately accountable only to God alone. He left no doubt, that he felt that moral battles were best won outside politics, though he *never* rejected institutional channels. His final statement best illustrated this thinking: "And lastly, if this be so, it will be seen that moral questions cannot be decided by majorities, nor can the law of God be ascertained by the votes of conventions. Every man must give account *of himself* before God. We cannot shift the responsibility of our conduct upon others. Public opinion can make nothing either right or wrong."[224]

Wayland's analysis contained a measure of conservatism and liberation. Wayland never wavered on the sinfulness of slavery, but he often stumbled trying to steer a middle-path between emancipation and conservation, between Caesar and Christ. His *principles* demanded emancipation, but his *precepts* demanded fidelity to the law. His most controversial position, was that even if the law *could* emancipate the slaves, he questioned whether or not they *should*. He conceded, for example, that Congress had the power to end the slave-trade in the District of Columbia, but warned that it violated the spirit in which the States conceded this right. William Jay, son of the illustrious John Jay, charged residents in the District for precisely this hypocrisy. District residents argued falsely that they were not properly represented and were therefore

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[223] Ibid., 181-188; quotes on 182; 186; 185.
[224] Ibid., 187-188; quote on 188. See Edward H. Madden, "Francis Wayland and the Limits of Moral Responsibility," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 106, No. 4 (Aug. 22, 1962), 348-359.

bound by laws they had not consented to. Congress, however, wielded this authority, not District residents, and even then, they were represented in the legislative assemblies of the states of Virginia and Maryland. Their individual will was moot since the will of the majority overruled them. Their approval was not necessary for its legality.[225]

Wayland appeared not to have grasped this point. Free states and slave states were subject to the same Federal laws, and if the will of the majority overruled the preferences of the minority, the latter yielded lawfully to the former. However, moral and principled pressures should not be down-played. They may have been *inadequate*, but they were not *ineffective*. Eugene Genovese, for example, argued that "moral and ideological pressures" helped break the power of the West Indian merchant-planter class when economic interests alone could not.[226] This latter argument applied to this. Wayland, in his sermons address, *The Church, A Society for the Conversion of the World* reiterated this theme, but with greater alarm. The following statement, however, smacks not of conservatism, but of boldness, and suggests the position to which Wayland was led along by the political crisis facing that nation:

> It is very possible for us to profess the name of Christ, and yet to be, in fact, the greatest obstacles to the progress of his kingdom. If ever the condition of the world demanded a living and not a dead church, it demands it at this very moment. Our own country, in an especial manner, demands it. Iniquity abounds. Our cities and towns are becoming sinks of moral pollution. The want of principle in our public men is periling the existence of our republic. And while this is becoming more alarming, there seems no moral power existing to arrest these tendencies which are becoming every year more and more alarming. And there is no moral power in the people, because the church of Christ is faithless to her trust; and men professing godliness love luxury, and power, and party, better than Christ. Is it not time then for the children of God to come out from the world and

[225] William Jay, *View of the Action of the Federal Government in Behalf of Slavery* (New York: Bergman Publishers, 1839; reprint 1969), xvii-xx.
[226] Eugene Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1969, 1988), 31-32.

> be separate, and put away from them every unclean thing? Unless this be done, I see nothing to prevent us from perishing in one common ruin.[227]

Wayland reinforced this theme in his sermon address, *Responsibility for the Moral Condition of Others*. "God," he argued, "holds us responsible for the effect of our conduct upon others." "But I ask, do you not know that others are affected by your example, and that their moral character will be modified by what they hear you say and do?" Sins effects are corporate, rather than individual. Free will to sin does not negate its moral effect on others. It is ridiculous, he argued, to think that our lives are not influenced by others or neither that we do not influence others. In the same respect that parental failures spoil the child and managerial mishaps hurt the employee, private citizens, whether Christian are not, bore responsibility for their elected magistrates. The cumulative effect of poor decision-making is felt far beyond individual contributions. Wayland bluntly stated: "Every act of oppression, of public wrong doing, of wickedness in high places, can be traced home directly or indirectly to you and such as you; and it will be traced home and laid at your door, and your children and your children's children will reap the reward or pay the penalty to the remotest generation." Every act or spoken word infuses a ripple effect throughout society . "Thus the fountain of moral influence which we open will flow on, growing deeper and broader even unto the end." Wayland further described sin as "infectious" and "reproductive" in nature. He concluded that, Christians were to be "better than a mere negation" and must "exert a real and positive agency" in the world.[228]

If Christians were to move beyond "mere negation" and "exert a real and positive influence" how were they do so if not by example? How were slaveholders to set this similar example if not by emancipating their slaves? These latter two sermons both clarify and confuse

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[227] Francis Wayland, "The Church, A Society for the Conversion of the World" in *Sermons to the Churches* (Sheldon, Blackman & Company, Boston: Gould & Lincoln, 1858), 65-100; quote on 99.
[228]Wayland, "Responsibility for the Moral Condition of Others" in *Sermons*, 263-281; quotes on 264; 265; 271; 272; and 274.

his moral reasoning. He seemed to distinguish between moral responsibility and personal responsibility. Wayland offered no restrictions on the former, but did so in the latter. Yet, Wayland, despite his cautious nature, proved a strong admirer of British abolitionists, though less so of American ones. It proved perhaps, easier to admire such efforts at a distance, yet naturally, the often inflammatory nature of American abolitionists, be it the rhetoric of, *The Liberator*, the mail campaigns, or the controversy over severing ties with slaveholding parishioners hit too close too home. Nevertheless, his admiration was genuine. For example, in his sermon address, *The Moral Dignity of the Missionary Enterprise* delivered before the Boston Baptist Foreign Mission Society of October 26, 1823, he spoke highly of English abolitionist Thomas Clarkson. He stated:

> Such as man is Clarkson, who, looking abroad beheld the sufferings of a Africa, and looking at home, saw his country stained with her blood. We have seen him, laying aside the vestments of the priesthood, consecrate himself to the holy purpose of rescuing a continent from rapine and murder, and of erasing this one sin from the book of his nation's iniquities. We have seen him and his fellow philanthropists for twenty years never waver form their purpose. We have seen them persevere amidst neglect and obloquy and contempt and persecution, until the cry of the oppressed having roused the sensibilities of the nation, the "Island Empress" rose in her might, and said to this foul traffick in human flesh, Thus far shalt thou go and no further.[229]

In his work *Intellectual Philosophy*, Wayland in highlighting individuals who possessed unusual "high-intelligence," were "self-reliant," and an "impressive object of the spiritually sublime," again listed Clarkson as such a man who "resolving to lay aside every other object, and live hereafter only for the abolition of the African slave-trade," in his list of high-achievers.[230] "We have been pointed," he noted of the slave-trade, "to the dark slave-ship hovering over her coast, and have been told that two hundred thousand defenseless beings are annually stolen

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[229] Francis Wayland, *The Moral Dignity of The Missionary Enterprise, Delivered Before the Boston Baptist Foreign Mission Society on the Evening of October 26, and Before The Salem Bible Translation Society on the Evening of November 4, 1833* (Boston: James Loring, 2 Cornhill, 1824), 6.
[230] Wayland, *Intellectual Philosophy*, 404-405.

away, to be murdered on their passage, or consigned for life to a captivity more terrible than death!" [231] The ending of the slave-trade may have ended the "dark slave-ship hovering over her coast" yet African slaves still languished on American soil. British abolitionists, though involved, had little bearing on American slavery.

It is easy to wonder why if Wayland felt so strongly, he was unwilling to suffer "neglect and obloquy and contempt and persecution" himself from *his* countrymen, since the *same* cry from bondage was equally heard across the American landscape? When Wayland penned these words he was a young man in his twenties and his youthfulness may have factored into this. If anything, Wayland demonstrated *greater*, not *lesser* tendencies toward political action and he grew older and the sectional crisis unfolded. This, on one hand, was easier to do since antislavery had moved beyond moral suasion and had become more politicized. Yet, it raises the point of why Wayland endorsed political conservatism when he expressed such admiration for British abolitionists? Why was political activism acceptable in the British Isles, but not in America?

It is too easy to charge Wayland with complacency or indifference. Cultural, social, and legal boundaries existed in America that were absent from its European counterparts. If absenteeism defined the planter-slave relationship in the Caribbean Islands, paternalism defined its relationship in the Deep South. In the Deep South, slavery was a total system that embedded and interwove itself into the very fabric of American institutions. Antislavery may have been a near universal cry in the Western world, but it hardly portended a universal solution. Entrenched racism and near hysterical fears of racial wars or amalgamation of emancipated slaves, haunted North American planters far more than it did West Indian planters. The slave and planter were not separate in slavery nor could they be separated in freedom. Fear of assimilation, or rather the refusal to assimilate with liberated slaves, burdened the paternalistic American planter more so

[231] Wayland, *Moral Dignity*, 10-11.

than their absentee European counterpart. However, his above statements were not his final word on civic responsibility for the political crisis of the 1840s forced his reconsideration and his later writings illustrated the means and ends he was willing to pursue. Yet, if his civic views were hardly settled, neither were his antislavery views. His debate, with the Baptist pastor, Richard Fuller in early 1845, reopened what proved to be his most extensive statement on slavery.

CHAPTER THREE

The Wayland-Fuller Debate, 1845

"This is the first time in my life-I hope it may be the last-in which it has fallen to my lot to engage in controversy."[232] These words marked the closing sentiments of Francis Wayland in his celebrated debate with Richard Fuller, a Baptist minister in Beaufort, South Carolina. Fuller proved a worthy opponent. Born in Beaufort, South Carolina in 1804, he graduated from Harvard in 1824, and practiced law in Beaufort until his Christian conversion experience in 1831 led him to leave the legal profession for the ministry. His distinguished career as a Baptist minister lasted for forty-four years.

Richard Fuller unquestionably had financial ties to the cotton belt. His eldest brother, Thomas Fuller, was one of the wealthiest cotton planters in South Carolina. Richard himself owned slaves and pastored in the cotton belt for years, including fifteen years in Beaufort, and he frequently did revivalist tours throughout Georgia and South Carolina, and spent most of 1836 in Europe. In 1844, compelled to respond to the mounting antislavery sentiment in the North, he submitted the scriptural proslavery position to the Northern Baptist periodical, the *Christian Reflector* which quickly spiraled into an editorial debate with Francis Wayland. Shortly after these exchanges with Wayland, Fuller left Beaufort for the Seventh Baptist Church, Baltimore, Maryland where he spent twenty-four years. He played an active role in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention, and presided as its third president, serving two terms in 1859 and 1861. In the meantime, his church membership flourished at the Seventh Baptist Church, and

[232]Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered As a Scriptural Institution* (New York: Lewis Colby, & Co., 1845; 1847), 253.

Fuller agreed to pastor the splinter church of Eutaw Place Church, which he served for five years until his death in 1876.[233]

In late 1844 the *Christian Reflector*, a Baptist journal based in Philadelphia, invited Fuller to submit an article defending the scriptural proslavery argument. Concerned with the rising abolitionist sentiment in the North, Fuller responded with an editorial piece, in which he made direct reference to Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*. Wayland, compelled to respond, did so and the two fired off a series of journalist exchanges. These essays were collected in book form as *Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution* (1845). Written by two clerical giants, these essays framed the national debate over slavery for religious and non-religious readers alike and spawned numerous reviews and additional debates as Americans struggled to come to terms with the morality of slavery. Fuller's original essay led first, followed by eight responses by Wayland, six in response by Fuller, and Wayland penned the final remarks. These essays were marked by a high degree of cordially, but this does not obscure their forceful attacks against their critic's positions. However, these remarks were restricted to their arguments, not their persons.

Fuller chastised abolitionists, describing their newspapers as "fierce, bitter, and abusive" warning that no reasonable dialogue could take place within this context. Written on the eve of the Baptist denominationalism split in 1845, Fuller pleaded against separation and warned Christians not to "throw the first torches." He conceded that if slavery was sinful "surely it is the immediate duty of masters to abolish it," adding significantly "whatever be the result." Fuller questioned why if Old Testament patriarchs owned slaves, and if the New Testament no where

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[233]"Richard Fuller," in Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds, *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols., (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1931), 7:62-62. See also J. H. Culbert, *Life of Richard Fuller* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1879). For a 19th century general history of the Baptists that included references to Wayland and Fuller see: Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists: Traced by their Vital Principles and Practices from the time of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Year 1886* (New York: Bryan, Taylor and Co., 1887).

condemned it, why if Wayland contended that slavery was sinful, that neither Jesus nor the gospel writers explicitly condemned it although they condemned other evils? In fact, their every remark toward slavery, Fuller asserted, implied its continuation. Wayland suggested that the consequential fallout would have been too great to condemn it outright and so the gospel writers established universal principles over immediate and limited precepts to eradicate slavery. Fuller argued that consequences make poor criteria for morality. "They who proclaimed," Fuller wrote, "and persecuted a war of extermination against all the most cherished passions of this guilty earth, and attacked with dauntless intrepidity all the multiform idolatry around them-they quailed, they shrank from breathing even a whisper against slavery, through fear of consequences!!" How could the scriptures equally establish precepts governing slavery if its spirit worked against it?[234]

In a familiar refrain, Fuller warned that the issue at stake involved no less than "all kinds of property, all civilization, and life itself" and those who used the Scriptures to denounce slavery as sinful "deal in loose assertion" and "range one's self with the infidel and scoffer." Fuller argued that the Scriptures denounced abuses within slavery, but not the institution itself, but abolitionists denounced the institution and equated its abuses with the practice itself. Fuller, quoting Paley, defined slavery as "*an obligation to labor for the benefit of the master, without the contract or consent of the slave.*" He warned that to abandon biblical warrant for slavery was too abandon the Bible itself. Furthermore, in the new dispensation, polygamy was forbidden and a new law given to divorce, but slavery was neither condemned nor made criteria for church membership. "But slavery," Fuller explained, "was everywhere a part of the social organization of the earth; and slaves and their masters were members together of the churches; and minute

[234]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered* ,1-5.

instructions are given to each as to their duties, even without an insinuation that it was the duty of the masters to emancipate."[235] In his closing statement, Fuller laid out the principles at stake:

> What, then are we to think of those who revile us as pirates and thieves, and fulminate anathemas and excommunications against every Christian at the South, no matter what his conduct or character, simply because he will not submit to the arrogant behests of mortals who at best are, like himself, loaded with imperfections; and because he esteems the Bible a safer directory than the dogmas of men, most of who are every day proving themselves destitute of the sound mind and charity of the gospel-of people who are essentially monomaniacs-who cannot live without running into some insanity-who, if slavery were abolished, would be just as mad upon amalgamation, or masonry, or Millerism, or some other matter-and with whom, in fine, whatever your course may be as to us, neither you, nor anybody at the North who loves Christ and the gospel better than self, and strife, and fanatical intolerance, will long be able to harmonize?[236]

After Fuller fired the first volley, Wayland responded with eight separate letters of his own. No abolitionist, Wayland conceded that the abolitionist press "indulged in exaggerated statement," "violent denunciation," and "coarse and lacerating invective." Referencing their attendance at the Missionary Convention in Philadelphia, he found their spirit contrary to Christ's and found Southern attitudes more congenial. Yet, Wayland accused the South of stifling free speech on slavery and infringing upon basic civil liberties and he contrasted this to the revolutionary and early republican period whereby state conventions, religious institutions, abolitionist societies, and individuals freely debated these issues, and that the present "intolerance" was indefensible on a matter of such importance. Not only abolitionists, but southerners alike were muffled. Although the "fanaticism of abolitionists" caused this "universal irritability," Southerners overreacted in stifling dissent.[237]

Wayland conceded Fuller's definition of slavery as "*an obligation to labor for the benefit of the master, without the contrast or consent of the slave*," but added that this obligation further

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[235] Ibid., 2; 6-11.
[236] Ibid., 12.
[237] Ibid., 13-21.

implied the means to procure this labor by any means whatsoever. He wrote: "Now if the master enjoy this right, he enjoys also the right to use all the means necessary both to enforce and to render it permanent. He has a right to protect himself against every thing that would interfere with the exercise of this right." This argument predominated throughout his letters. No laws, no matter how stern, could be protested against if these assumptions are correct. Slavery was predicated on forced compliance and the two, the right of ownership and the right of procuring labor, were "inseparable" and "conflicting rights." Put differently, what other incentive is there for the slave to work without pay, compensation, reward, or material gain? None. If the former exists, the "original right" of possession, then the latter, "forced coercion" exists as well. If not, if the master has no right to force compliance, then the master has no right to ownership. Put differently, if coercion be wrong, so is the original right of ownership. The two are naturally and inseparably intertwined. The master, for example, has the right to restrict the moral and intellectual cultivation of his slaves if it benefit the master. Yet if slavery is sinful, then the slave and master alike possess the same God-given natural rights and stand in equally relationship to one another as any other men would, and the claim of the master to rule over the slave and the slave to emancipate himself are "conflicting rights." He succinctly stated that "One or the other must overrule. If the right of the master be the predominant right, it innocently controls the other. If the right of the slave be the predominant right, it abolishes the right of the master wherever this right interferes with it."

Wayland defined slavery as, "the right to oblige another to labor for me, without his contract or consent, with the additional right to use all the means necessary to insure the exercise of the original right."[238] The right of coerced compliance then is imbedded in Wayland's definition of slavery, and in defining it so, he accused Fuller of fudging the issue of how the

[238] Ibid., 23; 24.

"original right" of possession is enforced without coercion? Although sinful, slaveholders did not share equal guilt. "In the first sense, moral evil depends upon the immutable relations which God has established between his moral creatures. In the second sense, meaning personal guilt, it depends upon light, knowledge of duty, means of obtaining information on the subject, and may be different in different persons and at different times." Northerners, he argued, focused exclusively on the first and condemned *all* slaveholding as equally sinful, and Southerners focused exclusively on the second, and argued that since they inherited their slaves from their forefathers, and since others committed the first sin, they were neither responsible nor guilty.[239] Both these views in isolation, he argued, were fallacious. Guilt is attached, not to the physical act of slaveholding, but to recognition of its sinfulness. Although slavery is *always* sinful, slaveholding is not always so.[240]

Neither skin color, nor physical characteristics, moral or intellectual aptitude affect man's "*common nature"* or spiritual condition before God. His essential point is that slavery undermined both man's relation to God and man's relation to man. Slavery, rather than altering these established relationships, merely pits the strong against the weak. Protective legislation, rather than shielding individuals from responsibility, only maximized its guilt. State sanctioned legality does not make it morally right. Its legality, he argued, had no bearing on its morality, and rather shifts individual sins to societal ones. He explained: "The individual act is wrong. The law which protects it is wrong. The whole society, in putting the law into execution, is doing wrong. Before, only the individual, now, the whole society becomes the wrong-doer, and for that wrong

[239] For a general view of how northern clergymen viewed the South see: Chester Forrester Durham, *The Attitude of the Northern Clergy Toward the South 1860-1865* (Toledo: The Gray Company Publishers, 1942).
[240]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered*, 25, 26-32.

both the individual and the society are held responsible in the sight of God." His material point in that legalizing slavery does not alter its moral sinfulness in the sight of God.[241]

In his third letter, Wayland expanded on his distinction between slavery and slaveholding. Guilt is proportional to knowledge of wrongdoing, but equally to whether this ignorance is voluntary or involuntary. Guilt is weighed, not according to the act itself, but to an individual's knowledge of it. In this light, there existed "every possible gradation of guiltiness" among slaveholders. Slaveholders did not share the same guilt and therefore "no sweeping condemnation" was suitable. "It is surprising to observe," Wayland wrote," how long even a good man, under such circumstances, may continue in the practice of wrong, without every suspecting its moral character." Every shade of slaveholder might be found; those venerated by their peers, and those "intentionally steeled against every monition of conscience" and who are a "monster of iniquity." Wayland then did not condemn the act and actor equally. He explained: "With a deep conviction of the universal wrong of the act, I have very dissimilar views of the guilt of the actors." Towards the others, I entertain the same sentiments which I entertain towards any other wicked and injurious man. I believe them to be not only doing wrong, but to be also exceedingly guilty-excluded by their guilt from all hope of salvation, unless they repent of this sin." He concluded again that guilt was attendant upon the thought behind the action, not the action itself, and thus condemnation was proportional to knowledge.[242]

He added "that the degree of guilt attendant upon a wrong action" changed "with the progress of light and knowledge." Sin is fixed, but guilt is circumstantial. Although sin is fixed, its guilt is not. Guilt is also incumbent upon "the law of the community." Wayland conceded that restrictive southern laws limited emancipation and manumission options. If a master realized his

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[241] Ibid., 33.
[242] Ibid., 34-41; quotes on 37, 40 and 41.

wrong, and wished to emancipate his slaves, he might be prevented from doing so. Wayland argued that his guilt changed, though the act continued, yet the relationship was fundamentally altered. The master could retain the slave "not for *his* benefit but for *theirs*." Community laws "never affect the *right* or *wrong* of an action" but rather "the *guilt* or *innocence* of the actor." Though the slave-master relationship continued, the master was responsible for his intellectual, moral, educational and spiritual improvement and his guilt or innocence is weighed by his fidelity to these responsibilities. Although societal laws could not severe this relationship, individuals bore the additional burden of working toward there amelioration. Citizens were expected, even commanded, to exert their full constitutional duty to ensure abolition, and if the State worked against, they were instructed to correct it. If their fellow-citizens worked against them, they were expected to resist them, and if the weak were oppressed, to work on their behalf. "Unless he do this," he concluded, "he cannot, as a member of the society, be free from the guilt of the wrong which the society perpetuates.[243]

State sanctioned immorality did not ameliorate individual responsibility. Morality was neither determined by legality nor guilt governed solely by actions. Slaveholders, once aware of their sinfulness, held no excuse for not working toward emancipation. They could be guiltless *legally*, but not so *morally* if they offered no solution. The power to change resided in the community will. "Its members," he reasoned, "have placed themselves in their present position in regard to slavery. They can, whenever they please, change that position. And for not changing it, every member of the society who has not exerted his full constitutional power to remove it, must at the bar of God be held guilty.[244]

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[243] Ibid., 41-46; quote on 46.
[244] Ibid., 47-48.

Wayland conceded slavery among the ancient Hebrews and biblical patriarchs, yet he denied Fuller's position that since: "Slavery was sanctioned in the Old Testament; and since the Old Testament is a revelation from God, and since He would not sanction any thing morally evil, therefore slavery is not a moral evil." Wayland argued this reasoning superficial and hasty. "I believe slavery then," Wayland responded, "as now, to have been wrong, a violation of our obligations to man, and at variance with the moral laws of God." Wayland argued that revelation was progressive and God at different dispensations revealed His will more fully. He did not argue that slavery was right in the Old Testament and later sinful in the New Testament, but that revelation, once incomplete, became complete in later dispensations. Toleration and regulation neither condoned nor sanctioned slavery. Explicit forbiddance is not necessary to demonstrate wrongdoing, nor does permission indicate rightness.

Mosaic Law *permitted* polygamy and divorce, yet neither one was *sanctioned*. Its *allowance* did not imply its *acceptance*. The act itself was granted, but never blessed or ideal. His key argument is that one cannot take special commands given to a specific people, at a specific time and place, and suggest these commands equally apply in the present. Proslavery apologists confused *descriptive* statements, limited by time and place, with *prescriptive* commands, that are universally applicable. His material point was that Old Testament commands, limited by time and culture, were not normative today. Southerners erroneously assumed that Old Testament regulation of Hebrew slavery sanctioned slavery as practiced in the southern states. Not so he argued. One had no bearing on the other. Wayland argued that even were it granted "that whatever was sanctioned to the Hebrews is sanctioned to all men at all times" that it did not justify slavery as practiced in the United States, because it would equally

bind it according the rules and regulations of the Mosaic Law. This law, he argued, was absent from slavery as practiced in the United States.[245]

Although Wayland never developed an emancipation plan for American slavery, he established the biblical model for eradicating slavery. He grounded emancipation in expediency, which he defined as "the use of means suitable or fitted to accomplish an end." Expediency was less the *ends*, than the *means* to abolish it. He argued that the Bible as a whole, and the New Testament specifically, inculcated universal *principles* over specific *precepts*. Principles were universal and normative for today, but precepts, or specific commands, could be limited by time and place. Generally, scripture worked through the former, rather than the latter, *because* moral *principles* were not historically restricted. Although Mosaic Law permitted slavery, it restricted it to non-Hebrews (Leviticus 25:44-45), ordered enslaved Hebrews freed after the sixth year (Exodus 21:2), forbid returning runaway slaves to their masters (Deuteronomy 23:15), instructed them to provide refugee shelters (Deuteronomy 23:16), and though not explicitly forbidding slavery, it certainly worked against it. God, Wayland argued, shed greater light through different dispensations, allowing even "ages to intervene between the discovery of one truth and the discovery of the next." Masters, who might ignore the precept, might stand convicted by the principle. Wayland explained:

> Thus suppose a particular wrong to have become a social evil, to have become interwoven with the whole framework of society, and to be established by positive enactment and immemorial usage; suppose that all departments of society have become adjusted to it, and that much instruction is necessary before any party can avail itself of the advantages of a righteous change; suppose also the whole community to be ignorant of the moral principles by which both the wrong is condemned and the right established. In such a case, the wrong could only be abolished by changing the sentiments and enlightening the consciences of the whole community. Here it seems to me that it would be not only allowable, but a matter of imperative duty, to inculcate the principles on which the duty rested, rather than the duty itself. The one being fixed in the mind, would necessarily

[245] Ibid., See 48-61; latter quote on 58.

> produce the other; and thus the end would be in the most certain manner accomplished.[246]

The New Testament, Wayland argued, neither condoned nor sanctioned slavery, but its principles worked against it. No one suggested that the Mosaic law, given only to the Hebrews, was applicable today, yet proslavery apologists argued selectively that its slave regulations remained so. Why this regulation and not others he asked? If this argument be conceded, then proslavery appeals to Old Testament practices were erroneous. The New Testament, unlike the Old, was not restricted to the Hebrews alone, but applied universally "for all time." All scriptural passages,[247] he argued, merely *regulated* the duties and responsibilities *within* the master-slave relationship, though it did not *sanction* it. It *permitted*, but it did not *condone*. It *recognized*, but did not *endorse*. These regulations did not concede the original right of possession, yet if it conceded this right, then why not the slave-trade? "Nay, more, I do not see that it does not sanction the whole system of the slave-trade. If I have a right to a thing after I have gotten it, I have a natural right to the means necessary for getting it." Southerners, however, sanctioned slavery, but not the slave-trade from the New Testament. Why not the latter?

Wayland again accused southerners of selectively interpreting scripture. He argued that "if the religion of Christ allows us to take such a license from such precepts as these, the New Testament would be the greatest curse that ever was inflicted on our race." New Testament regulations furthermore could not be detached from historical context. Slavery existed universally throughout the Roman Empire, was abusive in nature, conceded masters absolute rights over their slaves, and forbade them from marrying or owning property. Southerners, he

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[246] Ibid., 63-73; latter quote on 73.
[247] Ibid., Wayland referenced Ephesians 6: 5-8; Colossians 3: 22-25; I Timothy 6:1-5; Titus 2:9-10; I Peter 2:18-23 and Colossian 4:1; See 79-82.

agued, wanted the slavery without the abuse. Yet the institution itself, Wayland insisted, was inseparable from it. If the New Testament supported these practices, he added: "The gospel of Christ, on the subject of human rights, falls infinitely below the Declaration of American Independence." Wayland insisted that the scriptures addressed *only* the relationship, not the institution itself, yet Southerners insisted that because it regulated the former, it sanctioned the latter and thus falsely argued from silence.[248]

The distinction between the "proper use and abuse of it" is no where delineated. "Under what circumstances," Wayland asked, "may a man be made a slave? By war, by purchase, by birth, or by all of them? If unlawfully enslaved at first, how is the right over him afterwards to be lawfully acquired? Has he a right to marry; and is the relation of marriage protected by the rules of Christ on this subject? Roman law allowed slaves to read, and many of them were learned men; can this permission be abrogated? Can a slave be rightfully forbidden to read the sacred Scriptures?" How then are they decided? If all this is stripped away, all that is left is slavery, but what rules govern it? He argued that the New Testament afforded no precepts regulating these questions. He concluded "that the precepts of the New Testament furnish no justification of slavery" and that all that can be claimed is that it contained "no *precept* prohibitory of slavery." And that "Christ and the apostles ministered in an age of "moral darkness." Precepts regulating slavery were meant only to curb its worst abuses, but its universal principles, such as the equality of all men and races, were designed to abolish it through the gradual implementation of these principles. What was permitted in percept, was not sanctioned in principle and the latter overruled the former. He explained:

> Suppose then, that slavery were permitted in the New Testament, and that, at the same time, these truths at variance with it were inculcated, it would be evident that the *permission* must yield to the *principle*. Divorce was *permitted*, but

[248] Ibid., 76-88; quotes on 83; 84; and 88.

> the Hebrews were censured for availing themselves of the permission. You may give your child, if he were approaching to years of discretion, permission to do an act, while you inculcate upon him principles which forbid it, for the sake of teaching him to be governed by principles rather than by any direct enactment. In such a case you would expect him to obey the principle, and not avail himself of the permission. So in the present instance, were the permission proved, we, as moral creatures of God, would be bound by the principles which controlled it.[249]

"But why was this mode of teaching adopted," he asked? Christ and his apostles, elevated *principle* over *precept*, because its universality was meant all people at all times. Put differently, the *spirit* of the law transcended the *letter* of the law. If this was not the case, Wayland asked why did Christ condemn the Pharisees, the most consistent followers of the *law*, if the *spirit* was not superior? Principles are universal but precepts are particular. The impracticality of establishing a legal code that forbid *every* wrong was self-evident, either of "*that particular time"* or "*that could ever afterwards arise*." The former forbid nothing beyond its immediate context and the latter could not be contained in the New Testament alone. The establishment of universal principles then transcended these dual problems and explained why individual sins were not singled out. The *duty* was postponed "until the *truths* were promulgated on which this duty *was founded*." He reiterated that to have demanded immediate abolition under Roman rule would have triggered a servile war between master and slave. "Hence, to have adopted the method of abolishing slavery by precept, would have defeated the great object in view, and rendered the condition of the slave worse than before." The precept, demanded too much too fast, yet the principle, though less demanding, was equally binding. "Hence it was manifest that the system could only be abolished by a change in the public mind, by inculcating those principles which would show the whole community that it was wrong, and induce them, from a general conviction of its moral evil, to abandon it."[250]

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[249] Ibid., 88-94; quotes on 88; 89; and 94.
[250] Ibid., 94-103; quotes on 100 and 99.

The New Testament, then, did not avoid condemnation by precept because it feared the consequences, but because principled emancipation proved a superior methodology. He charged Southerners with hypocrisy who argued that if slavery was forbidden in principle (or spirit) it should have been forbidden in precept (or law). Contemporary Southerners argued that slavery in their time could only be abolished through change in the public mind, by the consent of the slaveholder, and not by congressional or judicial decree, and then only gradually, but argued that if the spirit of the New Testament condemned slavery, it should have commanded by immediate precept its immediate abolition! He explained: "It would, therefore, seem peculiarly unreasonable for them to assert that there is only one method in which the abolition of slavery could, with benevolence to all parties, be accomplished, and then to assert that the gospel could not certainly mean to abolish it, because it had adopted this very method." Contemporary Southerners, exposed to greater light, were without excuse as these principles were now fully elucidated. If emancipation was restricted by law, southern duty (and guilt) toward them changed in proportion to how they prepared them for eventual emancipation. God, he argued, held one responsible not only for sin, but in relation to the amount of light bearing on it. In this regard, Southerners stood in greater condemnation than their first century counterparts even though the sin remained the same. Sin lay, not in the act alone, but in their response to it. Lest he be misunderstood, Wayland concluded: "In a word, I believe that slavery is forbidden in the Scriptures just as almost every other sin is forbidden; that is, by the inculcation of moral principles which are utterly at variance with it."[251]

In his eighth letter, Wayland listed a litany of violations perpetrated by slavery. It violated the "inalienable right" to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," penalized someone innocent of any crime, violated the spirit of Christianity, victimized the poor and weak,

[251] Ibid., 103-108; quotes on 104 and 106.

withheld compensation for labor, denied education, impeded spiritual growth, and even more galling, endorsed the enslavement of Christian brethren. On this latter point, he wrote: "I confess myself utterly at a loss to conceive how a human being can assume the responsibility of thus interfering between an immortal soul and its Maker," adding "How shall we stand before our Savior, if we make no effort to comfort and deliver this slave-much less if we count ourselves among the number of his oppressors?" He warned that this practice "established either by, or with the consent of their own brethren in Christ" could hardly be looked upon by God "with indifference upon such wrongs inflicted upon these his little ones." In response, he asked rhetorically, "But is not the slave, ignorant, degraded, whom no man cares for, my brother as truly as his intelligent and accomplished master? Is not the one as much as the other a member of the body of Christ?" [252]

Whatever financial loss occurred from emancipation was irrelevant in principle, but likely moot in practice, since the soil would neither decrease in quantity or fertility and the number of workers remained the same.[253] The only difference was that the relationship between the labor and laborer would change. Parcel to fears of financial loss and more particularly to the fear of social and racial leveling, southern states forbid free discussion of slavery. Wayland argued that even conscience-stricken slaveholders groaned under these restrictions. This did not, however, alleviate them of their social and moral responsibility, but he warned that would face persecution: "I fear that those who first set this glorious example would suffer persecution. Their names would be cast out as evil. They would be branded with every epithet of reproach. But they would be suffering to rescue millions of men from aggravated oppression, and to deliver their

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[252] Ibid., 109-119; quotes on 115; 116-117; and 118-119.

[253] On the economics of slavery see two contrasting interpretations: Eugene Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy & Society of the Slave South,* 2nd ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1989) and Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974).

country from a sin that must bring upon it the selectest judgments of a God that loveth justice."[254]

These brave souls would not tarry alone. "They would not, however," he explained, "long suffer alone. Thousands of slaveholders who now groan under the weight of this infliction, and are praying for deliverance from it, would soon enlist under their standard." These latter statements perhaps presumed too much about southern culture, in his assumption that multitudes awaited to express their true convictions, if only permitted free expression and guidance by bold leadership. Wayland, however, developed no specific blueprint for emancipation and conceded the details to other. This only highlighted the fact that slavery was easy to condemn but difficult to eradicate.[255]

Richard Fuller responded at length with six letters of his own. He retorted that his original letter to the *Reflector* refuted the abolitionist charge that "slavery" is "a heinous crime in the sight of crime." He railed against their "monstrous" and "uncharitable" position that Christians be excommunicated from church fellowship, a doctrine "peculiar to the restless and turbulent fanaticism of this country." Not even British abolitionist ministers, he charged, endorsed these positions or associated with their American abolitionists. Fuller established the context of American slavery. The mother country fostered the slave-trade into the colonies. Second, these importations were made without the consent and sometimes against the wishes of the colonists. Third, Northerners stood equally convicted in this trade. Fourth, once slaves arrived on American shores, their condition was bettered by slavery rather than worsened. His proposition that American slaveholders stood guiltless because slavery was an inherited

[254]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered*, 120-121.
[255] Ibid., 119-125. quote on 120-121.

institution and his contention that they were improved "physically, intellectually, morally, and religiously" was popular refrain by proslavery apologists.[256]

George Whitefield, "the greatest preacher who ever lived" owned slaves, and were he alive today, he would have been "deposed and excommunicated" by his Northern brethren. This position, that so great an evangelist, would be excommunicated today was intolerable. "If slavery, then, be a sin, it should at once be abolished." Yet if not, then immediate emancipation "would be a revolution involving the entire South in ruin" by "breaking up all social order and peace and safety" and "inflicting on the slaves themselves irreparable mischief." These statements revealed Southern fears of social leveling, and the entrenched paternalism toward an emancipated slave population. His following statement best revealed this mindset:

> It would suddenly give them a liberty for which they are wholly unprepared, and which would be only a license for indolence and crime. It would convert them, inevitably, from a contented and cheerful peasantry, into a horde of outlaws, a multitude of paupers with whom the white population could never amalgamate, who must forever feel themselves (witness their condition even at the North) degraded and outcast from the kindred and privileges of the superior caste; who, deprived of the master's protection, and no longer bound to their governors kindly and almost filial ties now existing, would endure perpetual humiliation and insult, and drag out a sullen life of envy and hatred and wretchedness; or, if instigated to revenge and insurrection, be certainly crushed, and either annihilated or subjugated to an iron bondage, a military rule, form the rigors of which they would look back to their former state as one, not only of comparative, but real, substantial, contrasted, liberty and happiness.[257]

This dour portrait revealed the depth of Southern paternalism and racism.[258] His material point, in that slaves, unfit for free society, socially inferior, unable to amalgamate to white culture, and destined only to criminality and humiliation, would quickly realize their superior

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[256] A solid work on the origins and patterns of slavery in the United States see: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in the North America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).
[257] Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered*, 126-136; quotes on 135 and 136.
[258] On racism as a defense of slavery see James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 20-30; 129-134. The classic work on paternalism is Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, roll, the World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974).

state *within* slavery. Fuller reiterated, however, that if slavery *was* sinful, "the consequences of abolition should not be considered at all."

It was blasphemy, he railed, to "charge the Bible with countenancing sin" and his "principal object" was "to vindicate the inspired volume" from having "permitted and regulated a crime of the darkest malignity." The essential question for Fuller remained the "moral character" of slavery. The question revolved around its sinfulness alone. Its uses and abuses were peripheral concerns, which he argued, antislavery writers, such as Wayland, used to distract from the core issue. These writers conflated two separate issues into one and traded the central issue for the peripheral issue. If slavery was abusive, it was wrong, but to Fuller, the issue was whether or not slavery *in and of itself* was sinful. If slavery was wrong, it was wrong because it *was* sinful, not *because* it was abusive; positive treatment did not make it *less wrong*, nor did ill treatment make it *more wrong*. Fuller denied Wayland's assertion that abuse was embedded within slavery. Wayland argued that if the "*original right of possession*" is conceded, then so is the "*use of means to enforce the original right*." The right to use a labor "without consent or contract" conferred no other rights beyond the right of possession. Fuller also charged Wayland with confusing *right* and *power*. The *right* of possession included no *power* to enforce anything. If a parent, restricted his child's intellectual and moral cultivation, the parent abused his trust, but this hardly negates the parent-child relationship. With slavery, as with parents, "it is not the relation which is sinful, but infidelity to the solemn trust which that relation creates." He charged Wayland in assuming slavery nothing more than "the compound of palpable infractions of right which you suppose."[259]

Fuller reduced Wayland's argument against slavery to little more than an argument against accumulated wrongs, rather than proof of wrong in itself. In this respect, the abuses were

[259]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered*, 137-141.

assaulted, but not the institution itself, yet he assumed the wrong of the former proved the wrong of the latter. No so Fuller argued. "There is quite abuse enough of this authority," Fuller confided, "to make me regret its general existence." He continued, "But to include in the idea of slavery "the right" to oppress and degrade, is to confound two things entirely distinct, and which really have no sort of connection." Yet, he argued that Wayland's confession that pious and decent slaveholders could be found among their ranks, implied that positive treatment and slavery could coexist. This viewpoint, Fuller conceded, more accurately represented slavery as it consisted of "no painting of fancy" or "impracticable Utopian abstraction." Fuller charged Wayland with sidestepping the question of immediate emancipation.

Fuller again conceded that if it be wrong, it should end immediately. If an adulterer, for example, were prevented by law from ceasing his relationship, no one would consent to his remaining in this relationship, irrespective of the legal consequences. If this be true, he laid this charge against Wayland: "Suppose, now, the laws of South Carolina should forbid an adulterer to dissolve his criminal connection; or require one of her citizens living by piracy to continue his desperately wicked career." Directing his question to Wayland, he asked: "Suppose, however, such a code; and suppose the adulterer and pirate should persevere in their courses, and plead these laws: could you-could even your kind disposition bring you to regard them as innocent?" If an adulterer or pirate be not exempted from immediate censor, why not the slaveholder? To argue that they were prohibited by law from terminating their relationship affords merely legal protection to an immoral act. The former appeared to sanitize the latter. Yet the duty of the slaveholder (or adulterer or pirate) to free himself from his immorality remained the same irrespective of the law. 'The question then," Fuller asked, "simply is this--is it necessarily a

crime in the sight of God, to restrict or control that personal liberty which every man is supposed to have in a state of nature?"[260]

Fuller contended that the right to restrict personal freedom is foundational to human society. Government is ordained by God and is predicated on restraint. The liberty of some is protected by the restraint of others. Inequality is inherent in human nature and equality in the eyes of God did not portend social equality. Furthermore, is was foolish he argued, to construct society on the abstract doctrine of "inalienable rights." To tamper in such doctrine was to ignore the "stern lessons" of the French Revolution and the "havoc and butchery" of St. Domingo. The Northern image of slavery was distorted, conjuring up images of "whips, and cruelty, and crime, and wretchedness," when slaveholders assumed nothing more than the right of possession, often performed "cheerfully and happily," when slaves were assigned only half the labor as northern whites, and with a full sense of their rights and duties. If the abolitionists falsely accused every slaveholder of harboring the worst motives and cruelties, the slaveholder stood equally condemned for romanticizing the institution. Wayland's indictment of slaveholders as turning men into "brutes" or "mere pieces of property" fit this mold, and was "absurd" and "the most sheer verbiage of shallow declamation." He explained:

> A right to the service of a man without his contract or consent, conveys no additional rights but those proper and necessary to this original right. But it is not proper and necessary to this original right, that a human being be deprived of any right which is justly his, as an immortal, intelligent, moral, social, and fallen creature. Therefore, a right to the services of a man without his contract or consent, does not justify any wrong done to his mind, or soul, or domestic relations. Therefore your first assumption fails. Slavery may exist without interfering with any of man's natural rights, except personal freedom. But to interfere with personal freedom in not necessarily a sin. Therefore slavery is not necessarily a sin. Therefore your second assumption fails.[261]

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[260] Ibid., 142-146; quotes on 145 and 146.
[261] Ibid., 147-152; quote on 152. For commentary on the master-slave relationship see: John B. Boles, ed., *Masters and Slaves in the House of the Lord: Race and Religion American South, 1740-1870* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1988).

The South Carolina minister fulminated against those who excommunicated Christian slaveholders and who were "forever perplexing a great question with quirks and quibbles" such as arguing that since the origin of slaveholding the United States was wrong, so was the institution. "If their importation was without their consent," he argued, "it was equally without mine." The "original title" has no bearing on the "existing title." For example, if a current landowner possessing a valid title to his property, should learn that his property was illegally acquired ages ago, he would hardly be expected to surrender his valid title, particularly if the fraudulent parties were long deceased. Equally so, Southern slaveholders could hardly be expected to surrender their legal title to slaves acquired through inheritance, even though slaves were initially imported into the colonies by English slave-traders.[262]

Despite this, Fuller did not advocate the "perpetuation" of slavery in the "abstract." Though the origin lay not with the contemporary slaveholder, he added: "My sole business now is with present duty. That duty is not the emancipation, but the instruction, moral and intellectual, of the slave; just as in despotism, the duty is, not granting a free constitution, but improving the subjects." He insisted that if these principles be conceded, that the origin bore no weight on the current right of possession and that their sole duty now was to improve the lot of the slave, it reasoned that slavery was not always a sin. There now existed grounds for reconciliation, "not only with each other, but with the Scriptures, and you be relieved from the laborious, up-hill, Sisyphus-task, of overcoming the word of God."[263]

It was essential to grasp these principles that, "What my relation as master, or parent, gives me a right to do, is one thing; what the law may permit, or even enjoin is another."

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[262]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered,* 156-158. Slaveholders often inherited their slaves through marriage or wills. See for example, women defenses of slavery in Elizabeth-Fox Genovese, *To be Worthy of God's Favor: Southern Women's Defense and Critique of Slavery*. (Gettysburg, Pa.: Gettysburg College, 1993).
[263]Fuller and Wayland, *Domestic Slavery Considered*, 157 and 158.

Abolitionists failed to recognize the distinctions. "Yet it is because good men among the abolitionists shut their eyes to the difference between a domestic or social relation, and the enactments concerning it, that they persist in denouncing slavery as a sin." In fact, Fuller indicted the abolitionists and their "incendiary literature" for bearing the "heaviest guilt" for slave laws forbidding them to read or write even though individual slaveholders, like himself, who were" the true friends of the slaves" opposed such measures. Fuller then castigated the abolitionists in the most blistering language.

> The abolitionists, however, are a band by themselves. With them the rudimental, initiating article is, that slaveholders are heinous culprits, and as such to be universally treated. This bitter, persecuting creed is the great bond of union, and faith in it a cosmetic for the most serious blemishes. If a man subscribe to this fierce tenet, he is a brother, and admitted to the pulpit and communion table, however destitute of the meek and holy spirit of Christ. But no matter what the character of the one who is by birth placed in the painfully responsible situation of a slaveholder, the damnatory clause does not suffer him to be spared. He is to be anathematized, and the church armed with her most awful sentences against him. Nay, he is deemed unfit to be a missionary to his own slaves; or even to take the lowest place among those who wish to advance the Redeemer's cause upon earth.[264]

Fuller retorted that the abolitionist doctrine of immediate emancipation was ripping the country apart but that its worst effect posed an "irreconcilable conflict with the Bible." Fuller charged Wayland with equivocation on slavery, because he argued that the guilt attached to slavery was circumstantial, and that to claim it sinful, in and of itself "jars harshly with what appears to plain men as the unequivocal teaching of the Scriptures" and if it was conceded that the Hebrew and Greek translations of servant really meant slave, "there is an end either of their dogma or of submission to the Scriptures."

Fuller, in heightened and elevated tone, stated his theological position that "WHAT GOD SANCTIONED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND PERMITTED IN THE NEW, CANNOT

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[264] Ibid., 159-161; quotes on 159 and 161.

BE SIN." He derided Wayland's position that "the permission yields to the principle" as flirting with charging the Bible with error. What better means to teach principles than by "apostolic example?" If the Scriptures permitted what it condemned in principle, how did it square with teaching by example? Wayland's theory, he added, opened the door to endless innovators claiming they discovered a new "principle" that overrode established precepts and thus made the Scriptures only an endless chain of interpretations without fixed teachings. No new doctrines or revelations were permissible beyond the New Testament. "Nothing can be more utterly sophistical than the idea that we have any light, as to matters of pure revelation, which the first Christians had not." His point was that current "innovators" who argue that revelation is progressive and that they have more light on slavery than their first century counterparts is fallacious. At best, it assumed they had more light than New Testament writers, at worst, it assumed the New Testament was in error. If anything, he argued that modern day commentators only "perplexed the truth" and the "accumulation of learned rubbish" only obscured simple truths easier grasped by the "first believers." [265]

To charge that the Scriptures failed to condemn slavery by precept because it feared its social consequences did not bear scrutiny. The Scriptures, he argued, condemned other known evils of its day. The New Testament condemned "idolatry," the "superstitions of the Gentiles," the "prejudices of the Jews," the "passion of the vulgar," and the "pride of the noble." Its writers "defied the priests," directly "confronted the Sanhedrin," and "thundered before unjust and licentious princes," yet as to slavery "they not only never forbade it," but received masters into the churches and declared them "faithful and beloved" brethren in Christ Jesus." Idolatry was certainly as interwoven into the fabric of Mediterranean culture as was slavery, yet they did not hesitate to condemn idolatry but they uttered not a word against slavery? Put differently, why

[265] Ibid., 164-185; quotes on 164; 167; 179; and 185.

condemn idolatry by precept but slavery by principle. If slavery was as grave an evil as idolatry, why not condemn them equally? Fuller asked rhetorically: "After this shall I be told that they considered slaveholding as a sin of appalling character, and meant it to be condemned by some covert and slow spirit or principle of their teaching?" It was absurd to defend such a proposition.[266]

So certain was Fuller he concluded that: "So incurable a skeptic does not live, and my proposition is established, that slavery was sanctioned in the Old Testament, and permitted in the New Testament. If, however, slavery was sanctioned in the Old, and permitted in the New Testament, it is not a sin; and he who says it is, will answer to God whom he affronts, not me." What then was the proper Christian response? The Scriptures provided the blueprint. Jesus and his apostles found slavery existing as a part of the social organization. Should they appear now, they would find the same institution here. They did not declare it to be a sin, but by precept and example permitted it to continue; making it, however, a relation not of oppression and crime, but of justice and love. And they would act now just as they acted then; or rather, they are here in the gospel, and are now doing what they did then.[267]

Fuller foresaw that the ramifications of these disagreements would indeed be great. The Baptist denomination fractured along into northern and southern bodies in 1845. The split revolved around whether Christian slaveholders were eligible to serve as missionaries. Northern bodies forbade this, but Southern bodies argued, this was both unfair and uncharitable to deny slaveholders this position in light of no New Testament precept against slavery. Fuller, alluded to this impending split, and in doing so, spelled out how poisonous the waters had become. His commentary in the debate highlighted the intensity directed at the North. "If, then, the monstrous

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[266]Ibid., 197-196; 198.
[267]Ibid., 200-201.

proposition be sustained," he lamented, "that they are all unfit to be employed in the Home Mission Society, and the proscriptive spirit of a few Northern enthusiasts thus annul a constitution under which our fathers have acted so long and happily, you readily foresee the consequences. Never again shall we assemble in any society. The spirit of fanaticism will exult in the accomplishment of its baleful plans. And one of the largest and noblest bodies of Christians every constituted for the glory of God, will at once be broken into fragments-not hostile, I hope, but forever irreconcilable."[268]

The apostles, Fuller contended, stood condemned for complicity in slavery if Wayland's doctrine of expediciency was correct. "If they knew," he explained "slavery to be sin of appalling magnitude, it was their duty to condemn it." The abolitionists at least could not be charged with such timidity in their willingness "to tear society to pieces" rather "than rest while the horrid sin is committed on earth." By Wayland's logic, the New Testament writers were less compassionate. "Slavery is averred by you to be always and every moment, a sin of appalling magnitude. And if this be so, I do not see how you can either respect the apostles, or censure even the most vehement abolitionist." Fuller argued that the gospel worked through divine precepts rather than by principle. The Scriptures taught dogmatically and led by moral example and Scriptures primary goal was the "holiness and salvation of the individual" and its secondary goal was the "removal of social and political evil" through the "purifying influence of individual character." He concluded that, "if the individual character be blackened by sin" and his "participation in the evil confirm the world in it" these goals were unattainable. Interestingly, Fuller concluded his final letter by noting that Wayland "had the popular side of the question" in the *Christian Reflector*. Fuller chastised the "fanaticism" of both the North (abolitionists) and the South (restrictions on free speech). Rather than writing to refute the "untenable" and

[268] Ibid., 204.

"mischievous" and "monstrous dogma" he would rather have instructed masters as to their duties toward the slaves.[269]

Fuller conceded Wayland the final address and Wayland's final letter analyzed his critic's remarks. "Never before," Wayland responded in his charitable manner, "has the defense of slavery on Christian principles been so ably conducted. Never before has anything been written so admirably calculated to make a favorable impression on those who hold the opposite opinions." Nevertheless, "While, however, I say this, and I say it from my heart, "I do not perceive that you have overthrown a single position which I have attempted to establish." Wayland argued that Fuller's assertion that slavery involved only *a right to his service without his consent or contract,* but conferred no right to compulsion was ridiculous and his distinction between *right* and *power* as irrelevant hairsplitting. Wayland defined slavery as, "the right to *urge* another man *by a violent motive* resulting from *my own command, to labor for me without his contract or consent*." Forced compliance was imbedded in slavery; otherwise why would the slave be compelled to work without compensation? He continued: "The right, as above explained, is the right *to urge* another *by violent motives*, resulting not from the *law of God*, or the *social laws of man*, but resulting from *my own command*. My command dictates both the kind and the degree of violence; and I do not see, that in the conferring of this right, any limitations are imposed upon the exercise of my own will."[270]

His material point is that violence is embedded in the institution and that human property and forced compulsion coexist. Fuller, he argued, erred in his assumption that the *manner* in which the slave was treated undermined the central question of the *right to ownership*. If a parent blindfolded a child from birth and induced blindness and yet treated him well in all

[269]Ibid., See 205- 225;quotes on 205; 207; 209 and 224.
[270] Ibid., 226-232; quotes on 226 and 232.

other respects, this did not confer his original right to blindfold the child and induce blindness! Fuller, he suggested, avoided the issue altogether by refusing to argue in the abstract. Yet, Wayland retorted, "To this we must reply, *a master* is one who *has* this right, and a *slave* one who *is under this obligation*. Violence, being imbedded in the institution, reduced slavery to the strong enslaving weak. "If this right to oblige another man to labor for us is thus given to human nature, it is really and truly given to black men as to white men. It authorizes them to enslave us, just as much as it authorizes us to enslave them." Logically as well, he added, if the slave revolt and enslave his master, the master has the duty to submit to the slave. If the New Testament sanctioned slavery it did so for all men at all times and all places. He charged proslavery apologists with inconsistency in restricting the institution to Africans. The New Testament warranted no such conclusion:

> It is a permission given, not to a few men of a single country, but to the whole human race. By virtue of it, I have the right to oblige every other man to labor for men without his contract or consent. I may assert this right to-day. I might be well pleased with this permission; but then *every other* man is, by the same rule, equally authorized to oblige me to labor for him. The question which shall be the master, and which the slave, must be decided by physical strength. And after I have subdued him, he has the same right as before to enslave me in return. Here then is war, war interminable, and war to the knife. Nor is this all. While I am *obeying* the gospel in enslaving him, I am at the same moment *disobeying* it, in not also allowing him to enslave me. Here then is a permission given of which every man may avail himself, but of which he cannot avail himself without directly violating it.[271]

In critiquing Fuller's Old Testament, it cannot be said, he argued, that although the Scriptures esteemed Old Testament patriarchs who held slaves, that they did not do so because they owned slaves, but in spite of this. Secondly, Fuller asserted that though the Bible permitted polygamy and divorce in the Old Testament, it forbade them in the New. Slavery however was equally permitted and regulated in both. Therefore, it remained permissible to all Christians.

[271] Ibid., 235-239; quotes on 237 and 238-239.

Wayland argued that this proved nothing more than that revelation was progressive and God did not condemn in the New what was regulated in Old. This, he argued, undermined Fuller assertion that sin is circumstantial and that God could not permit sin to continue by example, for in regard to polygamy and divorce, he forbade by precept what *once* enjoyed greater permissiveness. Again, however, the permission never implied consent. Furthermore, it was hardly feasible to condemn every law by precept, limited by time and culture, than to condemn by principle, that which was universally applicable. Wayland further charged Fuller with inconsistency in his conviction that he should not wish slavery to continue in the abstract.

> I cannot, however, but observe, that you *regret* the general existence of an institution, of which the general existence is, as you affirm, both *sanctioned* and *permitted* by God himself; and you declare that its perpetuation would be both *impossible* and *improper*. These opinions you must have derived, certainly, from *principles*, for there is, as we both grant, no direct *prohibition* on the subject. Nay, more, you inform us that these principles are *derived from the Bible*, and that they result from what the Bible *teaches us of the character of man*. Now this looks to me marvelously like *controlling a permission by a principle*.[272]

After this blatant and clever charge against inconsistency, Wayland reinforced their points of agreement. First, neither party condoned the excommunication of slaveholders. Secondly, slaves were entitled to the same "intellectual, moral, and domestic" care as any other man. Thirdly, emancipation should never be bought at the price of violence. Despite these points of similarity, they in no manner outweighed the differences.[273]

At the risk of oversimplification, this debate can be summarized to its essential features. Wayland argued, first, the right to force another to work without contract or consent precluded forced compliance. Violence was embedded in the institution and it stripped the slave of his intellectual, moral, and spiritual development and violated the Biblical command to *love thy neighbor as thyself* and *to do unto others what you would have them do unto you*. Second,

[272]Ibid., 245-251; quotes on 250-251.
[273]Ibid., 253-254.

although slavery was always and everywhere sinful, the guilt attached to slaveholder was predicated both on the amount of light on the subject and the legal constraints in emancipating slaves. Third, although slavery existed in the Old and New Testament dispensation, it was permitted or allowed, not sanctioned or condoned. One cannot take *descriptive* statements as *prescriptive* for today. Fourth, revelation was progressive, and the Scriptures condemned slavery by principle, which is universal in application, rather than by precept, which is localized and historically restricted. The *letter* yields to the *spirit* as the *permission* yields to the *precept*. Fifth, Biblical slavery was not racial slavery and therefore all races could properly enslave another. Slavery then was predicated on force. If the slave must yield to his master, the master must yield to his slave if the slave overpowered and enslaved the master. This, by natural consequence, made war interminable, and thereby instructions both enslave others and to yield to masters were incompatible.

Again, at the equal risk of oversimplification, Fuller's arguments can be summarized. First, since the Old Testament sanctioned slavery, and permitted it in the New, slavery was not always and necessarily a sin. Second, since American slaveholders inherited their property from their English forbearers, and often against their will, they should not be held responsible for its origin. Third, the right to own human property conferred no other right other than the original right of possession. If slavery stripped man of his intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, this was the fault of the slaveholder or legislative restrictions, but not of the institution itself. Fourth, its abuses were confused with the institution, but not embedded it in. Fifth, contemporaries today possessed no greater light or additional revelation than the New Testament church. The Scriptures taught not by principle, but through precept and apostolic example.

Christians today could not condemn what Christ and the apostles did not. To do so, would be to charge the Bible with error and to side with the infidel.

Wayland's two sons, Francis and H.L. Wayland, confessed in their compiled memoir of Wayland that they were never fully aware of the impact of this debate upon the larger public. "How far the correspondence circulated at the south we are not informed. We have no knowledge, however, of its having changed the opinions of any who, from interest or education, were defenders of slavery. The time had passed, and everything was hastening the inevitable and final appeal. Yet whatever the reception of his words, it never ceased to be, on his part, a cause of gratitude to God, that he had been permitted to lift his voice in behalf of human liberty." Perhaps they were right that it changed few, if any minds. Yet, it certainly portended a new boldness on his part as the reputedly low-key president wadded into public controversy. The political crisis of the 1840s, however, be it the Dorr Rebellion in his home state of Rhode Island, or the nation at large, with the Mexican-American War, left little room for fence-sitting.[274]

Historian John Patrick Daly noted that Wayland's antislavery argument "received serious and extended treatment-never afforded to abolitionist arguments" by "proslavery intellectuals and moralists."[275] The Fuller-Wayland debate spawned other such debates. Two Cincinnati Presbyterian pastors, Jonathan Blanchard, pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, and Nathan L. Rice, pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, spared off over several days in October 1845. Blanchard argued the proslavery position and Rice the antislavery position.[276] In September 1858, the proslavery Tennessee Methodist pastor William G. Brownlow, debated the abolitionist

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[274]Wayland and Wayland, *A Memoir*, 2:57-58.
[275] See John Patrick Daly, *When Slavery was Called Freedom: Evangelicalism, Proslavery, and the Causes of the Civil War* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2002); 105-108; 116-117; quote on 105-106.
[276]J. Blanchard and N.L. Rice, A *Debate on Slavery: Held in The City of Cincinnati, on the First, Second, Third, and Sixth Days of October, 1845, Upon the Question: Is Slave-Holding in Itself Sinful, and the Relation Between Master and Slave, A Sinful Relation?* (Cincinnati: WM. H. Moore & Co., Publishers, 1846).

pastor Abram Pryne.[277] Naturally, these debates were held in Midwestern or Northern cities as southern laws had long outlawed such discussion below the Mason-Dixon.

Two leading Southern journals felt compelled to weigh in on the debate. The *Southern Literary Messenger* lauded both participants as worthy Christian brethren and cordial debaters. First, Wayland mischaracterized Southern slavery as an institution inherently violent and unrestrained in its use of force to uphold it. Rather, it was regulated and restricted by legislation. Second, he interjected abstract political and moral science questions into a into a scriptural debate and thus failed to prove that abridging personal liberty infringed upon spiritual and moral rights. If the institution violated these rights, why then was it sanctioned in the Scriptures? Wayland dangerously traded concrete constitutional and scriptural sanction for mere abstract human opinion. Third, Wayland reasoned backward, not forward. Wayland generalized first, and then sought Biblical confirmation, rather than ascertaining Biblical teaching, then generalizing from it. In short, Wayland's conclusions were wrong because he started from false premises. Wayland falsely assumed that slavery was sinful, and then reasoned from the Scriptures that it was. Wayland labored diligently, but to no avail, to force a principled reinterpretation on the plain meaning of Old and New Testament teaching. Fourth, the abolitionist doctrine of immediate emancipation falsely assumed that slave would be better free, than enslaved and yet provisionally and spiritually cared for. Even worse, its association with infidelity more accurately reflected its essential nature than its presumed Christian connections.[278]

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[277] W.G. Brownlow and A. Pyrne, *Ought American Slavery to be Perpetuated? A Debate Between Rev. W.G. Brownlow and Rev. A. Pyrne. Held at Philadelphia, September, 1858* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1858).
[278]"Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution," in *Southern Literary Messenger* (September. 1845) 11, 513-528.

The *Southern Quarterly Review* accused Wayland of misusing and twisting the Scriptures to support his preconceived opinions and wrongfully distinguished between principles and precepts. If the Old Testament permitted slavery as Wayland conceded, then it sanctioned it, but Wayland insisted that what was permitted was not likewise sanctioned! Likewise, the New Testament regulated the relationship, but did not sanction the institution. His dual claim was incompatible and Wayland then was forced between abandoning his argument or abandoning the Bible. His reasoning was ridiculous and assumed that the Biblical writers did not condemn by precept but by a sleight of hand did so in principle. He then presumed to know what the Bible really meant, by moving beyond what it actually said. In short, Wayland swapped the written text for private opinion.[279]

Northerners alike shared their thoughts. William Hague, for example, writing on behalf on the Boston Conference of Ministers, developed an extended response in March 1847 to the Fuller-Wayland debates. Ironically, although antislavery himself, he wrote to correct certain failures in Wayland's analysis "as to the manner in which primitive Christianity treated slavery." Hague wrote, not to refute Fuller per se, but to clarify where Wayland erred or could have improved. It is shameful, he wrote, that the discussion should have even taken place, that nineteenth-century Christians should even advocate "that the essential principles of the slave-system itself, Christianity does not reprobate," and "that a master may claim to be by right the sovereign lord and owner of his fellow-man, and yet to be his brother in Christ." Fuller's position, he stated flatly, was "built on the sand."[280]

The Southern Literary Messenger again returned to the Fuller-Wayland debate. Five key points are notable here. First, Wayland blundered by equating the practice of slavery with the

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[279]"Slavery in the Southern States," *The Southern Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1845) 8, 16, 317-328.
[280] Ibid.

violation of a moral law. Second, Wayland missed the point when he argued that though God sanctioned Hebrew slavery, he did not do so to all men at all times, for as Fuller argued, God would never have sanctioned any act to anyone that was morally wrong. Third, since the New Testament permitted slavery under the cruel regime of the Roman Empire, how much more so would the Bible permit it under the more benign American South. Fourth, modern churches wrongfully excommunicated those whom the apostle Paul would have welcomed as Christian brethren. Fifth, Wayland falsely equated the institution of slavery with the treatment within slavery.[281]

Hague argued that Fuller's Biblical argument did "greater disservice to the cause of religion and humanity" than all "the traffickers of human flesh whom the laws of Christian nations now condemn as pirates." The slaveholder at least, he argued, hid not their lust for gain, but the Christian teacher corrupted the "public sentiment" and declared what is a sin not to be a sin and removed all remedy for, and severed "all moral power in the world that can destroy that system." Hague, in fact, held Northern Christian proslavery advocates equally guilty as slaveholders, and added, that if a slaveholder renounced the Biblical sanction for slavery and worked, despite legal restraints, to emancipate his slaves, he bore less guilt than Northern Christians who justified Scriptural slavery. "The former is a slaveholder in name," he explained, "but not in truth and in spirit; the latter is called a non-slaveholder, but a change of residence would make him an owner of men and women, and he is now a slaveholder in principle, feeling, and in guiltiness." He added that God judged men, not solely on "overt acts" but "to the intents of their hearts,-the objects of their approval or abhorrence."[282]

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[281] "Slavery as a Moral Relation," in *The Southern Literary Messenger* (July 1851), 17, 393-410.
[282] William Hague, *A Review of the Correspondence Between Richard Fuller and Francis Wayland on Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, & Lincoln, 1847), 3-9.

Hague acknowledged several major flaws in this debate, the first two directed toward Fuller and the third directed toward Wayland. First, Hague argued that the reason the Scriptures failed to condemn slavery by precept, was that slavery had long disappeared in Judea. All New Testament references then, applied only to Roman laws regarding slavery. The New Testament epistles, written only to inner Jewish-Christian circles, had no need to address practices long abandoned. He attacked Fuller's interpretation of Leviticus 25, which restricted bondage only to heathen nations, as evidence of *perpetually* sanctioned slavery, for verses 9 and 10 of the same chapter, freed *all* slaves every fiftieth year in the season of jubilee.[283] Furthermore, unlike the origins of American slavery, the Mosaic Law forbid man-stealing and made it a capital punishment (Ex. 21:16) and Paul reaffirmed this in the New Testament (I Tim. 1:10). The Mosaic law, then, Hague argued, had built-in mechanisms to abolish slavery.

Second, the New Testament was written to instruct and encourage Christian churches and converts, not as a commentary on Roman practices. Roman law was simply the backdrop in which the church was born. It is unreasonable to expect then, Hague added, that the apostles would explicitly condemn *all* Roman law already forbidden to Christians. His moral precepts were universal, but Christ "rebuked only the specific evils which fell under his notice." Hence, Christ never condemned the caste system in India or Roman gladiatorial sports, nor slavery in Judea, because "the Jewish law, instead of sanctioning any form of slavery, had already

[283] Note: John Henry Hopkins, Bishop of the Diocese of Vermont, argued that the emancipation of slaves every fiftieth year applied *only* to *Hebrew* slaves. See John Henry Hopkins, *A Scriptural, Ecclesiastical, and Historical View of Slavery, from the Days of the Patriarch Abraham, to the Nineteenth Century Addressed to the Right Rev. Alonzo Potter, D.D.,* (New York: W.I. Pooley & Co., 1864), 10-11; in contrast, the Rev. George B. Cheever, Pastor of the Church of the Puritans, argued the opposite. He argued that the phrase to *all the inhabitants of the land* was too inclusive to suggest restrictions between Hebrews and non-Hebrews. See George B. Cheever, *The Guilt of Slavery and the Crime of Slaveholding Demonstrated from the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1860; reprint 1969), 266-267; 278-279.

extirpated it from the land." He charged Fuller, then, with erroneously arguing that silence implied sanction.[284]

Third, the "law of Christ" superseded the "law of Rome." The former, he argued, "governed all relations" in the New Testament church, and he chided Wayland for merely substituting principles for precepts. Christians then, living under a new dispensation and under the "law of Christ" lived under a new code that modified their relation to civil society. Christians were forbidden to participate in civil affairs and cultural norms that violated the "law of Christ." Paul, for example, frequently used the phraseology "law of Christ." Therefore instructions to *love that neighbor as thyself* and *to treat others as you would have them treat you* forbid slavery by implication. This being the case, to condemn slavery by precept, was to condemn Roman law, not slavery in the abstract for the "law of Christ" already forbid it. The New Testament message was universal, but its letters explicitly written to local churches, and thus it made no sense to condemn Roman practices that Christians were restricted from anyway. "A community governed by such laws as these," Hague explained, "could never make a man serve as a slave, nor would it be possible for one of them to hold his Christian brother in bondage against his will for a single hour." Yet, what about Christian slaveholders who continued the practice? [285]

The "law of Christ" fundamentally altered the relationship. If Christian masters did not free their slaves, the slaves were instructed to obey, not because the relationship was sanctioned, but rather out of their duty *to God*, and not *to man* and so to bear witness to their master in this manner. Rather than granting *scriptural* permission, it recognized its *legal* protection, and if the master refused to dissolve the relationship, and since armed revolt was out, the slave was instructed to suffer, not *unto man*, but *unto God*, until the day of liberation. For example,

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[284]Hague, *A Review*, 9-15, quote on 15.
[285] Ibid., 17-35, quote on 35.

although Paul wanted the recently converted and escaped slave Onesimus to stay with him in Rome, Paul recognized the *legal* right that Philemon had over Onesimus, and though he sent him back, he urged Philemon to receive him, *not as a slave, but as a brother*. Paul, Hague argued, worked through legal channels but instructed Philemon as to his *higher duty* under the "law of Christ."[286]

Hague railed against southern apologists who argued that since they inherited an institution begun by their English forebears, they were not responsible for its practice. "Does the duration of wrong," William Ellery Channing similarly asked, "the increase of it by continuance, convert it into a right?"[287] Hague conceded their original point, but argued that they *were* responsible for its *continuation*. What if the situation were reversed he asked? Referencing the North African states that had earlier enslaved both English and American sailors, he asked how southerners would respond if they defended their practice by suggesting that their generation had not begun their practice and that the Scriptures sanctioned the relationship? Would Americans then consent to this? Hague noted that Southerners of recent years defended slavery more fervently than previous generations had, despite their grievance that the system was generally begun against their will, yet they defended it with greater zeal. The passage of time, he argued, rather than lessening guilt, should rather reinforce the urgency to end it! "Amidst the agitation of recent years, however," he explained, "many leading men in the land have deemed the avowal of such a sentiment to be contrary to a safe policy, and have proclaimed slavery to be, not an entailed misfortune, but a righteous relation sanctioned by the Christian scriptures." He charged the Southern churches and Christians "to a great duty" of renouncing "that the men of Europe or America have no more right of ownership in the flesh and blood of the children of Africa, than

[286] Ibid., 35-45.
[287] Channing, *Slavery*, 21.

the Africans have in theirs; and that, not power, or wealth, or color, can give a man a right to property in another man." Hague again charged those who sanctioned slaveholding through Scripture with greater complicity than reluctant slaveholders who renounced such sanctioning and worked toward its emancipation.[288]

Cyrus Pitt Grosvenor, a Boston Baptist minister, member of the American Anti-Slavery Society, officer of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, and editor of the first four editions of the *Christian Reflector*, derided Fuller's contention that "A right to the service of a man without his consent or contract conveys no additional rights but those proper and necessary to this original right" and in no manner justified harm done "to his mind, or soul, or domestic relations" as absurd and illogical. How could the relationship do anything but violate these rights? To suggest that the parent/child relationship was parallel to the master/slave relationship was preposterous, for the former was based on parental love but the latter was predicated on extorting the labor of one for the benefit of another. Fuller's definition, unlike Wayland suggested, was not new, but rather "the same old scheme employed by men time immemorial, for the purpose, first of making the wrongs they perpetrate seem to themselves right, and then, of persuading the rest of mankind to look with favor or at least with mitigated severity on their practices." Even worse for Fuller's position, he both argued that Scripture sanctioned slavery and suggested that men could not be trust with such "irresponsible power" and he longed for the day when it would be eradicated! If it was wrong, how could the Bible sanction it? If it was right, how could Fuller wish for its abolition? Fuller in fact, played both sides of the argument and essentially condemned in principle what the contended the Bible sanctioned in precept.[289]

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[288] Hague, *A Review*, 45-54, quote on 52 & 53-54.
[289] Cyrus Pitt Grosvenor, *A Review of the "Correspondence" of Messrs. Fuller & Wayland on the Subject of American Slavery* (Utica: Christian Contributor Office, 1847), 15; 17; 23; 32.

Grosvenor had an axe to grind with Wayland. A Baptist himself, he felt that Wayland conceded too much charity to Fuller and was too harsh toward abolitionists. Grosvenor was frustrated that Wayland simultaneously condemned slavery and respected the slaveholder. The two, he argued, were incompatible and irreconcilable. He conceded that Wayland "employed much of sound and unanswerable arguments against slavery" but he limited its impact by his admission that the New Testament no where explicitly condemned slavery by precept. This latter point was precisely the admission that Fuller and Southerners alike wanted and thus Wayland played right into their hands. Grosvenor in fact argued that the New Testament did explicitly condemned slavery by precept. Jesus taught in parables for example, which conveyed truth through illustration, and the irony is that the common man understood its meaning but the intellectual too often overlooked its plain meaning in search of hidden truths. By implication, Fuller demanded the literal wording that condemned slavery, when Scriptural passages plainly condemned it through illustration and teaching.[290]

He argued, for example, that Jesus repetitiously used the phrase "it shall not be so among you" to warn his disciples not to model gentile or heathen practices, including slavery. Christians were to live in Rome, but not to be of Rome. In Matthew 20:21-28 and Luke 22:24-30 Grosvenor contended that Jesus condemned slavery explicitly and by implication in these passages. To suggest otherwise, he argued, was to read into the Bible a different meaning than which was intended by the author. Grosvenor unequivocally suggested that both the general tone of the Bible worked against slavery, but equally contended that it also worked against it by precept. In fact, he threw down the gauntlet and challenged the slaveholder to prove from the New Testament that it sanctioned Christian slaveholding by precept. "Such an absurdity," he argued, "is not ascribable to the teachings of Christ." Wayland, in short, missed a golden

[290] Ibid., 144-146.

opportunity to slam the door shut on Fuller, but conceded too much ground in suggesting that the New Testament condemned slavery by principle, but not in precept.[291]

Albert Taylor Bledsoe, proslavery advocate and professor of mathematics at the University of Virginia, published a lengthy review on Wayland, drawn both from his *Elements of Moral Science* and his debate with Fuller in his work *Liberty and Slavery* (1856) which testified to the significance, if not the manner in which Wayland rattled the proslavery camp. Bledsoe's analysis, dotted with sarcasm, criticized too much and analyzed too little, and refuted Wayland, less by engaging his arguments, than by making his own. Bledsoe denied that the right to own a slave conferred any right beyond ownership. Wayland, he charged, overlooked "the fact that the Southern statesman vindicates the institution of slavery on the ground that it finds the Negro race already so degraded as to unfit it for a state of freedom." Slavery was not meant for the "enlightened" but for the "ignorant and the debased." Bledsoe charged Wayland with contradiction by arguing for the abolition of slavery on the ground of its sinfulness, yet against its immediate abolition on the grounds that slaves were not prepared for freedom. This latter point, he argued, merely confirmed his own. Bledsoe, argued that Wayland misapplied the Golden Rule in his contention that if the slave wished for freedom, he should be granted it just as the master would if his role were reversed. Bledsoe countered, that the Bible equally sanctioned slavery, and unless one conceded that God overlooked this incompatibility, that the two could coexist. Rather than the Golden Rule granting the slave freedom, it impressed upon the master the duty to treat his slave justly, just as he would want to be treated *were the master himself a slave*. It nowhere pretended liberation for the slave.[292]

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[291] Ibid., 145-153; quote on 152.
[292] Albert Taylor Bledsoe, *An Essay on Liberty and Slavery* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1856), 43-54; 64-79; quote on 54.

"He habitually overlooks the fact," Bledsoe wrote, "that slavery results, not from the action of the individual, but from an ordinance of the State. He forgets that it is a civil institution, and proceeds to argue as if it were founded in individual wrong." Furthermore, the abolitionist erroneously assumed that the institution was intended for the benefit of the master alone and not the slave. Bledsoe, denied Wayland's argument that slavery enriched the slaveholder's happiness at the expense of the slave, by whimsically arguing that the relationship was mutually beneficial. He argued that the slaveholder's right to the slave's labor, did not confer right over his soul. The slave, though possessed as property, remained a man, or rights talk was meaningless, and furthermore that these rights were defined, not by abolitionists, but "by the word of God." Bledsoe argued that the charge *that all men were created equal* did not concede equality of office, social rank, economic roles, suffrage, political participation, or nullify meritorious advancement. Liberty was not a precondition of equality. Rights are not inalienable and possessed from birth, but accumulated as individuals acquired the means to manage them. The slave then, unsuited for freedom, had no right to freedom as he is unprepared for it. People are born equal, he argued, but not equally free and independent. A government, by nature, suppresses the rights of some, to protect the right of the many and equality is always predicated on its social and political context.[293]

David Christy, the Cincinnati newspaper editor, geologist and antislavery writer, further cautioned churches and biblical commentators from moving beyond the written text. In his review of antislavery arguments from the *Christian Intelligencer*, he ridiculed his contemporaries for believing that after eighteen hundred years of silence they held more light on slavery than did the Apostles. "Is it possible that the Holy Spirit would withhold all knowledge of the Divine will from them, on so important a question? And, is it possible, that the Apostles would be contented

[293] Ibid., 82-96; 102-137; quote on 82-83; 102.

to remain in uncertainty, during all their lives, as to what duty required in relation to sixty millions of bondmen, without once asking for Divine direction?" He accused slaveholding critics of subverting the infallibility of Scripture by substituting a "higher law" than Scripture itself on slavery. He wrote: "The example of the Apostles, in their teachings on slavery, had been pronounced an insufficient guide to the people of this age, and a doubt was thus thrown over the Scriptures as an infallible rule of moral conduct. A higher law than the Bible, as heretofore interpreted, was demanded for the exigencies of the times."[294]

John Henry Hopkins, although a northerner and the Bishop of the Diocese of Vermont, equally chastised fellow Christians for their presumption in inferring how God *should* have acted. "Who are we," he asked, "that virtually blot out the language of the sacred record, and dictate to the majesty of heaven what *HE* shall regard as sin and reward as duty? Who are we that are ready to trample on the doctrine of the Bible, and tear to shreds the Constitution of our country, and even, plunge the land into the untold horrors of civil war, and yet boldly pray to the God of Israel to bless our very acts of rebellion against this sovereign authority?" He conceded that these attitudes often stemmed from the ignorance of Northerners who had never visited the South and believed the lies of abolitionist propagandists.[295]

The Methodist Ohio Rev. Charles Elliott, author of the two-volume antislavery work, *Sinfulness of American Slavery* (1851) provided his own testimony on the debate. Elliott argued that Wayland, in his distinction on guilt, conceded too much ground, because if guilt alone were attached to knowledge, and if non-guilt were attached to ignorance, slaveholders continued in willful ignorance or defended slaveholding "by mere customs and usages." Elliott blasted Fuller for supporting a relic of the barbarism of the ancient world. Rather than selecting "good

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[294] David Christy, *Pulpit Politics; or, Ecclesiastical Legislation on Slavery, in its Disturbing Influences on the American Union* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1862; reprint 1969), 88; 426.
[295]Hopkins, *A Scriptural, Ecclesiastical, and Historical*, 16-17.

examples after which to copy" slaveholders "select degradation, and the lowest forms of degraded humanity" to form their models. He argued that even if no other argument existed "in or out of our Bible" this alone "ought to sink it forever." Fuller, he argued, could not "deliver slavery from the weight of this millstone." Elliott charged Fuller with romanticizing slavery and argued that its abuses, were not aberrations, but rather "its natural and legitimate workings." Fuller, he argued, defended a slave institution that did not exist, rather than "American slavery, as authorized by law, sustained by court decisions, and practiced under the sanction and protection of these laws and decisions." Fuller, for example, may defend their right to read and write, but the fact remained that they were legally restricted from it. This latter condition represented slavery as it truly existed, not the former.[296]

The argument seemed without end. Yet, while the country expanded continentally by balancing its free states and slave states the two major political parties, the Whigs and the Democrats, maintained their constituent base on both sides of the Mason-Dixon. The founding generation's fears that political parties portended factionalism, proved the cross-sectionalism glue that bound Northern and Southern interests together. The Mexican-American War however, with the attempted, yet failed Wilmot Proviso that threatened to ban slavery in any territory seized in the war, tore at this truce, yet not before Protestant denominational bodies formally fractured into Northern and Southern institutional wings. The intensity of the political turmoil heightened the intensity of the proslavery-antislavery factions, yet the slavery debate remained somewhat stagnant as neither party conceded ground to the other. In the end, of course, warfare, rather than arguments, settled the score.

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[296]Charles Elliott, *Sinfulness of American Slavery*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: L. Swormstedt & J.H. Power, 1851); I:33-34; 131-133; 246-248.

Even a cursory glance at proslavery and antislavery writings underscore what both parties felt was at stake. The heightened emotional and political state of events linguistically attached cataclysmic and symbolic meaning to these developments. Their language leaves little doubt that many believed civilization itself was at stake. Thornwell, for one, left no doubt. In a sermon preached in March 1850, he laid out that "The parties in this conflict are not merely Abolitionists and Slaveholders; they are Atheists, Socialists, Communists, Red Republicans, Jacobins on the one side, and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. In one word, the world is the battleground, Christianity and Atheism the combatants, and the progress of humanity at stake."[297] Thomas Dew called upon "the reverend clergy, whose examples should be pure, and whose precepts should be fraught with wisdom and prudence, to beware, lest in their zeal for the black, they suffer too much of the passion and prejudice of the human heart to meddle in those pure principles by which they should be governed."[298]

The northern Episcopalian, Samuel Seabury, uttered similar sentiments: "Slavery is at present the great point of antagonism, not so much, I think, between the North and the South, as between order, conservatism, and Christianity on the one hand, and misrule, anarchy, and infidelity on the other."[299] The South Carolinian James Hammond, writing to the British abolitionist Thomas Clarkson, charged abolitionists with erecting "a higher standard of morals than the Almighty" and to have done more damage to the extension of Christianity "than all the infidels who have ever lived." He charged their "new-fangled and ethereal code of morals" as more "delusional" than the infidelity of Voltaire and Hume.[300]

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[297] James Henley Thornwell, "The Christian Doctrine of Slavery" in B.M. Palmer, ed., *The Collected Writings*, 398-436; quote on 405-406.
[298] Dew, *Notes*, 459.
[299] Seabury, *American Slavery*, 20.
[300] James H. Hammond, "Slavery in the Light of Political Science" in Elliot, *Cotton is King*, 636-637.

The Massachusetts Congregationalist pastor Amos Phelps, argued equally for its seriousness though from a different ideologically perspective. "Liberty and slavery are, from their nature, discordant elements. They can never harmonize. They can never, for any length of time, co-exist in the same political fabric. Sooner or later they will fly asunder."[301] The Methodist Rev. Charles Elliott, concurred, noting that "There is a direct and irreconcilable antagonism between the principles of the slave system, as established by law, and the principles of the Christian religion." He further argued that "the worst kind of emancipation is infinitely better than the continuance of slavery."[302] The abolitionist George Cheever, never one to mince words, tartly lambasted legislators and pastors alike who sanctioned slaveholding, flatly stating that "If there be a lower deep in hell than any other deep, such men will, beyond all question, occupy it" and further warned that the country had become "the battle-ground of religious principle against a wicked political expediency, and of God's authority in national affairs against the spirit of conquest, covetousness, oppression, and diplomatic fraud and selfishness."[303] Princeton theologian, Charles Hodge argued the opposite, warning that "the opinion that slaveholding is itself a crime, must operate to produce the disunion of the States, and the division of all the ecclesiastical societies in this country."[304]

Northern sentiment remained divided on the morality of slavery, even more so on the forms that emancipation should take. In fact, northerners and theologians in general provided little encouragement if not outright disdain for abolitionists. Abolitionists and antislavery writers often could not even count on northern pastors and theologians for Scriptural assistance. Two notable examples are Moses Stuart, a former mentor and instructor of Wayland's, and Charles

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[301] Amos A. Phelps, *Lectures on Slavery and Its Remedy* (Boston: New-England Anti-Slavery Society, 1834), 23.
[302] Elliott, *Sinfulness of American Slavery*, 2:103; 309.
[303] Cheever, *God Against Slavery*, 25; 69.
[304] Charles Hodge "The Bible Argument on Slavery" in Elliott, *Cotton is King*, 837-873; quote on 870.

Hodge, the formidable Princeton theologian. Moses Stuart, professor of theology at Andover Seminary and pastor of First Church at New Haven, Connecticut, had established his reputation as the most learned Biblical exegete in American theology and in his celebrated debates against Unitarian theology. Stuart argued flatly that although Mosaic Law sanctioned slavery among the ancient Hebrews, Mosaic Law was *preparatory* and neither permanent nor complete. The New Testament did not condemn slavery, because unlike the Mosaic law which legislated for Jews, the apostles could not legislate *against* the Roman state. Slaveholders then, he argued, should not be for their act alone, but for the amount of light they possessed at the time. However, he flatly denied, in contrast to Wayland, that slavery was wrong in and of itself, for if the Scriptures permitted it at one time, then it was not sinful in itself. Whereas Wayland distinguished between slavery as sinful and slaveholding guilt, Stuart denied the sinfulness of slaver per se, but conceded that slaveholding guilt was proportional to their knowledge of wrongdoing. Wayland and Stuart, then, agreed on the latter, but not the former. Stuart did however, argue consistently with Wayland, that New Testament principles worked against the institution and he then laid out ten evils within slavery that condemned it in practice.[305]

Charles Hodge, the widely respected Princeton theologian, similarly refused, without explicit prohibition, to charge slaveholders with wrongdoing. Hodge had no patience for Wayland's argument that Jesus and the apostles condemned slavery in principle but not in precept for fear of consequences. The apostles did not hesitate to condemn polygamy or idolatry, the latter particularly interwoven into Roman culture, yet the apostles did not fail to condemn it for fear of the consequences. To condemn idolatry, was to array themselves against the state, but they did so anyhow. "If they did abstain from this declaration," Hodge noted of slavery, "as is

[305] See for example, Moses Hodge, *Conscience and the Constitution with Remarks on the Recent Speech of the Hon. Daniel Webster in the Senate of the United States on the Subject of Slavery* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1850), 22-56; 100-106; quote on 33.

admitted, it must have been because they did not consider it as in itself a crime. No other solution of their conduct is consistent with their truth or fidelity." Hodge further denied that the right to possess property in slaves conferred all other rights necessary to ensure compliance. Hodge argued that if the former argument be conceded, it afforded no protection of the individual from the state or the child from the parent. Hodge charged Wayland with failure to distinguish between the relation itself and its physical and mental abuses. "We hold it to be the grand principle of the gospel," Hodge responded, "that every man is bound to promote the moral, intellectual, and physical improvement of his fellow men. Their civil or political relations are in themselves matters of indifference." Essential equality then, did not portend social or political equality. Hodge did however, concede, that the principles of the Scriptures worked *against* slavery in practice, yet the abolitionists, in their zero-sum game, only inflamed the South and were counter-productive in ending slavery by means other than immediate abolition.[306]

These arguments are redundant, but they reinforce the fractured nature of evangelicals on the subject of slavery. That this proslavery argument seemed from a prominent Northern theologian likely made its reception particularly bitter. Abolitionists remained a minority from start to finish, but antislavery moderates proved numerous. Naturally, Southerners were stung to lose defectors to antislavery circles, such as James G. Birney and Sarah and Angelina Grimké, and no less so for Northerners. Hodge, would in the end, cast his lot with the Republican Party, but like so many tortured souls of his generation, he staggered, rather than ran across the finish line. Yet, this same decade in which the Fuller-Wayland debate occurred was the same that split the Methodists and Baptists churches and tottered the cross-sectional alignment of the Whig-

[306] Charles Hodge, "The Bible Argument on Slavery" in Elliott, *Cotton is King*, 837-873; quotes on 852 and 871. For his changing views on slavery see Allen C. Guelzo, "Charles Hodge's Antislavery Moment," in John W. Stewart and James H. Moorhead, eds., *Charles Hodge Revisited: A Critical Appraisal of His Life and Work* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdemans Publishing Company, 2002), 299-325; and David Torbett, *Theology and Slavery: Charles Hodge and Horace* Bushnell (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2006).

Democratic Party system. Wayland, no less than his Northern and Southern counterparts, was tested as to his fidelity to his principles. His dualistic reformist and conservative approach to civic responsibility failed in the passionately charged political atmosphere that increasingly left little room for fence-sitting. Yet, the subsequent political crisis that erupted in the two decades before the Civil War provide greater insight into which half of the fence he sat on.

CHAPTER FOUR

On the Brink of War: Dorr, Mexico, and Civil Disobedience

In a letter written to Congregationalist pastor and antislavery author, William Ellery Channing, the Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner wrote in June of 1842 that he noted a change in the antislavery views of Francis Wayland. "I was in Providence yesterday, when I saw President Wayland. His views on slavery, and with regard to the South have materially changed lately."[307] Too much could be read into this statement. Wayland may have experienced a legitimate change of heart, or it might wishful thinking by Sumner that Wayland proved a useful convert.[308] Yet, by the end of the decade, something had changed in Wayland's perspective. Recently returned from a tour of European universities, Wayland had locked horns in heated debate on slavery with British abolitionists. His moderation toward emancipation and abolitionism were frowned upon and Wayland confessedly was stung by criticism. Upon his return to America, politically charged events in his home state of Rhode Island, and in the nation at large, did not afford Wayland leisured contemplation of the musings of his critics.

Wayland walked into a firestorm when he returned to the United States. Providence, Rhode Island was torn by the turmoil of the Dorr Rebellion. The simmering Texas annexation issue broke out into the fury of the Mexican War. The two-party system fractured at the seams with the Wilmot Proviso. The Compromise of 1850 and its inflammatory Fugitive Slave bill, threatened to engulf the nation in a head-to-head battle over civil disobedience. Wayland, swayed by local and distant events, weighed in both publicly and privately. His cordial yet pointed debate with Richard Fuller further drew Wayland out into the open in expressing his viewpoints. Whatever the merits of Sumner's observation in 1842, Wayland left little doubt that

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[307] Charles Sumner to William Ellery Channing, June 23, 1842 in Edward Lillie Pierce, *Memoirs and Letters of Charles Sumner*, 4, vols. (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 2:211.
[308] See Van Broekhoven, *Suffering with Slaveholders*, 217 (footnote 21).

by the Compromise of 1850 little room was left for silence or fence-sitting. If anything, the 1840s proved an eventful decade for Wayland and the nation alike.

The territorial, military, and political turmoil of the 1840s too easily shielded the volatility of the previous decade. Comparatively speaking, the 1840s seemed the more eventful decade, yet this is misleading. The rebirth of coordinated American abolitionism underscored the simmering tension beneath the surface. The resulting mail campaigns and the Gag Rule exposed the potential explosive power of the slave question. The South squashed antislavery sentiment in its jurisdiction, restricted free speech, and revealed a heightened sensitivity and defensiveness toward Northerner criticism. The Nullification Crisis and the removal of the Georgia Indians from their treaty-protected land revealed the breakdown in law and order. Nevertheless, both the Whigs and Democrats retained loyal constituents that transcended the Mason-Dixon. So long as slavery remained a nuance, rather than an all-consuming political question, and as long as the American two-party system maintained its cross-sectional balance, the Union stood protected from ruin, and maintained the false illusion that the country could continue in a perpetual state of status quo.[309]

This illusion was shattered when the Texas annexation issue resurfaced in mid-1840s and led directly to the Mexican War. Although wartime support was split along party lines, support for the Wilmot Proviso split along sectional lines. The Wilmot Proviso, which opted to restrict slavery in any territory acquired from the war, fractured the Whig party along sectional lines. This realignment did not kill it completely, but it portended its doom less than a decade later. The Compromise of 1850, designed to heal the feud created by the war, merely exacerbated and prolonged the question of whether the newly acquired territories would be slave or free upon

[309] See Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), for background on these events.

statehood. Its most controversial measure, the Fugitive Slave Law, indicted a complacent North in the murky deeds of the South and spun a host of writings and sermonizing on higher law doctrine and civil disobedience. Francis Wayland, no stranger to controversy, albeit he had long worked best behind a desk rather than in public view, could no longer contain his silence. As the country drifted toward a state of radicalism and realignment, so did he.[310]

In 1840, Brown University granted Wayland a leave of absence so that he might tour European universities to develop models for his planned reforms at Brown. His timing was unfortunate, for he toured England only months after London hosted the World Anti-Slavery Convention.[311] His moderate viewpoints did not sit well with British Baptists. However much he railed against slavery in his writings, his policy toward emancipation and abolition seemed tame by comparison with British and American abolitionists. In fact, Wayland felt constantly badgered by British abolitionist who continually pestered him as to the position of American Baptists on slavery and as to his own views as well. Wayland, at times felt, that they cared for nothing else:

> All the talk about abolition, &c. It is amazing to perceive how this question seems to absorb every other among the dissenters, and to what extent they carry out their notions. A man who does not adopt their opinions is, it would seem, excommunicated from church and society. I have already had some reason to observe this. May God grant me grace to act like a Christian, and the more abundantly to love them the less I be loved. I respect their motives and their love of freedom, although I have small sympathy with their modes of expression.[312]

Wayland complained that the same bitterness and animosity in English unionism and political strife, spilled over into religious and benevolent associations. British Baptists, he

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[310] The political fallout of these events are aptly covered in Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005).

[311] See Annie Heloise Abel and Frank J. Klingberg, eds., *A Side-Light on Anglo-American Relations 1839-1858. Furnished by the Correspondence of Lewis Tappan and Others with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1927; 1970); Clare Taylor, *British and American Abolitionists: An Episode in Transatlantic Understanding* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1972); On the British abolitionist movement see David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 168-226.

[312] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2:12.

charged, blatantly ostracized dissenters, and falsely made slavery the basis for fellowship. Their established policy was principled exclusion, but he asked if exclusion formed their policy, why they did not demand conformity in other areas? By extension, temperance or women's rights should command equal fidelity to the party line. However, this was not the case. In squashing dissent, Wayland criticized abolitionists for employing the same ostracizing tactics that they charged the Establishment with. "Here, then, we see in dissenters the admission of the very principles which they abhor when put in practice by the Establishment. It is an assumption of the power and right to inflict disabilities or exclusions on those who differ from them in points on which every man justly claim to entertain an opinion of his own." He added, quite significantly, that it was little wonder that people were attracted to the Establishment, for despite it evils, it at least accorded stability and order.

Whatever his pretension to civility, there was no escaping the equally strong convictions of British abolitionists. His major works were known throughout England, but it was his conservatism toward emancipation and abolitionism that repeatedly frustrated British abolitionists. His latest work, *The Limitations of Human Responsibility*, became a particular target for reproach. One minister flatly told him that he could not speak in his church, for while he had no personal objection, "some doctrines in your treatise on "The Limitations of Human Responsibility" have rendered you unpopular in England, and, were I to do it, I should incur reprehension." This same pattern repeated itself throughout his trip.[313]

His European tour, in the final analysis, proved positive for Wayland despite his frustrating experiences. His overall impression was favorable and it formed the basis of his educational reforms at Brown. It also motivated him to reconsider his views on emancipation and abolitionism. It oversimplifies the American context too much to argue that this trip transformed

[313]Ibid., 2:12-13.

his politics, but it certainly motivated him to reconsider his position toward emancipation and civil disobedience. Politics and sectional tension escalated dramatically in wake of the Mexican-American War. This war, to be fair, transformed most people who were connected to politics.

However much his views changed, he first walked into a civil rebellion in Rhode Island that left one wondering just how far he had in fact drifted, if at all. Thomas Wilson Dorr founded the Democratic Constitutionalist Party. Rhode Island had a long history of stubbornness. It had refused to send a delegation to the constitutional convention in Philadelphia in 1787 and only ratified the Constitution in 1790, the last of the original states to do to. As late as the 1840s, Rhode Island still clung to its original colonial charter of 1663. Its growing working-class, immigrant population challenged the narrow boundaries of its constitution, which restricted the franchise to those owning $134 in land or paid $7 in rent, and which by 1840 disenfranchised more than half of its adult male population. It favored the coastal traders and farmers more than the manufacturing interior, provided no bill of rights, or an independent judiciary. Its exclusionary suffrage restrictions quickly boiled over into a political coup.[314]

In 1841, the Rhode Island Suffrage Association, headed by Thomas Dorr, bypassed the legislature, called forth their own state convention, and drafted a People's Constitution that established universal white manhood suffrage and an independent judiciary. Although not legal, the authorities did not interfere with its "ratification." In April 1842, Dorr was elected under the new charter and asked for ratification under this election rather than the previous one. Samuel King, Rhode Island's governor, appealed to President Tyler for help. The president, albeit reluctantly, ordered in federal troops after Dorr was inaugurated governor on May 3. In response, Dorr attempted to seize the state arsenal, but his men had little stomach for armed

[314]See Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy,* 539-545; and Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 599-603.

revolt, and Dorr was captured and imprisoned for one year until released. Meanwhile, the charter government, with the Dorrites boycotting, ratified the "Law and Order Constitution" that enfranchised all native-born men who paid a minimum of a dollar in taxes, yet held immigrants to the terms of the original charter. It went into effect in November 1842 and though it expanded the voting franchise, change proved very moderate. Democrats generally supported the movement, but Whigs feared it an example of anarchy.

Wayland, as a resident of Providence, and the president of Brown University, the most prestigious institution of higher learning in the state, could not sit idly by without comment. His response, widely noted, was given to on May 22, 1842, in the First Baptist Church in Providence. Wayland interpreted the Dorr Rebellion as a war between civic order and lawless anarchy. The key issue, he argued, was not political, "but whether law or anarchy shall bear sway; not at the ballot boxes, to express our peaceful wishes, but, at the cannon's mouth, to determine whether we shall be governed by constitutional law, or trampled under foot by a lawless soldiery." What troubled Wayland was not the extension of suffrage, but rather the violence employed to attain it. The true principle established, he argued, was not the extension of suffrage, but rather the legitimatized use of violence to achieve change. If this principle were carried out to its logical end, an endless chain of governmental usurpations would occur. Force, not law, became the committed motif for change. It reinforced the flawed assumption that the majority overrode the will of the minority, and made politics into a simplified game of the strong triumphing over the weak. If the natural rights of individuals were not protected, he suggested that "solitude" was preferable than "slavery in company."[315]

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[315]Francis Wayland, *The Affairs of Rhode Island. A Discourse Delivered in the Meeting-House of the First Baptist Church, Providence, May 22, 1842* (Boston: William D. Ticknor, 1842), quotes on 6 and 17. For his general views on industry and agriculture in Rhode Island see Francis Wayland, *An Address Delivered Before the Rhode-Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, October 6, 1841* (Providence: E. Cranston & Co., Printers,

He railed that the protectors of law and order were condemned as the oppressors and the lawbreakers were hailed as emancipationists. He warned against repairing a defective constitution irrespective of existing laws and constitutional parameters. This latter proved particularly threatening for it sought the overthrow of a legitimate government through unlawful means. He explained:

> Whatever may have been the natural rights of men previously to a social organization, in forming such an organization, they enter into a mutual agreement to guarantee to each other the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. By virtue of this compact, every one of us is protected in the possession of all that he holds dear. After it has been formed, the whole society, both majority and minority, those in power and those out of power, are solemnly bound by its provisions. If a majority *out of power* may overturn it at will, a majority *in power* may do the same, and thus, all constitutional right is merged in the will of the strongest. He who undertakes to affect a revolution by force, thus, not only puts to the extremest hazard all the present interests of the community, but renders it perfectly uncertain in what manner it will ever again be organized.

Wayland did not argue against *all* revolutions. If the government proved utterly incapable of protecting the natural rights and liberties of its citizens, then revolution might prove justifiable. However, if revolutions were enacted for *personal* grievances alone, it would plunge society into anarchy. Wayland linked submission to government to submission to God. Since the institution of government was God ordained, rebellion against it was unlawful and ungodly, unless the government ceased to perform the essential functions it was originally instituted to perform.[316]

Wayland expanded this theme in a sermon he preached in July 1842. He praised the new constitution as a "noble act" and a "moral victory." Although he supported the expanded suffrage in the constitution, he was equally thankful that the forces of law and order prevailed

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1841) and Francis Wayland, *Address Before the Rhode-Island Society, for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, and the Rhode-Island Horticultural Society, at their Second Industrial Exhibition in Providence; Delivered September 12, 1851* (Providence: Knowles, Anthony & Co., 1852).

[316] Ibid., 28.

over the forces of civil anarchy. "It was the question," he explained, "whether we should be governed by constitutional law, or by brute force, force not merely of our own misguided citizens, but of men from other States, allured by the hope of plunder, or the demon-like love of mischief." The civil rebellion, he argued, was tempered by legitimate ends, but evolved by illegitimate means. The cure, he warned, was nearly worse than the disease. The rebellion, whatever its rationale or justification, violated constitutional constraints. Particularly worrisome, he ventured, was the fearful precedent established not only for citizens within the state, but for the citizens of other states who might provoke their own civil rebellion based on their example. If this were the case, there would be a complete breakdown in law and order.

> For weeks together it seemed as though the foundations of which the social fabric stood, were trembling. The very principles, by the admission of which, liberty can alone exist, and all that man holds dear be rendered inviolate, were denied, and the only course by which they could be vindicated seemed the resort to arms. It was inexpressibly painful to believe that there were men whom we had never been conscious of injuring, and to whom we bore no evil intention, who were nevertheless willing to wage war upon a peaceful community, and surrender all that renders life a blessing, to the will of lawless violence. And if this could ever be pleaded as a precedent, every one asked himself where in this continent would there be a refuge for liberty, innocence, and peace. All who have passed through this crisis, will agree with me in saying that every other evil is light in comparison with the mental agony which was suffered by every citizen, when he looked down into the chasm on the very verge of which we for some time seemed to be standing.[317]

He did not, however, simply indict rebellious Rhode Islanders in a civil rebellion. Wayland linked the civil breakdown to the judgment of God. America, he argued, had turned its back on God and assumed that it could go forward without His guidance. Its "national arrogance" and "forgetfulness" had "exposed us to ridicule." America wrongfully held other nations in contempt, and boasted that America alone possessed a monopoly on virtue. America falsely assumed that it was immune to the ills and misfortunes of its historical predecessors.

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[317] Francis Wayland, *A Discourse Delivered in the First Baptist Church, Providence, R.I. on the Day of Public Thanksgiving, July 21, 1842* (Providence: H.H. Brown, 1842); quotes 5-6; 9; 13-14.

National prosperity, in turn, made people selfish. He indicted America for not guarding its moral and intellectual development and he chastised individuals for their selfish disregard for others. He warned that resorting to force only exacerbated the problem, in that it merely substituted one problem for another. He furthered warned that intellectual development without moral improvement was futile, if not outright risky. Brighter intellects, if not protected by ethical restraint, only enabled the power-hungry to seize more, because regardless of intellectual improvement, the baser "passions" remained the same." He explained: "The passions of men are, at the present moment, the same as they have ever been. Civilization by presenting new objects of desires, has only whetted to a keener edge the appetite of cupidity, and universal information, by opening to all men every avenue to distinction, has only fanned to intenser fury the demom-like love of power."[318]

Human passions then, remained fixed, but intellectual and educational development grew, but proved unstable, if not outright dangerous, if not tailored by moral and ethical improvement. This, he argued, proved particularly important in a republican form of government. Contemporary events may have tempered his political viewpoints, and even pushed him toward more public confrontations, but his ethical reasoning retained the same prescription for alleviating societal ills.

> It is on the religion of Jesus Christ alone, that the freedom and security and permanency of every form of government must ultimately depend. If this be true in general, it is specially true of institutions like our own, where all the ancient barriers are removed, and constitutions and laws emanate so directly from the will of the people. Let us never then lose sight of the truth, that the only stable foundation of such a government as ours, is the moral principle of the people; and let us remember at the same time that the moral principle of a people can never be relied upon under strong temptations, unless it be sustained and upheld and vitalized by the precepts and hopes and sanctions of revealed religion.[319]

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[318] Ibid., 14; 18-19.
[319] Ibid., 19.

While Wayland cherished individual liberty, he argued that national prosperity was enriched through each individual helping his neighbor. Individual duty, did not negate corporate responsibility, but rather reinforced it. "And it is not enough," he explained, "for us to allow our fellowmen in this country to take care of themselves. God has made it our duty to take care of them; and unless we obey his laws, we must sooner or later suffer the consequences of our transgressions." Wayland encouraged religious instruction, community involvement, financial thrift, mutual forbearance, charity, and respect for the law. The citizens of Rhode Island were bound to the new constitution, but its workability, depended on the self-imposed constraints of community members and officials alike, and that "the highest and the lowest, the many and the few" were subject to the same law.

In a letter written to his uncle, Daniel S. Wayland, Sr., Francis Wayland reinforced the theme, that social stability was predicated on the mutual interests of its community members and its civil authority, each protected by character, civility, respect for the law, and constitutional constraints. History, he warned, afforded little encouragement that republican forms of governments were immune from such turmoil if the two interests diverged from one another.

> The very principles of social order have been questioned at the point of the bayonet; and though no was slain yet a patriot trembles when he sees that such things may be done. The prospects of this country to my eye seem gloomy. There is danger that the mere will of man's will come to be substituted for constitutional law. I fear also that our form of government presupposes a degree of unity in the people and of character in the executive and other departments of government which history teaches us has never existed and which experience begins to show us does not now exist. Constitutional obligations are becoming of less efficacy.[320]

In the judgment of historian Charles Cole, Wayland abandoned the progressivism notable in his earlier works. Cole suggested that this work was "hastily written" and "lacks the usual

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[320] Letter to Francis Wayland, Sr., Providence, August 22, 1842, Hay, MS-1C-4, II 43. See also Letter to Francis Wayland, Sr., Providence, July 6, 1842, Hay, MS-1C-4, II 43; and Letter to Basil Manly, Providence, February 9 1843, Hay, MS-IC-4, II 44.

calm, dispassionate approach of its author."[321] He noted that "The religious community could accept innovations in doctrine but it would not brook similar political changes. The popular evangelist could preach successfully on the comparatively harmless uncharted religious courses but to veer from the narrow political conservatism of his flock was to flirt with failure." Radical figures, such as Robert Dale Owen and Francis Wright, rather than orthodox theologians, generally promoted political radicalism. Legislating against temperance or prostitution was harmless enough, but they were unwilling "to shake the whole social fabric" with political radicalism. At best he argued, northern evangelists remained political conservatives.[322]

The historian Wilson Smith is more sympathetic to Wayland. Smith argued that Wayland analyzed this crisis from the perspective of a "moralist" not a constitutionalist." The "moral gravity" of the crisis led Wayland to sermonize politically from the pulpit, and despite his expressed support for suffrage, Wayland could not condone public violence.[323] Smith suggested that what separated Whiggish idealists like Wayland from Jacksonian Democrats, was less ends than means. Wayland supported suffrage through legalized means, but "secular reformers" cared more for its consequences. Yet, Smith argued that Wayland's intuitive ethics was too "inflexible" to suit the complexity of social ills and that Dorr was as equally convinced of the natural right to revolution as Wayland was to the "immorality of violence." Means, not ends mattered to the moral philosopher. "And Wayland believed," Smith explained, "that his way of gently opening social doors through patience, civil obedience, education, and industry would in turn unlatch the political gate that Dorr was trying to break down."[324]

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[321] Charles C. Cole Jr. *The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelists: 1826-1860* (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1966), 143.
[322] Ibid., 144.
[323] Wilson Smith, *Professors and Public Ethics: Studies of Moral Philosophers before the Civil War* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1956), 133.
[324] Ibid., 144-145.

Furthermore, Wayland attempted to play both the "academician" and the "layman" or the "theologian" and the "political commentator." Smith suggested that Whiggish politicians were caught between their promotion of orderly change and the economic forces creating this disorder. Many Whigs, he explained, skirted this dilemma by choosing one or the other. Wayland however, could not ignore such difficulties and he simultaneously sympathized with "the natural right of the Dorrites" and "the constitutional rights of the Law and Order advocates." Cole argued that Wayland's conservatism is best explained "in what he wanted to conserve." Preserving the "moral order" triumphed over protecting property, but the two were hardly mutually opposed, as moral stability *best* protected property rights. Protecting the latter then best served the interests of the former. "Common sense," he added, "led him into a conciliatory approach to a middle class of *both* Dorrites and anti-Dorrites."[325] In the end, Wayland's political vision avoided simplistic partisanship and his dualistic social vision was broad enough to sympathize with both parties, but his political ends remained limited and constrained by his moral means.

His social vision then was complex. It was simultaneously Manichean in its division between ethical and non-ethical means, and socially complex in its sympathies. His ethical means often constrained his political ends when their incompatibility prohibited compromise. It is essential to remember, that for Wayland, political stability rested on moral stability and political stability was incompatible with moral instability. Despite his political sympathies, his position in the Dorr Rebellion was consistent with his ethical principles. If Wayland be charged with rigid conservatism, he cannot be equally charged with flippant or whimsical inconsistency. His social and political visions were compatible, yet the feasibility of the former was tailored by

[325] Ibid.,146. See also a critique of Wayland in John Augustus Bolles, "*The Affairs of Rhode Island," being a Review of President Wayland's Discourse. A Vindication of the Sovereignty of the People and A Refutation of the Doctrines and Doctors of Despotism,* By a Member of the Boston Bar (Providence, B.T. Albro; Boston: B.B. Mussey, 1842).

the workability of the latter. Yet, if the Dorr rebellion challenged the boundaries of politics in Rhode Island, the denominational split of the Methodist and Baptist churches in the mid-1840s tested the limits of Christian fellowship. Wayland again, was indirectly drawn into the fray albeit he proved unable to moderate between the two extremes of separation or reconciliation.

A forerunner of the political split of the nation in 1861was the sectional split of the Methodist and Baptist denominations in the mid-1840s. Presbyterians had previously severed formal ties in 1837-38 into Old and New School factions. Its division was rent more by theological disputes than slavery, although the latter was a factor. In general, antislavery or outright abolitionist sentiment drew more from the New School and moderates or conservatives drew more the Old. The Methodists followed in 1844. The key issue was the rejection by Northern Methodists of slave-holding bishops. This issue burst into the open when Bishop James O. Andrew of Georgia inherited slaves by marriage to a slave-owning widow. In June 1844, the General Conference voted to remove Andrews from his post unless he emancipated his slaves. This proved too much for Southern Methodists, who withdrew from the General Conference, and formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Baptists followed a year later in 1845. Wielding a less formal institutional structure than their Methodist counterparts, the Baptists were nominally united in the Baptist Triennial Convention, made up of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society and the Foreign Missions Board. Northern Baptists grew hostile to slavery in general and to slaveholding missionaries in particular. In 1844, the Home Missionary Society, backed by Northern Baptists, rejected the Georgia nominated slaveholding James Reeve as a missionary to the Indians. Stunned by his rejection, in May 1845 the Southern Baptists withdrew

from the Triennial Convention and formed the Southern Baptist Convention, in Augusta, Georgia.[326]

What difference did the fractured churches make on the Union? Although the denominational splits did not cause the war, contemporary politicians certainly recognized their influence. Henry Clay, for one, recognized that the broken fellowship within the churches might spill over into political ones. In a letter dated April 7, 1845, Clay expressed his thoughts specifically toward the Methodist Episcopal Church, but his remarks were applicable in general.

> It was, therefore, with the deepest regret that I heard, in the course of the past year, of the danger of a division of the Church, in consequence of a difference of opinion existing on the delicate and unhappy subject of slavery. A division, for such a cause, would be an event greatly to be deplored, both on account of the Church itself and its political tendency. Indeed scarcely any public occurrence has happened for a long time that gave me so much real concern and pain as the menaced separation of the Church, by a line throwing all the Free States on one side, and all the Slave States on the other. I will not say that such a separation would necessarily produce a dissolution of the political union of these States; but the example would be fraught with imminent danger, and, in co-operation with other causes unfortunately existing, its tendency on the stability of the Confederacy would be perilous and alarming.[327]

John C. Calhoun concurred, noting the widespread interdenominational cooperation that once marked church influence in America, a spiritual unity that once promoted political unity. Their unity lost, they became two warring camps. In his last public speech of March 4, 1850, Calhoun linked the churches as one strand among many that held the nation together.

> The cords that bind the States together are not only many, but various in character. Some are spiritual or ecclesiastical; some political; others social. Some appertain to the benefit conferred by the Union, and others to the feeling of duty

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[326]See C.C. Goen, *Broken Churches, Broken Nations: Denominational Schisms and the Coming of the American Civil War* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1985), 65-107; Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion and Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 113-150; Richard Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics*, 133-174; for Presbyterians see George Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970); for Methodists, see Donald G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 212-282.

[327]Henry Clay "Mr. Clay to Dr. W.A. Booth" April 7, 1845, in Calvin Colton ed., *The Private Correspondence of Henry Clay* (Cincinnati: H.W. Derby, 1856), 525-526.

> and obligation. The strongest of those of a spiritual and ecclesiastical nature consisted in the unity of the great religious denominations, all of which originally embraced the Union….All this combined contributed greatly to strengthen the bonds of the Union. The strong ties which held each denomination together formed a strong chord to hold the whole Union together; but, as powerful as they were, they have not been able to resist the explosive effect of slavery agitation.[328]

This moral issue was fraught with explosive political repercussions. While one cannot draw a direct line from the dissolution of the churches to the dissolution of the Union, clearly the fractured state of America's intellectual and theological leadership damaged the Union politically by undermining its morally. If the moral leadership in America could not get along, and if they could not avoid separation, what bond was left to hold the nation together? In Antebellum America, their influence was indeed vast, but their "moral impasse" over slavery revealed their own limitations. The church historian Sydney Ahlstrom noted that ministers maintained the largest weekday and Sunday audiences, not only through church attendance, but through their extensive network of periodicals. The clergy, he added, "were the official custodians of the popular conscience."[329] In the same manner that the two-party system unified Northern and Southern constituents despite their sectional differences, so did the churches. Although cause-and-effect cannot be established, it is a fact that the churches split before the nation did on the same issue that divided the nation politically. At best, it can be argued, that it was no small leap for many to sever political fellowship in the same manner as they had severed themselves from theological fellowship. The precedent, in short, had been established. Henry Clay, in an interview given to the editor of the *Presbyterian Herald* shortly before his death in

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[328] John C. Calhoun, "Speech on the Slavery Question, March 4, 1850" in Clyde N. Wilson and Shirley Bright Cook, eds., *The Papers of John C. Calhoun*, 18 vols. (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2003), Vol. XXVII, 187-212; quotes on 199-200. Note: Calhoun was too ill to deliver this speech himself, so James M. Mason, Va., did so on his behalf.

[329] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972; 2004), 649; 672.

1852, reiterated its impact, warning that if those entrusted with the national conscience could not get along, what hope existed for those who pretended no such role?

> I tell you this sundering of the religious ties which have hitherto bound our people together, I consider the greatest source of danger to our country. If our religious men cannot live together in peace, what can be expected of us politicians, very few of whom profess to be governed by the great principles of love? If all the churches divide on the subject of slavery, there will be nothing left to bind our people together but trade and commerce…. That is a very powerful bond, I admit, but when the people of these states become thoroughly alienated from each other, and get their passions aroused, they are not apt to stop and consider what is to their interest.[330]

Wayland himself worked within and outside the Baptist organization to maintain institutional unity. In 1845, Wayland helped reorganize the Triennial Convention into the American Baptist Missionary Union. Its constitution rejected amendments that prevented reunification with southern Baptists or prevented slaveholders from becoming institutional members or active missionaries. In the judgment of historian John McKivigan, Wayland felt reassured that the constitution was "purely for missions" and "equally free from slavery and antislavery."[331] He failed. The breakdown in Christian fellowship preceded the breakdown in Church unity. He warned that disunity on slavery did not warrant disunity in Christian fellowship. Change was possible, if and only if, the two parties maintained open channels of communication. If Northern and Southern Christians broke fellowship what hope was there for reconciliation? If the latter was possible, it remained so only if the church bodies remained united. Wayland underscored the degree to which Northern abolitionists and Southern slaveholders *did not* want fellowship and justified reconciliation *only if* the other party conformed to their thinking. In theology, Wayland protected the essentials, but tolerated

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[330] Quoted in Goen, *Broken Churches*, 106.
[331] Quoted in John R. McKivigan, *The War Against Proslavery Religion: Abolitionism and the Northern Churches, 1830-1865* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 88. See also *Baptist Missionary Magazine* 25 (Nov. 1845), Issue 11, 292-296; and *Christian Secretary* 25 (June 5) Issue 13, 2.

diversified opinion in peripheral issues, but his opponents inverted this relationship, and in his opinion, made peripheral theological issues essential ones. His distinction between slavery as sinful and the guilt shared by slaveholders helps explain his position, but Northern abolitionist churches tolerated no such hairsplitting between slavery and slaveholders. For the abolitionists, to tolerate a slaveholder was to tolerate sin. For the southerner, to make slaveholding the basis for Christian fellowship was to promote a standard for fellowship not warranted in Scripture. Wayland could not council such extreme viewpoints.[332] Yet, no sooner had the churches split than more ominous events appeared on the horizon. The outbreak of war in the Southwest reverberated with political repercussions felt through the outbreak of the Civil War that the fractured churches were in no position to halt.

Texas annexation in 1836 created a political firestorm that cooled momentarily beneath the surface for a decade until the political issue exploded into a military one in 1846 when the U.S. declared war on Mexico. It ripped apart at the national fabric, as it was largely a partisan war, with the Democrats split over the war, but the Whigs firmly aligned against it. The sudden acquisition of such vast new territory naturally raised the question of whether it would be organized as slave or Free states. The Wilmot Proviso, though it failed to pass, prohibited slavery in any territory seized from Mexico. This salient attempt to undermine slavery before it rooted itself in the Southwest, proved more politically ostracizing than the war itself. The Proviso broke political bonds long enjoined on less explosive issues such as tariffs and national funding for internal improvements. The Whigs, previously united in opposition to the war, fractured as Southern Whigs opposed the Proviso and Northern Whigs supported it. This did not bode well

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[332] For Wayland's role in the Baptist Triennial Committee see Guy Thomas Halbrooks, *Francis Wayland: Contributor to Baptist Concepts of Church Order* (Unpublished Dissertation, Emory University, 1971), 172-195. Jeremiah Jeter, *Recollections of a Long Life* (Richmond, Va.: Religious Herald Co., 1891), 230; on Wayland and 276 for the impact of the Methodist split in general; William E. Hatcher, *Life of J.B. Jeter, D.D.* (Baltimore, H.M. Wharton and Company, 1887), 216; see also McKivigan, *The War Against Proslavery Religion*, 177.

for the Republic as the American party system became aligned along sectional, rather than party lines. [333]

Politically, Wayland was as Whig, supported the Wilmot Proviso, and voted for the Free Soil Party in 1848.[334] He was "profoundly hostile" toward Texas annexation and rejected it as a "mad scheme" to expand territory, provoke war, and enrich the Slave Power. The Mexican-American war "he regarded with unfeigned abhorrence" and he "never ceased, in public and private, to urge the cessation of a wicked invasion, and to pray for those whom we were, by cruel hands, reduced to widowhood and orphanage." Furthermore, it was "wicked, infamous, unconstitutional in design, and stupid and shockingly depraved in its management."[335]

The Mexican-American war however, provoked another learned statement from Wayland on civic responsibility and civil disobedience. Delivered as three sermon addresses and published collectively as *The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate*, Wayland tested the waters and boundaries of civil disobedience. This sermon was important and marked a transition in his role from rhetorical critic to a more public activist. His transition was not yet complete, but it pointed in the direction that he was shifting. It was a much firmer statement that his previous writings. He confided to his sister in a letter just before publication "I never felt more anxious about

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[333]For works on Texas, Mexico, and the Wilmot Proviso see: Joel H. Silbey, Storm over Texas: The Annexation Controversy and the Road to the Civil War (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005);Justin H. Smith, *The War with Mexico*, 2vols., (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919); David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War* (Columbia, Mo., 1973); John D. Eisenhower, *So Far from God: The U.S. War with Mexico, 1846-1848* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); Chaplain Morisson, *Democratic Politics and Sectionalism: The Wilmot Proviso Controversy* (Chapel Hill, 1967); Eric Foner, "The Wilmot Proviso Controversy," *Journal of American History* 56 (September 1969), 267-79. For the political fallout see William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion, Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); William J. Cooper, *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860* (Columbia, S.C., University of South Carolina Press, 2000).

[334]On the election of 1848 see: Letter to Daniel S. Wayland, Providence, R.I., December 21, 1847, Hay, MS-IC-4, II:54, 1848, Nov.-Dec.

[335]Wayland and Wayland, *A Memoir*, 2:57. On the election of 1848 and the Free Soil Party in general see: Letter to Daniel S. Wayland, Providence, R.I., August 8, 1847, Hay, MS-IC-4 II:51 1847 and Letter to Heman Lincoln, Providence, R.I., February 2, 1849, Hay, MS-IC-4, II:55, 1849, Jan.-Apr.

anything I have published; not, I trust, on my own account (for necessity was laid upon me, and I could but bear my testimony), but on account of my country."[336]

Drawing from Matthew 22:21, Wayland analyzed the dual allegiance allotted to the Christian citizen between God and State or Caesar and Christ. "The precept of our Lord then is, render to the civil government whatever is due to the civil government, and to God whatever is due to God." The civil magistrate and God both possessed legitimate authority in their respective sphere, and each were rightfully entitled to obedience. If the two conflicted, duty to God overrode duty to the State. If the State encouraged an action that conflicted with the will of God, the Christian was bound to obey God and not the State. However, Wayland warned against using this doctrine as a license for wrongdoing. The conscience acted as a moral filter, but the State retained all authority that rightfully belonged to it.[337]

Government was instituted by God, though not its form, and it was unlawful to withhold compliance because its political structure was flawed. Neither Jesus nor the apostles advocated disobedience to the Roman state and in fact encouraged Christians to render to Caesar his proper due. Whatever its abuses, the form of the Roman state did not negate fidelity to its laws. In like manner, Christians were forbidden to render to Caesar what rightfully belonged to God and likewise forbidden to render to God what rightfully belonged to Caesar. Wayland noted the existing tension, but argued that though the two seemingly conflicted, they were not incompatible.[338]

The State is entitled to what rightfully belonged to the State. The State rightfully legislated in the areas of taxation, public works and projects, and military defense. Its chief duty

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[336]Quoted in Murray, *Francis Wayland*, 273.
[337]Francis Wayland, "The Duty of Obedience to the Civil Magistrate" in *University Sermons Delivered in The Chapel of Brown University,* 2nd edition (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1849), 253-293; quote on 255.
[338]Ibid., 255-258.

was the protection of the natural rights and civil liberties of its citizens. As these were in the proper purview of the State, the citizen was dutifully bound to comply with these laws. Wayland encouraged citizens not to perceive the State as an intolerable evil, but rather a positive institution designed for the protection of its citizens. Each citizen bore his share of the public burden, but Christians were encouraged to exceed their dutiful responsibility and lead by example. For example, he derided those who scoffed at jury duty and voting as both morally and politically reprehensible. If the citizen expected service from the State, the State equally expected service from its citizens and was rightfully entitled to it.[339]

However, what if the State laid claim to that which belonged to God? What if the State legislated in areas that fell outside its jurisdiction? Wayland again restated his central point that the issue centered on recognizing proper boundaries. If the State transgressed its proper authority, if it legislated in areas that fell outside its sphere, if it commended what God condemned, and if particular fidelity to the magistrate warranted infidelity to God, Christians were forbidden to comply. He warned that the office of the magistrate warranted more respect than the individual in office. If the individual *in office* proved corrupt, this did not warrant disrespect for *the office* itself. Again, the form of government did not negate the institution itself. This distinction is essential in understanding Wayland's interpretation. The institution itself, being God ordained, was afforded respect, irrespective of its corrupted form or leadership.

Wayland promoted passive noncompliance rather than active resistance. However, he argued that noncompliance was acceptable only in reference to the *immediate* law in question. If the State passed an immoral law, the Christian was forbidden to comply, yet only in regard to the *specific* law in question, and it did not negate obedience to other laws. Noncompliance in one area then did not warrant noncompliance in another and God held men guilty in proportion to

[339]Ibid., 258-264.

their obedience to just laws in the same proportion he held them liable for noncompliance to unjust laws.[340]

Wayland argued that the State possessed no monopoly on tyranny, but noted that institutionalized power in any form might prove corrupting. "Ecclesiastical societies, civil societies, political parties, combinations for the purpose of amassing wealth or consolidating power, utter nothing but the voice of man, weak, selfish, more depraved, and more liable to error, in consequence of the combination which blends the individuals too frequently into one soulless and unprincipled mass." Corporatism, in any form, he suggested, had no conscience. Societal wrongs however were the collective guilt of individual wrongs. Individuals stood indicted for either voting irresponsible leaders into office or for neglecting their electoral obligations. In either form, individuals shared in the guilt.

> I think it must be admitted that every member of a society is morally responsible for the wrongs committed by that society, unless he has used all the innocent means in his power to prevent them. Unless he has done this, he is a partaker in the wrong. It will constitute no valid excuse for him to plead that he was not the actual doer of the wrong, and that it was done by his agent. He who appoints an agent is, by every principle of law and of equity, responsible for his acts. Nor can we even plead in extenuation, that we, as members of the society, took no active part in the appointment and direction of the agent. The wrong is done, and the wrong might have been prevented by the exercise of precisely such power as has been placed in our hands. Unless we have exerted that power for the prevention of wrong, which others have exerted in causing it to be committed, we are, on every principle of right reason, responsible for the act, and are partakers of the guilt.[341]

Wayland concluded that if the State violated its sphere or obligations, it lost its just claim to authority. No single violation, nor even the collective wrongs perpetuated by multiple wrongs, warranted forceful resistance against the State. However, if the State ceased to exercise the functions for which it was created, it if removed all protection from its citizens, if it ceased to

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[340] Ibid. 265-277.
[341] Ibid., quotes on 278 and 279-280.

work toward its good and only worked toward its evil, the government negated it higher purpose and may be overthrown and replaced with another. Wayland warned that government without "moral principle" was simply power devoid of authority. "For no other reason," he explained, "so far as I perceive, are we justified in resisting by force that which performs the functions of government. He magistracy may err; it may do wrong; it may, in many respects, treat me unjustly, it may treat foreign nations unjustly; but none of this, nor all of it together, justifies me in resisting by force, so long as it accomplishes, or honestly intends to accomplish, the purpose for which it was created." [342]

Wayland restricted resistance to within constitutional parameters, and he warned citizens to avoid all entanglements in the wrongdoing. He prohibited, for example, loaning government money to fund unjust wars or profiting from exploitative contracts. Yet did these actions not subvert respect for authority and sunder all legitimate ties between the citizenry and the State? He urged the republic "to patiently endure it" and warned against valuing party loyalty over "truth, and justice, and mercy." The citizen must "surrender party for moral principle" and stand alone if need be, as "the friend of righteousness." Consistent with his general tone and writings, the best means to arrest political corruption was the infusion of moral principles. Power, devoid of morality, was devoid of a moral compass, and subject to an endless train of abuses, yet the responsibility for this moral accountability, lay not with the State, but with the individual.

> We have no reason to expect in a legislator a higher degree of virtue than we possess ourselves. It is unrighteous to blame him for being a selfish partisan, when we ourselves have set him the example. It is unreasonable to expect him to sacrifice office, emolument, and influence, for principle, while we dare not act from principle when we have none to lose. It is shameful to ask him to forsake his party for right, when we ourselves, if he obeyed our wishes, would be the first to abandon him. If we expect moral independence in our representatives, we mush show them that we possess it ourselves. If we ask them to peril their political

[342] Ibid., quote on 283.

> influence for right, we must at least show them that the moral principle of their constituents will sustain them in well-doing.

Political reform then began with individual moral reform. Principles, best established through influence and example, proceeded not from corporate institutions, but from individual initiative. Morality, then, was best served by the slow filtering of ethical conduct on the part of its citizens, who in turn influenced the State through principled example.[343]

In general, this line of reasoning formed a key difference between Wayland and abolitionists. To Wayland, slavery remained lawful, even though it was immoral. For the abolitionist, if slavery was immoral, then it was unlawful. This distinguishing trait was significant. Wayland demanded moral accountability in spirit, but legal fidelity in precept. Wayland countenanced individual responsibility, the abolitionist demanded societal responsibility. Wayland protested individually, the abolitionist corporately. Wayland would harbor a fugitive slave, but the abolitionists would do that and intervene with the law itself. Wayland, presumed the individual unrighteous and in need of reform, the abolitionists presumed the State immoral, and in need of redemption. However, these two lines of reasoning were complementary, rather than contradictory. Excessive politicization obscured individual effort and reform, and excessive individualization obscured corporate intellectual and collective strength.

Wayland expanded this theme in two sermon discourses assessing 1848 European revolutions that swept over the continent. Wayland argued that liberty and freedom were the inevitable byproducts of the wider infusion of intelligence, political economy, education, and religious tolerance, throughout the Western world. This heightened intellectual and educational culture produced greater sensitivity and awareness to tyranny, oppression, and despotism. This in turn, created demand for change and transformation. However, consistent with his moral and

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[343] Ibid., quote on 290 and 292.

intellectual worldview, proper transformation or civil order both depended upon the moral culture of its people. He warned that revolutionary reform was limited and predicated upon change first in the people, then in the government. If the people proved unable to change, altering the form of government mattered little. "But the nature of the political institutions that shall occupy its place," he explained, "depends upon the power of moral restraint exerted by the conscience of the people. Unless every man be disposed to respect the rights of his neighbor, and seek his own happiness within the limits of reciprocity, the overthrow of existing governments can confer no advantage; nay it may tend to sink the nations yet deeper into despotism."[344]

Historian William Wiecek used the case study of the Virginian slaveholder James Otis who sued under the 1793 Fugitive Slave Law to enforce the return of his runaway slave, George Latimer. This case of October 1842 tested the limits of civil disobedience in America. The case dissipated after Boston abolitionists persuaded Gray to sell his claim to Latimer for $400. The details of the case need not detain us, but Wiecek noted its chief significance lies in the moral and legal dilemma faced by abolitionist justices and lawyers. The Bostonians involved were firmly antislavery, had no interest in returning Latimer to slavery, but felt constrained by their professional duties and legal oaths to enforce the law regardless of their individual consciences. The question arose where do unjust laws end and personal morality begin?[345]

The dilemma for these men extended far beyond a simple calculation of right versus wrong. The larger question was how one determined what laws they would or would not obey. Philosophically, this debate was grounded in natural law versus positive law theories. Predicated on divine law, natural law pitted conscience above law. However, natural laws

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[344] Francis Wayland, "The Recent Revolutions in Europe" in *University Sermons*, 294-328; quote on 316.
[345]William M. Wiecek, "Latimer: Lawyers, Abolitionists, and the Problem of Unjust Laws," in Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman, eds., *Antislavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1979), 219-237.

theorists assumed that human laws would minimize moral conflict by conforming human law *to* natural law. Positive law theorists feared the potential anarchy of privileging conscience above law and generally supported "legality over justice" when in tension. In general, positive law theory predominated over natural law theory after the mid-nineteenth century in America.

Broadly speaking, Bostonian justices and lawyers generally responded to the Latimer case and like cases in three ways. First, were those who enforced laws they found morally unjust because they swore an oath to uphold the law. Second, were men like William Jay, who, rather than enforce unjust laws, or willfully violate them, pledged to resign from the bench if forced to choose. Third, were those who vowed to uphold the law and were committed to work within the existing system, however imperfect, so to reform it from within. Charles Francis Adams, for example, secured passage of the 1843 Massachusetts Personal Liberty Law which minimized Massachusetts compliance with the Fugitive Slave Law.[346]

It is too easy to condemn committed antislavery jurists, attorneys, and judges for enforcing the law despite their personal sentiments. Simplistic interpretations fail to do justice to the complexities of slavery in America and ignore the realities that constrained human actions. It ignores the economic and social nature of slavery interwoven into the fabric of nineteenth century America. Legal professionals could not easily skirt existing laws lest they promote anarchy and civil disobedience. The latter need might arise, to be certain, but it was particularly potent if it stemmed from the judicial bench. Reformists and social activists were less constrained by the law since they were not legally bound by professional oaths to uphold the law. The former accused the rigid abolitionists of arbitrary application of law, while the latter condemned the jurists for reducing flesh-and-blood slaves to an abstraction of the law. One party felt constrained by fidelity to the law, while the other felt constrained by fidelity to

[346]Ibid., 219.

conscience. To be sure, *both* parties acted in respect to *their* consciences, but the former privileged civil order *over* private conscience and the latter privileged private conscience *over* civil order.

If the average American did not contemplate civil disobedience, the Compromise of 1850 gave the non-slaveholding Northerner ample opportunity to think it over. Comprised of five provisions, California was admitted as Free State, Texas as a slave state, the rest of territory separated into territories with the issue of slavery reserved for a later date, the slave-trade was abolished in the District of Columbia, and a newly strengthened Fugitive Slave Law was passed. The latter measure proved the bitterest pill for Northerners to swallow since it prohibited them from interfering with the capture of fugitive slaves, and even more galling, explicitly demanded their assistance in detaining them if possible.[347]

In response, on March 4, 1850, the aging Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster delivered his famous yet divisive conciliatory speech on the Compromise of 1850. He stressed compliance with the law, even the much despised Fugitive Slave Law, irrespective of individual grievances. He chastised Northerners and Southerners alike, Northerners for their noncompliance with provisions in the bill, and Southerners for threatening secession. Northerners responded with greater anxiety and frustration, that so lofty and esteemed a senator should council fidelity to the Fugitive Slave Law. In his own way, Webster threw down the gauntlet that sparked a massive outpouring of sermonizing and writings on the subject of the higher law and civil disobedience.

> I desire to call the attention of all sober-minded men at the North, of all conscientious men, of all men who are not carried away by some fanatical idea or

[347] On the political reverberations of the Compromise of 1850 see, Michael A. Morrison, *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997): Michael F. Holt, *The Fate of Their Country: Politician's, Slavery Extension, and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).

> some false impression, to their constitutional obligations. I put it to all the sober and sound minds at the North as a question of morals and a question of conscience. What right have they, in their legislative capacity or any other capacity, to endeavor to get round this Constitution, or to embarrass the free exercise of the right secured by the Constitution to the persons whose slaves escape from them? None at all; none at all. Neither in the forum of conscience, nor before the face of the Constitution, are they, in my opinion, justified in such an attempt.[348]

His opposition did not sit quietly by. William Seward, New York governor and later U.S. Secretary of State under Lincoln, responded to Webster in what is dubbed his "Higher Law" speech of March 11, 1850. His speech stood in marked contrast to Webster's compromising and conciliatory speech. Collectively, the two speeches delineated the tension that existed within Northern political circles. If Webster represented the drift toward compromise, Seward represented the drift toward steadfastness. Two aspects of his speech are notable. First, he argued that conscience condemned the fugitive slave law as "unconstitutional" and "immoral." Particularly reprehensible, he argued, was that Southerners roped Northerners into policing their own slave property.

> We are not slaveholders. We cannot, in our judgment, be either true Christians or real freemen, if we impose on another a chain that we defy all human power to fasten upon ourselves. You believe and think otherwise, and doubtless with equal sincerity. We judge you not, and He alone who ordained the conscience of man and its laws of action can judge us. Do we, then, in this conflict of opinion, demand of you an unreasonable thing in asking that, since you will have property that can and will exercise human powers to effect its escape, you shall be your own police, and in acting among us as such you shall conform to the principles indispensable to the security of admitted rights of freedmen? If you will have this law executed, you must alleviate, not increase, its rigors.

Second, he complained that the Compromise of 1850 elevated slave states above free states and slavery above freedom. It falsely assumed that since the Constitution recognized the institution of slavery, that it was the ruling institution. It was only one of many and there was no

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[348] Daniel Webster, "The Constitution and the Union" A Speech delivered in the Senate of the United States, on the 7th of March, 1850 in *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*, 18 vols., (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1903), X, (56-99; quote 87.

reason why it should triumph over the others. He explained: "Freedom is equally an institution there. Slavery is only a temporary, accidental, partial, and incongruous one. Freedom, on the contrary, is a perpetual, organic, universal one, in harmony with the Constitution of the United States." Furthermore, a "higher law" existed than the Constitution, that regulated its authority, and devoted it to the same "noble purposes."[349] That so provocative a sentiment that higher law doctrine overrode the constitution stemmed from the mouth of a politician intimated the fact that the nation at its highest ranks was experiencing a moral crisis of conscience. Seward, however, did not have the final word, for pastors and theologians alike weighed in. Wayland was one of them.

The Fugitive Slave Law tore at the conscience of America and elevated the moral tone of slavery to unheard of heights. In like manner that judges and attorneys struggled to square their political obligations with their moral one, Wayland faced the same dilemma. His response toward the law is best exemplified in his correspondence to a minister, who, required to swear an oath to uphold the constitution and laws of the United States upon registering to vote in his home state, felt ethically unable to do so because he could not support the Fugitive Slave Law. In response, Wayland counseled that whatever could not be done in good conscience, should not to done at all. "That is, what we cannot do with a clear conscience, do not at all, for we greatly injure our conscience, whenever we in any manner put a blind before our eye…. If you cannot do it with a clear conscience, you must abstain." Fidelity to right and conscience was more highly esteemed than blind obedience. Wayland cautioned that if one could not vote in good conscience, lest he violate his oath in doing so, then he should abstain and protest in another

[349] William Seward, "Freedom in the New Territories" March 11, 1850 in George E. Baker, ed., *The Works of William H. Seward*, 5 vols., (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1887), I., 51-93; quotes on 65; 67; 74.

manner. As if to lead by example, and to establish his own willingness to take risks, instead of giving mere advice, Wayland confided his own decision. He wrote:

> I have always declared that I would never aid to arrest a fugitive, or do a thing to return him to slavery. I would make no opposition to the government, but would patiently endure the penalty. This I have a right to do, on the principle that I must obey God rather than man. Whether this applies to the oath to obey the constitution and laws, I do not see clearly, and would advise you to consult the best judicial authority as to the meaning of the oath. Is it intended to express agreement to every particular, or, as the old Puritans had it, to the general scope and tenor? It is easy to show your love for the constitution and laws in other ways besides voting.

Wayland proved true to this word. He further confided that he and his son had sheltered and cared for a fugitive slave and he was glad to have done so.[350] Embittered by the general direction of politics, he increasingly expressed his theological conviction that God Would smite America for its crimes. His sons explained: "When slavery had gained supremacy over all departments of the government, and was aiming at conquests yet greater, he not infrequently expressed his conviction that a crime of dimensions so vast, and of character so atrocious, God would take into his own hands, and would punish with an overthrow so marked that none could fail to recognize the divine hand, although the particular agencies through which this results would be reached, he could not predict."[351]

Wayland was not alone in his denunciation of the Fugitive Slave Law, but more importantly, its passage spurred a rash of sermons and essays on civil disobedience. Their reflections were timely and often hastily written in response to the political mood of the country. Tempered by commitment to both theological conviction and political stability, pastors knew the line between civil disobedience and anarchy was razor thin. Analyzing American pastoral sermonizing on civil disobedience better contextualizes Wayland among his Northern

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[350] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2: 332.
[351] Ibid., 332-333.

counterparts. Southern opinion is not relevant here, and as Wayland represented Northern opinion, only the latter will be analyzed.

Horace Bushnell, pastor of the North Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut, warned that the nation had dangerously divorced government from morality and principles. He argued that party spirit and blind partisanship subverted political restraint because it endorsed hollow principles without application. The lust for office and the want of power led individuals to act in groups in ways they would never behave as individuals. The conscience, a trait of individuals, was absent from corporate bodies. He warned that constitutions, divorced from morality, offered no safeguard against anarchy. "A constitution is paper only, and there is no power in paper to hold rulers to their place, or sustain the frame of body politic. Constitutions have their efficacy and value in the fact that there is a conscience and good faith in men to Observe them." He further warned that the "divorce of politics from conscience and religion" must end "in the total wreck of our institutions and liberties." He chastised those who countenanced voting for "the lesser of two evils" when no acceptable candidate existed. Better not to vote, he advised, than to choose between "Sodom and Gomorrah." [352]

Ichabod S. Spencer, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, noted that man's duties were classified into duties enjoined between God and man and duties enjoined between man and man. The former, were taught by precept, but the latter, were taught by generalized principles and codified, regulated, and protected by human governments. Since government is a divine institution, it is a religious duty to obey it. Whether the laws are just or unjust, whether consent is given or withdrawn, man is obligated to obey the civil magistrates. Although the "compact theory" may describe the *form* of government, Spencer denied that it

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[352] Horace Bushnell, *Politics under the Law of God: A Discourse Delivered in the North Congregational Church, Harford; on the Annual Fast of 1844* (Hartford: E. Hunt, No. 6 Asylum Street, 1844); quotes on 14 and 15.

formed the *foundation* of government. Human government, he argued, was either predicated on force or the will of God. Civil disobedience then, was both political and religious in nature.

Civil disobedience was warranted, if the government either forcefully suppressed civil liberties, or proved incapable of enforcing its own laws and statutes and preventing their suppression by someone else. In either case, the security of the citizenry was lost. Spencer warned however that arbitrary and flippant rebellion was ungodly and portended anarchy. He also suggested, in lieu of the political leverage warranted by the populace in representative democracies, that civil disobedience was likely unwarranted. Fidelity to the Fugitive Slave Law, then, was neither predicated on consent to the law specifically or slavery in general, but in the maintenance of civil order and respect for the law.[353]

Moses Stuart wrote one of the more widely read works on the Fugitive Slave Law. A noted Hebrew scholar, theologian, and professor of Wayland's at Andover Seminary, wrote in defense of Daniel Webster's March 4, 1850 speech. He warned against flagrant civil obedience and argued that that Northerners, irrespective of their personal sentiments, were legally bound to return fugitive slaves. Although the Mosaic law forbid the return of runaway slaves to *heathen* nations, the South was a Christian one and shared the same commonwealth as the North. It was groundless, he argued, to deny Southerners "the title of a Christian" for if perfection became the model alone, "I fear that we of the North might have our title to such a name called in question." Citizens and states alike were bound to honor preexisting "contracts" and "compacts" and could not arbitrarily negate them. Stuart charged private citizens with fidelity to the law, but abolitionists argued that private conscience and the higher law overrode the Constitution. If, he asked, private conscience is sacred, then how can the citizens of one state presume to dictate to

[353] Ichabod S. Spencer, *Fugitive Slave Law. The Religious Duty of Obedience to Law: A Sermon Preached in the Second Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, Nov. 24, 1850* (New York: Published by M.W. Wood, 1850).

the citizens of another state what their consciences should legislate? Unless State law conflicted with Federal law, each state legislated for itself and the citizens of another state had no right to interfere. Compliance did not infer agreement, and though Northerners could not end slavery where it legally existed, they could work toward its non-extension. Fidelity to the law did not portend their consent. Put differently, fidelity to its letter, did not presume fidelity to its spirit.[354]

Charles Hodge, Princeton Presbyterian and theologian, argued that government is God-ordained and therefore man is obligated to obey its laws. God proscribed the institution of government but not its proper form. Compliance to the law was a religious duty and disobedience a transgression toward God. Fidelity to law is neither predicated on "the consent of the governed" or any "social compact" and such doctrines were "notoriously of infidel origin." Law-breaking was first and foremost a crime against God and secondly a crime against the State. Furthermore, institutions could only legislate within their respective spheres, and if their laws transgressed these bounds, were not legally binding. The individual must first decide whether the party had the right to legislate as it did and secondly whether it could be obeyed in good conscience. Private conscience, though not a license to civil disobedience, judged the character of these laws and any law in violation of the Scriptures was not legally binding. However, the individual must determine whether the law be simply unjust or unbiblical. If the former, he is required to execute it; if the latter, he is not. Yet if the individual miscalculate, and judge an unfair law an immoral one, he must be prepared for the full brunt of the law.

Guilt was limited to its legislation, not to its execution, unless the latter involved "personal criminality" in its enforcement. If individuals were forbidden to do what God

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[354] Stuart, *Conscience and the Constitution*, 3-22; 56-100; 106-119 quote on 32-33. For a counterpoint directed at Stuart see: Rufus W. Clark, *A Review of the Rev. Moses Stuart's Pamphlet on Slavery, Entitled Conscience and the Constitution, By Rufus W. Clark, Pastor of the North Church, Portsmouth, New Hampshire* (Boston: Published by C.C.P. Moody, 1850); Clark perceptively noted that the Compromise of 1850 "would arouse and excite the nation, as it has never been aroused or excited before." 103.

commanded or required to do what God forbade, man was to resist the precept, but not the penalty. Limited to passive disobedience, it never warranted violent resistance or active obstruction. Man is required to disobey the law, but to submit to punishment. However, though the people possessed no right to resistance, the people possessed a divine right to revolution. If not, then the people were subject to an endless chain of passive resistance and punishment, with no recourse to alter the existing form of government. Hodge then drove a wedge between two polarizing viewpoints of civil disobedience and the Fugitive Slave Law in particular. The first, driven by righteous indignation, urged flagrant resistance to the law, and the second, fearful of blatant resistance, naively endorsed obedience to the law irrespective of its character.[355]

Gilbert Haven, a New York pastor and longtime abolitionist, boldly countenanced civil disobedience in a sermon address on the Fugitive Slave bill. His opening salvo cut right to the heart of the conflict: "When we cannot remain idle spectators of a contest which is raging around us, but from the orders of leaders in the battle are compelled to take definite positions, then it is our solemn duty to examine the nature of these commands, that we may see whether we must obey or resist them." The federal government shattered its illusion of neutrality by siding with the Slave Power. "The government of the country has arrayed its mighty strength upon the side of Slavery, and issues its mandates to all the people, to lend their aid to its defense. The conflict between the eternal foes of freedom and slavery has by this act changed as from unconcerned spectators, if we had chosen to assume that position, into actors, and requires every one to take his place under one of the hostile banners." Christians were not bound to obey immoral laws and he warned Christians not be swayed by the pompousness of Congressional decrees that pretended to reinvent morality by decree alone. The Constitution is a reflection of the higher law,

[355] Hodge, "The Fugitive Slave Law" in A.N. Elliott, *Cotton is King*, 807-836; quote on 818.

but it remained subservient to it, not above it. If the Constitution decreed an act that conflicted with the higher law, the former yielded to the latter.[356]

The Boston Transcendalist Theodore Parker argued along similar lines. The moral law stemmed from God, and men were duty bound and obligated to God and man to obey it. A law did not make an immoral act morally right and if someone was obligated in his business capacity to violate the moral law, that individual was obligated to obey the moral law. Its meaning for the Fugitive Slave bill should be clear. Yet Parker encouraged not only noncompliance but active intervention in the enforcement of the law. Moving far beyond what abolitionists countenanced, Parker confessed "that I will do all in my power to rescue any fugitive slave from the hands of any officer who attempts to return him to bondage. I will resist him as gently as I know how, but with such strength as I can command; I will ring the bells, and alarm the town, I will serve as head, as foot, or as hand to any body of serious and earnest men, who will go with me, with no weapons but their hands, in this work." The fugitive possessed the same right for if any may sought "to reduce me to slavery, in that moment of attack alienates his right to life, and if I were the fugitive, and could escape in no other way, I would kill him with as little compunction as I would drive a mosquito from my face. It is high time this was said." He chastised law-makers who their sworn oaths to the constitution above their sworn duty to God and man, specifically indicting Stuart's *Conscience and the Constitution*, but questionably Parker elevated the stakes of civil disobedience beyond where many were willing to go.[357]

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[356] Gilbert Haven "The Higher Law" in Gilbert Haven, *Sermons, Speeches and Letters on Slavery and Its War* (New York: Arno Press, 1869; reprint 1969), 1-32; quotes on 1-2; 30.

[357]Theodore Parker, "The Function and Place of Conscience, in Relation to the Laws of Men: A Sermon for the Times. Preached at the Melodeon, on Sunday, September 22, 1850" in Theodore Parker, *Speeches, Addresses, and Occasional Sermons*, 2 vols., (Boston: WM. Crosby and H.P. Nichols, 1851) II:241-276; quotes on 257- 258. See also Dean Grodzins, *American Heretic: Theodore Parker and Transcendentalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

Moses Stuart and Theodore Parker represent the theological bookends of higher law and civil disobedience theorizing in American theological circles. Neither party, of course, represented the whole, but each defined the range of higher law thought among American clergymen and theologians. Stuart urged fidelity to the law irrespective of individual conscience because since government was instituted by God, men were expected to comply with its laws unless men were expected to commit an act explicitly forbidden in the Bible. Hodge encouraged the same compliance, but he did concede that while resistance was self-defeating, the right to revolution may at times be warranted. foundation. Bushnell warned that constitutions divorced from morality secured no protection against malfeasance by the government. Spencer suggested that respect for the law was more predicated on civil stability than actual consent. Haven argued that since conscience and Scripture were in harmony, the law could not be obeyed in good conscience. Francis Wayland stood in the center. He rejected the extreme conservatism of Stuart's total compliance and he equally rejected the justification for violent ends and means in Parker's rationale. Wayland, argued, and in fact demonstrated, his willingness to harbor fugitive slaves, but he never countenanced violence or direct interference with the law. Clearly, however, his flagrant endorsement of noncompliance with the law illustrates that Wayland had shifted intellectually on the question of slavery.[358]

The unfolding political drama from the Mexican-American War through the Compromise of 1850 was fraught with danger for the Union. The Dorr Rebellion, although localized, portended civil rebellion on a grander scale. The fracturing of the churches foreshadowed the polarizing and sectionalized nature of the two-party system that followed the Mexican-American

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[358] See Edward H. Madden, *Civil Disobedience and Moral Law in Nineteenth-Century American Philosophy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), on Wayland 16-43; see also D.H. Meyer, *The Instructed Conscience: The Shaping of the National Ethic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), on Wayland 15-16; 114-115; 118-119.

War and the Wilmot Proviso. The road to the Civil War narrowed considerably after the churches proved unable to accommodate nonconformity on the slavery question. The Fugitive Slave Law dragged an unwilling and often complacent Northern populace into the fray by requiring their involvement in a once distant geographical problem. Lincoln's decided statement that a house divided against itself cannot stand proved prophetic. Fence-sitting did not prove optional as the Northern population was no longer immune from contaminating their hands with slavery. The Western territories, now up for grabs in whether they would become free or slave states upon statehood, enlivened the struggle for political power and congressional representative. The Missouri Compromise and the habit of balancing free and slave states suffered a slow death as popular sovereignty took precedence over legislative decision-making.

Francis Wayland was no more immune to these events than were his fellow countrymen. His European trip awakened him to the ridicule in which British abolitionists beheld moderates like himself on abolition and emancipation. Although the Dorr Rebellion tested the boundaries between means and ends, the Mexican-American War spurred Wayland to reconsider his own ideas on civil disobedience. His debate with Richard Fuller in 1845 further developed his thinking and expanded his public persona. His philosophy, however, had not fully matured, for his thinking, like the man himself, evolved as events both molded and shaped his ideas. It important to avoid easy conclusions that Wayland was merely swept along by events. Surely the political drama affected his thinking, but reformism had always been embedded in his writings. Means, not ends, formed the tension in his thinking and he often demonstrated flexibility and malleability in his social thought. Wayland retained his core belief in moral over politic suasion and of individual over corporate action, but the heightened and politicized nature of slavery narrowed the bridge between fidelity to law and fidelity to morality. In time, the two proved

incompatible. Wayland, seemingly out of character, grew increasingly vocal in his opinions. The sway of political events though left him little choice.

The 1840s indeed, proved a turning point for the nation and for Wayland himself. Wayland could not be charged with complacency or indifference toward slavery. His viewpoints were well-known and equally well-published. His European row with British abolitionists easily and uncomfortably confirmed this for Wayland. The same ills that frustrated British abolitionists were shared by their American counterparts. American abolitionists like Charles Sumner, were frustrated that so respected a pastor, scholar, University President, and individual, remained moderate toward immediate abolition. Yet this was precisely the point. Wayland, both in his moderate viewpoints and in his diplomatic character, held the attention of *both* the North and the South, something that few on either side of the Mason-Dixon could boast. Wayland consistently maintained that his personal opinion must never interfere with his public responsibility. This explains why he simultaneously condemned slavery as sinful, but withheld this same epithet toward slaveholders. It further explains, despite his heightened sensitivity toward the mounting militancy in the South, that he fought against separation, knowing full well, that Northern influences would be helplessly lost if the churches fractured into two institutional bodies. If anything, Wayland can be charged with procrastination, but he cannot be charged with inconsistency. To be fair, the 1840s an$ particularly the Compromise of 1850 shook many Northerners from their comfort zone. Wayland evolved, just as did public opinion. across the country. His start point and end point were not the same. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 made certain of that.

CHAPTER FIVE

Francis Wayland in the Furnace of War

In 1857, the trustees at Mississippi College issued a resolution that condemned the antislavery writings of Francis Wayland and recommended his text, the *Elements of Moral Science*, be pulled from the curriculum. The resolution read: "Resolved, That the Trustees of Mississippi College do hereby condemn the teachings of Dr. Wayland in his 'Moral Science,' on the subject of African slavery, and that the Faculty of the College be requested to discontinue the use of Wayland's *Moral Science* as a text-book." In recapping the events in the *Liberator*, the editorialist titled the article "Dr. Wayland Annihilated." With even less humility, he dubbed the resolution career ending, and boasted that even if the resolution had stemmed from Andover, Newton, Harvard, Yale, or Amherst, it would have been less damaging, for "when Mississippi *repudiates*, there is an end of the matter."[359] This episode illustrated the extent and degree to which Wayland had shifted in his antislavery views and that despite his tireless efforts at reconciliation, he proved unable even to save himself. It further illustrated the extent to which Southerners tolerated no dissent or nonconformity on the issue of slavery.

The Civil War brought together centrifugal forces in American society. Lincoln's House Divided speech proved prophetic as the nation tore apart sectionally. Historical tensions in American society between slavery and freedom, liberty and bondage, and ideology and practice were put to the ultimate test as war engulfed the nation. The Civil War was not only a war over clashing cultures, but also a test and measure of national morality. Europe had long observed America's fragile experiment with republicanism and democracy with suspicion, often wishing for its demise. Although Americans still chanted the worn-out diatribe about Old World

[359]See "Dr. Wayland Annihilated," in *Liberator* September 18, 1857; Alba Godbold suggests that Church Colleges were less swayed by sectionalism than were state colleges and that the former were slower in pulling northern texts. See Alba Godbold, *College of the Old South* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1944), 165-167.

corruptions, slavery had all but disappeared in the Western Hemisphere, the United States, Brazil, and Cuba excepted. American democratic idealism had long disturbed European monarchs and the conservative retrenchment following the Napoleonic Wars had revealed its resilience. Yet in another sense, one cannot resist the conclusion that European skepticism of American idealism, was less the principles themselves, but rather its want of application.[360]

Francis Wayland had generally countenanced obedience to the civil government, and although he flatly opposed the Mexican War, his support for the Civil War flowed from the same Unionism. The Mexican-American War, interpreted by northern Whigs as the imperialistic expansion of slavery, and by southern Democrats as necessary to their political and cultural survival, proved too destabilizing to maintain unity. The Civil War proved in hindsight to be the logical outcome of these incompatible viewpoints. What motivated individual soldiers to fight may have been legion, but ultimately one *had* to choose North or South. Border state Unionism and Confederate sympathies coexisted, but although Unionism prevailed at the state level, individual citizens bore the weight of their own consciences. Wartime conditions created conditions whereby people wrestled with ideals scarcely conducive to neutrality of either mind or action. Francis Wayland, moved by political events and his own idealism, fully threw his support behind the Union war effort. Wayland had brought himself full circle. The refining nature of the war remade the nation into something new. A once reluctant emancipationist, Wayland shook off his slothfulness and worked for the betterment of the freed slaves during the war years.

The war, shook the ground out from under moderation and compromise. Yet, the Civil War did not occur in a vacuum. The Compromise of 1850, it was supposed, had settled the slave

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[360] For contextualization of American Slavery see David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of New World Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

issue temporarily, but the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854 resurfaced the issue to an explosive intensity. Politically, the bill threatened the balance between free and slave states, but ideologically, it prompted a public response from Wayland that tested the patience of Southern goodwill.

The dawn of 1854 began with a bad omen for the Union. In January of 1854, Stephen Douglas introduced a bill to organize the territory to the west and northwest of Missouri as Nebraska Territory in January 1854. Previous attempts had failed. Pioneers wanted the land organized for settlement and railroad interests wanted to extend routes westward toward the Pacific. In February 1853 Southern factions had killed the bill since it lay north of the compromise line and would be free territory. When Douglas introduced his bill, Southerners predicated their support on repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The original bill stated that Nebraska would be slave or free dependent upon its constitutional guidelines upon achieving statehood. He modified this again, and opted to allow the residents of the territory to decide the issue themselves through their representatives. Popular sovereignty, then, became the official policy toward slavery in the territories and in determining statehood.[361]

Southerners demanded more, and pressured Douglas to endorse the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. He did so, with the added provision that the territory was reorganized into Kansas, to the west of Missouri, and Nebraska, to the north of Kansas. The bill passed in March and in effect nullified the Missouri Compromise. Southern Democrats argued that the Compromise of 1850 had already nullified the Missouri Compromise, since popular sovereignty had settled the slavery issue north of the compromise line. However, the 1850 legislation applied only to territory acquired from Mexico, not the Louisiana Purchase, and this was how it was understood

[361] On popular sovereignty, the Lincoln-Douglas debates are a good start. Harold Holzer, *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete, Unexpurgated Text* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994). Allen. C. Guelzo, *Lincoln and Douglas: The Debates that Defined America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008).

at the time it was implemented. For Wayland and many Northerners alike, the thought that what was sanctioned as free territory could now become slave territory was abominable. For Wayland, more than anything, the bill was a act of bad faith on the part of southern legislators.[362]

On March 7, 1854, Wayland spoke before a meeting of Providence citizens that featured several speakers on the subject of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Wayland retained his good faith in individual slaveholders. His condemnation, he argued, applied not to individuals, but to the institution itself, which was "the great curse that rests upon the Southern States." He suggested that many slaveholders believed the institution to be sinful, were restrained from freeing their slaves due to restrictive legislation, and he pleaded for like-minded Southerners to reject the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Naïve or otherwise, Wayland believed that Northerners maintained abundant allies in the South. It was absurd, he argued, to assume that the legislation portended neutrality, for whatever the outcome of the controversy, it reopened the question of whether the territory would be slave or free. In this sense, Wayland interpreted the bill as a Trojan Horse tactic that Southerners used to increase their Congressional representation through the addition of slave states. In a concise statement, he summed up his pointed interpretation:

> On the face of it, then, it places slavery and freedom on equal terms, and proclaims that freedom and oppression are looked upon with equal fervor by the people of the United States. It is, I know, said that it is intended to have no practical effect, for that slavery will never be introduced there. This, I presume, however, that no one expects us to believe. To suppose the universal agitation of this subject to be revived-an agitation so much to be deprecated by the South-and the reproach of violated faith to be endured, without an assignable object, is to suppose men to act without motive; that is, to be either idiotic or insane. We will not accuse reasonable men of this absurdity. I therefore consider this as a bill to establish slavery throughout all this vast region.

Wayland outlined five core reasons why he opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. First, he protested that it violated the "elementary law" on which government itself was founded. The first

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[362] For background to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill see; Freehling, *The Road to Disunion*, I, 536-565; Holt, *The Rise and Fall*, 805-835; *Wilentz*, *The Rise of American Democracy*, 668-707.

principle is that "*every man has a right to himself*." Man possessed this right, "by virtue of his humanity" and it is "the foundation of all responsibility." Government existed, not to grant these rights, but to protect them. "Suppose a man not to have right to himself, and what is the consequence?" Government, he argued, became impossible, and slavery would become universal as each man had the right to enslave another interminably.

> Slavery is a sin against God, and an outrage on humanity. It deprives man not of one or another right, but it violates that fundamental law of humanity on which all right rests. I would protest against this iniquity anywhere, in the name of humanity, and justice, and universal love, I protest against it here at home specially, when this outrage is to be perpetuated on soil of which I and every other American citizen are the sole and rightful possessors.[363]

Second, as an American citizen. The Kansas-Nebraska bill violated the first principles in which the United States was founded. The Declaration of Independence granted the notion of humanity, without exclusion of "any portion of the race." The Constitution itself recognized that slavery was at variance with these fundamental truths and built in protections against its expansion. Wayland reiterated that Southerners among the Founders shared these sentiments. Slavery violated the object which the Constitution was adopted, "*to establish justice*" and to "*secure the blessings of liberty*." These principles, he argued, were what set America apart from the rest of the world. "Abolish this," he warned, "and there is nothing to distinguish us from those despotic oligarchies in which a few declare themselves free, while they hold millions under them in bondage."[364]

The bill was revolutionary, even more so than if one had proposed to dismantle the office of the presidency and establish an hereditary monarchy. The relationship between the people and the State, not the institutional form itself, was what mattered. He compared the Kansas-Nebraska

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[363]Francis Wayland, *Dr. Wayland, on the Moral and Religious Aspect of the Nebraska Bill*: *Speech at Providence, R.I.,* (Rochester, NY: William N. Sage, 1854), quotes on 1-2 and 2.
[364] Ibid., 3.

bill to an insurance agency that lent itself to burning buildings, rather than insuring them. The bill reversed the principle on which the government was founded, and instead of protecting rights, it took them away, and made slavery, rather than freedom, its guiding principle. He warned that the government then had overstepped its limitations and that it portended ill for the Union: "The force of such a resolution is to dissolve the government itself; for when the essential element of a compact is reversed, every contracting party is released from his obligations in respect to it. I therefore protest against this bill as revolutionary, and giving just cause for a dissolution of the Union."[365]

Third, as a citizen of a free state. The bill, he argued, was designed to "render the whole legislation of this country subservient to the slaveholding States, by securing, at all hazards, a majority in the Senate." Yet it was only one of a long train of measures designed for this purpose. The Louisiana Purchase was achieved "without constitutional advantage" and illustrated the "mischief" that developed by substituting principle for "immediate advantage." The Missouri Compromise was equally passed without "constitutional authority" and even against "constitutional enactment." The Compromise of 1850, "grossly insulted" the free states and forever tarnished the reputation of the "great statesmen" who secured its passage. When people protested against the admission of the slave state of Florida, Southerners argued that Congress had no say in the matter. California, although admitted as a Free State, did so only after six months of debate and compromise that split Texas into four potential slave states. The Kansas-Nebraska bill, in turn, broke faith with the North, and turned free territory into possible slave states. The result would be disastrous. He explained: "When these States are organized and added to those formed out of Texas, the character of the Senate is irrevocably fixed. The legislation of the nation is forever Southern; and Southern legislation is always subservient to the

[365]Ibid., 4.

peculiar institutions of the South." Numerically, Wayland warned that if Southern legislators gained the upper-hand, it meant that an "institution unknown to the Constitution" would soon subvert the Constitution, and that an institution "degrading and despicable" would rule over those who respected the work of their own hands. "How long a union of such a character can continue may be easily foreseen. The question ceases to be whether black men are forever to be slaves, but whether the sons of the Puritans are to become slaves themselves."

The bill subverted the ideals of the Constitution, made a mockery of human rights, made slavery the rule, rather than the exception, and shattered the image of the United States among foreign nations. He would sacrifice anything, he argued, for the Union except "truth and justice and liberty." If these were violated, then to support the Union would be to support an oppressive institution. The extension of Western territory further engendered the Indians who had suffered a long train of deception, fraud and broken treaties. The bill, by implication, continued this habitual practice. "Shall an act of cruelty unparalleled in the history of civilized man be perpetrated, because the victims are weak and their skins are red? Has no man any rights unless his skin is white, or has a just God given permission to white men to defraud and enslave and murder their fellow-men with impunity?" [366]

Fourth, as a Christian. Christ died, Wayland wrote, "for the redemption of the whole race--for the ignorant and downtrodden African as much as for his haughty Anglo-Saxon oppressor." The poor and wealthy are brethren alike, and since Christ set the example, the Union had no basis to discriminate against them. The African and Indian were likewise brethren and yet the bill unduly showed favoritism towards white people. To the tortured Christian slaveholder he pleaded that he must prove himself willing to sacrifice personal gain for the good of the slave. To the politician, he charged them with fidelity to the Constitution and to their prior compact with

[366]Ibid., 4-6.

the Northern states. To the President, he warned that the oracles of God circumvented "the mists of passion" that dominated the moment, and to look rather to future posterity. It was essential, he concluded, to divorce oneself from iniquity, and to defeat this measure through calm and tempered resolution.[367]

In many respects this speech proved electric for Wayland. Reprinted in most Northern newspapers, it spun a lot of commentary. Wayland, clearly indignant at the bill, still shielded individual slaveholders from general guilt. However, he defined the bill as nothing more than a sleight-of-hand tactic by Southerners to expand both slavery and their congressional power by any means necessary. The bill, he argued, broke faith with the North by nullifying he Missouri Compromise, which even this he argued, was a Northern compromise to placate Southern bullying. An insult to the North and the Union alike, it was another chapter in the long train of Southern domination at the hands of an acquiescent and complicit North. What rankled Wayland, was that he had long warned Northerners not to overstep their constitutional bounds and good-faith pledges toward the South, and here in this bill, the South was shredding this good-will for political advantage at the expense of ill-gotten gain and disharmony. Wayland foresaw, as did many of his Northern counterparts, that this truce could not last forever.[368]

The *American Baptist*, for one, wrote a favorable review of his speech but chastised Wayland for having waited so long to break his silence toward the South. The editorial

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[367] Ibid., 6.

[368] Ibid., 6-8. For other key perspectives on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill see: Charles Sumner, "The Landmark of Freedom: No Retreat of the Missouri Compromise," Speech in the Senate, against the Repeal of the Missouri Prohibition of Slavery north of 36 30' in the Nebraska and Kansas Bill, February 21, 1854," in George Frisbie Hoar, ed., *Charles Sumner: His Complete Works,* IV (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1900; 1969.); Charles Sumner "Final Protest, for Himself and the Clergy of New England, Against Slavery in Nebraska and Kansas" Speech in the Senate, on the Night of the Final Passage of the Nebraska and Kansas Bill, May 25, 1854, in Hoar, *Charles Sumner*, IV, 141-151; Horace Bushnell, *The Northern Iron: A Discourse Delivered in the North Church, Hartford, on the Annual State Fast, April 14, 1854* (Hartford: Edwin Hunt and Son, 1854); Haven, "The Death of Freedom. A Sermon Preached at Wilbraham, Mass., May 28, 1854, on the occasion of the passage of the Nebraska Bill, by the Senate of the United States, on the midnight of Thursday, May 25, 1854" in Haven, *Sermons, Speeches, and Letters*, 33-56.

suggested, that had Wayland and others like him acted sooner, the bill may have been avoided. The editorialist wrote:

> Had he, and the other leaders of the conservative classes, with whom he has formerly sympathized and acted, done this at the proper time, there would have been, now, no Nebraska bill for him or them to oppose. Had he planted himself, in the beginning of the great contest which for the last twenty years has been waged between slavery and freedom, upon the obvious, universal principle that *every man has a right to himself*,-and had he boldly pronounced the Union itself, if maintained by permitting the invasion of that right, an accursed thing, instead of seeking to demonstrate, by a careful measurement of the 'limitations of human responsibility,' that we are under no obligation to rebuke the wrong-doer until he is ready and willing to hear us,-his speech, if the occasion for it had arisen, would have had, what it now lacks, the merit of consistency with his previous life.[369]

The editorialist had a point, but overreached. True, Wayland moved progressively toward more liberal antislavery views, but it hardly warranted the conclusion that had he acted sooner the crisis would have been averted. No doubt, had northern moderates acted with greater moral and political fervor antislavery pressure would have multiplied proportionately, yet it is equally true, that Southern intransigence grew in proportion to northern antislavery pressure, not less. The twin problems of Northern conservatism toward slavery and Southern fears of economic and social anarchy of immediate emancipation persisted, and were seemingly insurmountable, no matter how high-profile the converts. Few individuals from the 1830s-1850s shared their earlier commitments without amendment, and recall, that even the abolitionists split among themselves over political engagement. Yet, the *American Baptist* had a point. The response of men like Wayland overlapped with and in response to the deepening political crisis, a point at which, it perhaps made, little difference who protested what.[370]

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[369] *American Baptist* quoted in *Liberator*, (April 21, 1854).
[370]Ibid.

Another such critic was the *Biblical Recorder*, a Raleigh, North Carolina publication and a distinctly Southern one. Three weeks after Wayland's speech, an editorial piece ripped Wayland and northern clergymen for fanatically and shamelessly interjecting their private judgments and opinions into theological circles and thus politicizing the pulpit. Individual clergymen were not alone. Northern periodicals and religious publications "employed their columns to promote abolition fanaticism" and "to excite a religious horror in the public mind against Southern slavery." In one sense the South was not surprised, but what concerned them was the unison in which the clergymen acted in denouncing the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Wayland, however, was the chief surprise. The South was shocked that the aged and respected Wayland, long noted for his calm and dispassionate demeanor, became party to "a promiscuous assembly and a co-worker with political fanatics and agitators" and it was confessedly "more than we could ever have supposed."[371]

His "reputation and influence are pretty well at an end in the South" the *Recorder* noted, which included his literary works. Although Wayland's antislavery views had been tolerated in the South, his Providence speech was touted as "not only unfriendly but decidedly inimical." Failing to sway Congress, Wayland became a "Disunionist" and his speech was more than "a genuine *abolition* production." Wayland also falsely misrepresented the views of Southern slavery. Undoubtedly, the *Recorder* lamented, disgruntled Southern youth at Brown University falsely implanted these thoughts in Wayland's mind that the institution was inherently abusive, when in fact it was not. Even worse, Wayland brazenly argued that the institution was neither sanctioned in the Bible or the U.S. Constitution, when all evidence suggested otherwise. Since

[371]"Fanaticism at the North" in *Biblical Recorder* (March 31, 1854).

the Bible sanctioned slavery, and if the institution be sinful, then "the error lies in the Divine will itself."[372]

The *Recorder* concluded with a warning "to the aged Divine of Providence." Wayland, among other clergymen, had declared that if the bill passed, "the Union of the States becomes a thing which they abhor." The North, not the South, was indicted with threatening secession. Northern clergymen were warned to ponder the consequences "in employing their influence to excite civil commotion and revolution, and whether they may find their priestly garments stained with the blood of hundreds and thousands of their countrymen." Wayland and his clerical supporters were thus blatantly indicted with treasonous thinking and then asked to consider their place in history: "Can you, as a patriot array your country in opposition to every attribute of the eternal God? Remember also that your life will have a page in this world's history. An impartial posterity will judge you by your actions, and will assign you a place with good men or with bad, with the benefactors or the enemies of your race." These words, no doubt, could just as easily have been hurled at the South.[373]

In April, the *Biblical Recorder* suggested that Wayland "has evidently forsaken the great platform of Bible truth, and whenever he quotes the Scriptures to support his false theory of human liberty, seldom fails to torture and distort their meanings." Wayland, the editorialist argued, misunderstood the Founding Fathers on human liberty. It was a natural mistake, the editorialist supposed, for the Founders to concede too much on human liberty in light of British oppression, and their ideas must be understood within this context, and yet their writings "are sweeter to this age divine and more weighty than the most important Bible truths." The abolitionists likewise misread them and falsely asserted equality. In fact, quite the opposite was

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[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.

true: "Men are not equal in many respects, never have been and probably never will be in this world. Complaint, therefore, against inequality among men, is foolish and in christians, evidently sinful, as they impugn the wisdom and goodness of divine Providence, which from the creation has ordained such inequality as all the world is obliged to know."[374]

The abolitionists were beyond reasoning with and evidently Wayland's speech was endorsed "by the whole abolition corps." His reputation, it seemed, was beyond redemption. "We say with pain that we are compelled now to regard him as a leader of a large number of Clergymen whose course as agitators and fanatics, is alike disgraceful to their sacred profession and injurious to their country, and who entertain sentiments of liberty more consistent with the infidels and libertines of the French Revolution, than with the enlightened views of American citizens or American divines." The association of abolitionism with the infidelity of the French revolutionaries was a typical charge, and the fact that Wayland was now associated with such sentiments indicated the degree to which Southern opinion had changed on him.[375]

In May, the *Recorder* indicted Wayland bitterly for turning against the South without cause, denouncing the institutions "bequeathed them by their forefathers" and joining the ranks of their "avowed and fanatical enemies." It was left, the *Recorder* suggested "to the common sense of mankind, if such a man does not deserve the lash of his forsaken and dishonored friends." Wayland may have escaped the lash, but his reputation was tarnished throughout Southern circles and his books committed to the flames. The *Recorder* explained: "Wayland need not be surprised to hear that his books are burnt, instead of being bought in the South. We have already heard gentlemen of high respectability and intelligence say, that since they read his Nebraska speech, their feelings against his books were such that they were strongly inclined to

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[374]*Biblical Recorder* (April 21, 1854).
[375]Ibid.

take them from their libraries, and commit them to the flames; and if the Doctor is not himself burnt in effigy, it will be owing to the respect which our people have for religion, and for those who are its professed advocates."[376]

Three weeks later, the *Biblical Recorder* returned to the same theme and devoted a lengthy editorial on Wayland and a shorter opinion piece. Wayland falsely asserted that every man had a right to himself, that government was predicated on such sentiments, and that the Kansas-Nebraska Bill violated this principle. Scripture, in establishing human relations, recognized differences within relationships, particularly between master and slave. Rights for one, can be abridged in the case of "lunatics" or "felons" who forfeit these rights. Presumably then, if rights can be lost, they can be regained. To admit this in principle "would be to admit in comment what has been denied in the text." The question of rights then, hindered on which slavery violated such rights. Rights were not individualistic, but community oriented, and the only right that man possessed is stood in relation to another. God ordained these relationships and pre-established societal norms and happiness is bound within maintaining these relationships. True liberty, the editorialist argued, is not possible outside of complete savagery. If an individual withdrew from one government and joined another, he was not free, but now bound to the laws and relationships of his new government. He merely traded one set of restrictions for another. If he completely withdrew from society and lived until himself, this was not liberty, "but another name for licentiousness." In short, true liberty could not be found in individualistic living, but rather was interwoven within community relationships, and stability was found, not in the absence of restraint, but in respecting institutional and societal restrictions.[377]

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[376]*Biblical Recorder (May 4, 1854).*
[377]W.H.J., "Dr. Wayland and the Nebraska Bill," in *Biblical Recorder*, May 25, 1854.

Rights were not inalienable but qualified and amendable, and rights could not be violated which in fact did not exist. An individual might be entitled to keep his income, but not to the portion he owed in taxes. In short, to deprive a man of his rights was wrong only if he was deprived of those rights which were rightfully his. Wayland, then, erred, by associating slavery with a loss of liberty, because he failed to demonstrate that slaves were entitled to the rights that slaveholders denied they had in the first place. If Wayland was correct, slavery was "lawless violence" but if not, then slavery served a legitimate social function "which results from the impossibility of changing our social condition."[378]

Another editorial in the same edition, written under the anonymous name "Southerner," charged Wayland with inconsistency. In his debate with Richard Fuller he acknowledged the high-character of some Southern slaveholders, but in his Providence address, Wayland lamented that slavery was an outrage against humanity. These two statements were incompatible and damaging to his reputation. "Such a palpable contradiction of himself in his own assertions, not made unwarily but designed for the public, was not to be expected from one of his advanced age and matured opinions, and who has long piqued himself upon his consistency; and will necessarily derogate much from his decidedly great weight of his authority on all moral questions."[379]

Unquestionably, Wayland had lost his charm among Southerners. Yet, despite the pronounced militancy in his Kansas-Nebraska speech, Wayland warned against blindly reacting from uncontrolled passion. He maintained his stance that the surest means to induce change was through the inculcation of moral principles, best taught by example.

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[378] Ibid.
[379] Ibid., (author under name Southerner).

This viewpoint was ably exemplified in his response to the Anthony Burns affair. In May 1854, only two days after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, the escaped Virginia slave, Anthony Burns, was arrested in Boston and detained on a false charge of robbery. His incarceration by federal marshals resulted in condemnation by blacks and white alike under the rubric of the "Virginia KIDNAPPER!" Although abolitionists opted to pay for his freedom, the federal attorney, determined to enforce the Fugitive Slave Law, sided against Burns, and had him returned to his Virginia owner. The entire affair, by salient example, highlighted the reality of the Fugitive Slave Law. In June 1854, Wayland confided his viewpoint on the Burns affairs to his son. He wrote:

> Keep down your passions; pray for the country; try to look as patiently as possible upon wrong-doers. In the mean time, proclaim the principles of right, their obligation and supremacy, and nerve men to be willing to suffer loss in consequence of them. What is wanted is to extend and deepen the feelings of resistance to oppression, and of determination at all hazards to be free from participation in it. When this is universal, united, and moral, nothing can withstand it, and the agents to carry it on will soon appear. Do not allow yourself in strong excitement, but rather lift up the case with both hands, and all your heart, to the Judge of all the earth; plead his promises and his perfections, and wait for the indications of his providence. This seems present duty. Write, publish, inform the people, direct the present feeling in proper channels. This is all I see at present.[380]

On June 7, 1856, Wayland delivered a speech following the caning of Senator Charles Sumner on the Senate floor by the South Carolinian Preston Brooks. Both individual and national tempers were heightened and Wayland warned that he would not be cowered by "the bludgeon of a bully" or "the pistol of an assassin." He reiterated this theme in a letter written in June 1856. God, he warned, in a personal letter, had chastised the North for indifference toward the slave, and that "God is given us a taste of it, that we may see how we like it ourselves." The North, was governed, not by law or conscience, but by "bowie-knives, bludgeons, and the lash."

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[380] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2:134. For the Burn's Affair in general see Albert J. Vol Frank, *The Trials of Anthony Burns: Freedom and Slavery in Emerson's Boston* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

He supported the Republican Charles Fremont in the 1856 presidential election, but while he supported a concerted plan to rally Northern support, he warned a fellow minister against explicit political endorsement. Ministers were instructed to teach the moral law, not to endorse political candidates. The former was permissible, but the latter " is to claim his sanction for your opinions." Wayland, despite Fremont's loss, remained optimistic. The North, he argued, had rallied together, and even had Fremont won, he would have faced insurmountable odds against a Democratic controlled Senate and House.[381] Following John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, Wayland did not explicitly condemn Brown, but noted his "coolness" and "bravery," and even suggested that it would "raise the tone of antislavery feeling several degrees higher throughout the North."[382]

In between the smoldering embers of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the start of the Civil War, Wayland retired from Brown University in 1855, but he maintained an active public role. Wayland, for example, worked tirelessly to establish more public library systems. In his commencement address at Brown University in 1847, he expressed his desire to fund a library in the town of Wayland, in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. The town named in his honor, opened the library in August 1850, partially due to his personal financial contribution and fund raising efforts. Wayland was widely credited with originating the idea for the passage of the "Library Act" in May 1851 in Massachusetts. It continued, in a non-collegiate sense, his desire to expand the education of the layman.[383] Wayland also increased his involvement in missions. For many years he served as President of the Prison Discipline Society and he worked as a Sabbath school teacher in the Rhode Island State Prison. In June 1851, Governor Allen of Rhode Island

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[381] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2:154-156.
[382] Quoted in Murray, *Francis Wayland*, 145.
[383] For commentary on his role, see Jared M. Heard, *Origin of the Free Public Library System of Massachusetts* (Clinton: Printed at the Office of the Saturday Courant, 1860); see also Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, II: 71-74.

appointed Wayland to the board of inspectors where Wayland worked to expand the comfort of inmates, erected a chapel, and even helped find them employment after they were released. His son, Francis Wayland, Jr., later Dean at Yale Law School, continued prison volunteer work.[384]

Two other issues occupied his time. Throughout the 1850s, Wayland remained committed to reforming the work of Baptist missionary efforts. His major work on the Baptist denomination, *Notes on the Principles and Practices of the Baptist Church* (1857) has already been considered. His *Thoughts on the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist Denomination* (1859) expanded the theme of Baptist missions. Wayland argued that the current mission structure was too cumbersome and bureaucratic and he suggested that each association of Baptist churches perform the work themselves. His position provoked a lengthy and anonymous review, on the grounds that few men possessed the reputation to refute Wayland on this subject. The structure, fractured into the three agencies of the Home Mission Society, the Publication Society, and the American and Foreign Bible Society, produces too much competition and overlap of workloads. Wayland wanted to streamline missionary work by granted more independency to regional associations and churches. Nevertheless, the reviewer wrote a response nearly twice as long as Wayland's original essay.[385]

Wayland also worked as the President of the Providence Auxiliary to the *American Tract Society* and wrote a piece under the title, *How to be Saved* (1862). Begun under the name the *New England Tract Society* in 1814, it changed its name to the *American Tract Society* in 1823, headquartered in Boston. A sister organization, the *National Tract Society*, incorporated in 1841,

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[384] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, II:339-350; See for example, a report on the prison system written by his son, Francis Wayland, Jr., in Francis Wayland, *Some of the Causes Which Tend to Promote the Increase of Crime in the United States. Report of the Criminal Law Reform Committee of the National Prison Association, Read at its Annual Session at Baltimore, Maryland, December 5, 1892* (New Haven: Hoggson & Robinson, Printers, 1892).

[385] Francis Wayland, *Thoughts on the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist Denomination* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1859); For the anonymous review see, *A Defense of the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist Denomination. Being a Review of a Pamphlet Entitled "Thoughts on the Missionary Organizations of the Baptist Denomination, by Francis Wayland* (Boston: John M. Hewes, 81 Cornhill, 1859).

was founded and headquartered in New York. In a speech delivered at the Anniversary of the *Providence City Tract Society* in January 1860, Wayland briefly recounted the history of the Tract Society. The Boston and New York tract society worked in harmony, Wayland noted, until Southerners complained the tract society was an abolitionist ruse to smuggle antislavery ideas to slaves. Controversy arose between the two societies, it seems, because the Boston society opted not to balk at Southern bullying, but the New York society opted to appease them and forgo any publication that some might find offensive. Wayland outlined three wrongs committed by the New York society. First, it was wrong to shirk the Christian duty to preach to the lost and oppressed due to pressure. Second, it hurt Southern Christians who counted on Northern moral support. Third, it gave the slaveholders an excuse for wrongdoing because no moral judgment was hurled at them. Wayland encouraged fidelity to the original principles on which the Boston Tract Society was founded and to their Southern brethren who toiled under the oppressive slave system. That the issue of slavery had worked its way into the politics of the tract societies reinforced that it left no institution untouched. In general, radical abolitionists demanded that the ATS condemn slaveholding as sinful, but Wayland, backed by other moderates, thought this too bullying, and motioned to censure the publishing committee for its refusal to abide by the previous year's mandate to circulate tracts on the responsibilities of masters.[386]

In his famed House Divided speech in 1858, Lincoln laid out what was at stake in the nation: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*. I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved*-I do not expect the house to *fall*-but I *do* expect it will cease to be divided. It will become *all* one thing, or *all* the

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[386] *Dr. Wayland on the Tract Societies. Speech of Rev. Francis Wayland, D.D., At the Anniversary of the Providence City Tract Society, Auxiliary to the American Tract Society (Boston) January 20, 1860; see also McKivigan, The War Against Proslavery Religion,* 119-125. See his personal tract, Francis Wayland, *How to be Saved: Three Letters to a Friend,* (Boston: American Tract Society, 1862).

other."[387] Lincoln stated his thesis that disunion was not imminent, but that the country could no longer endure "half *slave* and half *free*." However, the house in fact did split, because the North and South had reached the limits of compromise and conciliation. Southerners, convinced that the only means to protect their interests lay outside the Union, seceded from the Union in vain hopes of independence. The Civil War unleashed an fury of anxiety, fear, anger, and explosiveness that had long simmered beneath the surface in American politics. Although the South seceded, it is reasonable to add that some in the North welcomed the fight. The war, triggered by Southern fire-brands, roped an often weary and reluctant Southern constituency along with it, yet Northern resentment had been building toward years. The Fugitive Slave Law had pushed many reluctant Northerners over the edge and awakened them to the duplicity that forced non-slaveholders to detain runaway slaves. The Kansas-Nebraska Act, which repealed the Missouri Compromise, theoretically opened the entire remnants of the Louisiana Purchase to slavery. This in turn, triggered a civil war in Kansas. When the status of Kansas statehood came up for a vote, and despite the fact that the majority of its residents were antislavery, "border ruffians" from the slave state of Missouri, flooded across the Kansas border to vote in a proslavery government.

In the Dred Scott Decision of 1857, the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, ruled that residence in a free territory did not make a slave free, concluding that blacks "had no rights that the white man was bound to respect" and noted by implication that the exclusion clause of the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. Although the Kansa-Nebraska Bill had already repealed it, his ruling theoretically opened the entire country up to slavery since residence in a free state did not alter their legal status. The ruling, received nearly

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[387] Abraham Lincoln, "A House Divided Speech" in Roy Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 9 vols, II:461.

universal praise in the South and nearly universal condemnation in the North.[388] For Southerners, the Wilmot Proviso, the growth of the Liberty and Free Soil parties awakened Southerners that that their day of legislative bullying was ending. John Brown's Harper Ferry Raid of 1859 convinced them, whether true or not, that a Northern conspiracy was afoot between whites and free blacks to liberate slaves by force of arms. The election of the "Black Republican" Lincoln, who ran on a non-extension platform, proved more than Southern fire-brands could bear. If Lincoln's election was not proof enough for Southern moderates, the firing on Fort Sumter in April 1861 pushed many into secessionist ranks.[389]

Southerners remained divided in heart and mind over secession and even divided over how to define what took place. Some boldly proclaimed secession to be revolution in the spirit of 1776. Yet, armed revolt against an established government is illegal, but secessionists insisted their actions were legal and constitutional. Many them promoted secession over revolution. Whereas the latter overthrew an existing and legal government, the former established a new and independent government. In this respect secession then was legal not revolutionary. To Northerners, the Southerners subverted the principles of natural rights in lieu of one based on the institution of slavery. It was a rebellion, not in the interest of mankind, but of despotism and tyranny. Southerners retorted that Northerners were the true revolutionaries, in their pretense to

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[388] See Don E. Fehrenbacher, *The Dred Scott Case, Its Significance in American Law and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). On John Brown see Stephen B. Oates, *To Purge This Land with Blood: A Biography of John Brown* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Paul Finkelman, ed., *His Soul Goes Marching On: Responses to the John Brown and the Harper's Ferry Raid* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995).
[389]On Northern secession see: Howard C. Perkins, *Northern Editorials on Secession*, 2 vols. (Gloucester, Mass,: Peter Smith, 1964); Kenneth M. Stampp, *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970); and David M. Potter, *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964); Freehling, *Road to Disunion,* II. charts the final years leading to secession.

overturn ancient institutions of social order, whereas the South upheld the natural and inherited rights of property. This latter of course meant property in slaves.[390]

Secession brought out the worst in people. The prominent South Carolinian and theologian James Henley Thornwell perhaps stated it best in unequivocal fashion the Southern justification for secession and the perception of the what the election of Lincoln meant for the South. First, secession was nothing more than the nullification of a contract. Second, the election of Lincoln redefined the terms of the Union and secession was warranted to protect Southern interests. Thornwell explained:

> The real cause of the intense excitement of the South, is not vain dreams of national glory in a separate confederacy, nor the love of the fifty lucre of the African slave-trade; it is the profound conviction that the Constitution, in its relations to slavery, has been virtually repealed, that the Government has assumed a new and dangerous attitude upon this subject, that we have, in short, new terms of union submitted to our acceptance or rejection. Here lies the evil. The election of Lincoln, when properly interpreted, is nothing more nor less than a proposition to the South to consent to a Government, fundamentally different upon the question of slavery, from that which our fathers established. If this point can be made out, secession becomes not only a right, but a bounden duty. Morally, it is only the abrogation of the forms of a contract, when its essential conditions have been abolished. Politically, it is a measure indispensable to the safety, if not to the very existence of the South.[391]

Princeton theologian Charles Hodge argued that secession was illegal. Hodge distinguished between revolution and secession. The former, was admittedly illegal, but Southern justification for the latter, was flawed. Hodge outlined four reasons why. First, the nation, was not a confederation of states but was a unified whole, under one constitution and one people, indissoluble. Second, the Union was perpetual and made secession an impossibility. Third, the

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[390]On Southern secession see: Avery O. Craven, *The Growth of Southern Sectionalism, 1848-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953); John McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalists and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1979); Dwight Lowell Dumond, *Southern Editorials on Secession* (New York: The Century Co., 1931) and Donald E. Reynolds, *Editors Make War: Southern Newspapers in the Secession Crisis* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1970).

[391]James Henley Thornwell, "The Present State of the Country," 1861, in B.M. Palmers, *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell*, 1875), 591-610; quote on 595.

Founding Fathers rejected the right to secession. Fourth, all parties were committed against the right of secession, and if secession is possible, it must be ascertained at the consent of the all the parties. Fifth, the illogical tendencies in secession made the proposition absurd, in that the U.S. would require so vast a territory, only to grant its citizens the right of secession. Its financial loss, no less than its geographical one, would be enormous and incalculable. It seemed, he added, that Southerners were incapable of living in a political system that they did not control.[392]

The Union then was divided geographically along a seemingly unbridgeable gulf beyond two rival cultural and economical systems. Yet individually, choosing one or the other was neither self-evident or unequivocal. Loyalties to home and hearth tore at the sentiments toward nation and Union. The logic of secession though made one chose sides whether willingly or not. Thornwell, once the reluctant secessionist, committed himself to the Confederate cause. Hodge, once the Northern defender of the scriptural proslavery argument, rallied behind the Union cause. To be fair, their political loyalties were never in question, but it demonstrates the ambiguity and complexity between the two warring parties. Wayland, though committed to the proposition that slavery was sinful, had not committed himself to immediate emancipation. Southern secession and Northern determination to fight put slavery on the ultimate road to extinction. Wayland, jumped at the chance to support the Union cause, although in one key respect, his journey was a strange one.

It is paradoxical that Wayland supported the war effort. He was a committed Unionist, but Wayland had also been a noted pacifist and former president of the American Peace Society. He argued that society was bound by the same principles as individuals and were subject to the

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[392] Charles Hodge, "The State of the Country," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 33 (January 1861), 1-36; for a critique his political views, see Richard Carwardine, "The Politics of Charles Hodge," in John W. Stewart and James H. Moorhead, eds., *Charles Hodge Revisited: A Critical Appraisal of His Life and Work* (Grand Rapids, Mich,; William B. Eerdeman Publishing Company, 2002), 247-297.

same restrictions. Societal violence, like individual violence, was "contrary to the will of God." He explained:

> Hence, it would seem that all wars are contrary to the revealed will of God, and the individual has no right to commit to society, nor society to commit to government, the power to declare war. Such, I much confess, seems to me to be the revealed will of our Creator; and, hence, that, to all arguments brought in favor of war, it would be a sufficient answer, that God has forbidden it, and that no consequences can possibly be conceived to arise from keeping his law, so terrible as those which must arise from violating it. God commands us to love every man, alien or citizen, Samaritan or Jew, as ourselves; and the act neither of society nor of government can render it our duty to violate this command.[393]

Elsewhere, he wrote, "To attempt by physical force to maintain doctrines which physical force could never teach, and the teaching of which it could not restrain is manifestly absurd."[394] Preempting criticism, Wayland responded in Q & A fashion to expected criticism. To the charge that warfare best addressed national grievances, he argued that prevention of war is best accomplished by "the justice of its measures, and the benevolence of its conduct." Wayland asserted that world opinion against the aggressor state would rise in proportion to the non-violent resistance of the victim state. Even if injury be done, moral appeal is made not by "physical force, but to the consciences of men." National honor is sacrificed, not in silent resistance, but in aggression. Dishonor lied not with the nation patiently suffering, but with the aggressor state. Repetitive injury is conceivable, yet "obedience to the law of God" by the injured party "is the surest prevention against the repetition of injury." Fidelity to the "law of benevolence" whereby one nation turns the other cheek, does not guard against injury, but does insure against excessive injury. Wayland assumed, quite confidently, that foreign aggression was best repelled through moral suasion alone. His reasoning at times seemed hopelessly naïve and optimistic, but it reflected his self-confidence in his moral principles. Wayland even contended that were this

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[393] Wayland, *Elements of Moral Science*, 390.
[394] Wayland, "Recent Revolutions," 317.

principle to fail, retaliation, even though it meant complete subjugation, was prohibited. He argument chiefly rested on his assertion that violence begat violence and that all warfare, even in self-defense, is mutually self-destructive. He explained:

> And still more, is it not most commonly the case, that the very means by which we repel a despotism from abroad, only establishes over us a military despotism at home? Sense, then, the principle of retaliation will not, with any certainty, save a country from conquest, the real question, as before, is, by obedience to which law will a nation be most likely to escape it, by the law of retaliation, or by that of benevolence? It seems to me, that a man who will calmly reflect, will see that the advantages of war, even in this respect, are much less than they been generally admitted.[395]

Rather than promoting passive non-resistance, he argued for more active measures. "I however would by no means assert that forgiveness of injuries alone is a sufficient protection against wrong. I suppose the real protection to be active benevolence." Wayland argued rather that warfare is God's judgment for the violation of these responsibilities and duties. "I believe aggression from a foreign nation to be the intimation from God that we are disobeying the law of benevolence, and that this is his mode of teaching nations their duty, in this respect, to each other. So that aggression seems to me in no manner to call for retaliation and injury, but rather to call for special kindness and good will." The "law of benevolence" then rather than encouraging violence through passiveness, was the antidote to aggression, the cause of which in turn, is the negation of God-given societal responsibility. "If this be true," he reasoned, "it will follow, that the cultivation of a military spirit is injurious to a community, inasmuch as it aggravates the source of evil, the corrupt passions of the human heart, by the very manner in which it attempts to correct the evil itself."

Wayland preempted his critics when he wrote: "I am aware that all this may be *called* visionary, romantic, and chimerical. This, however, neither *makes* it so, nor proves it to so. The

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[395]Wayland, *Elements of Moral Science*, 391-393; quote on 393.

time *to apply* these epithets will be, when the justness of their application has been proved." Wayland concluded that although nations may not abide by these principles, it neither nullified them, nor negated either individual or societal responsibility to apply them. In fact, the increase in wickedness, rather than compelling like responses, only demanded further benevolence. His position on pacifism, while certainly sincere at the time he penned it, was subsequently challenged when the Mexican-American war broke out.[396]

In his *The Duty Obedience to the Civil Magistrate*, Wayland modified his viewpoints whereby he granted the state the right to use force to protect its citizens. Even here, force was to be calculated and utilized only to the degree necessary to alleviate the danger. Once this goal was secured and the threat removed, the state had no other legitimate use for force. He warned however, that state sanctioned violence naturally evolved from wars of self-protection to wars of conquest and extermination. Force, then, if not restrained by morality, served an illegitimate function. What people ever granted the State authorization to utilize force for means other than self-preservation he asked? Authorization for one mode of force did not concede authorization for another mode. "For the accomplishment of one object," he explained, "authority may be granted, but it cannot rightfully be granted for the accomplishment of the other." He concluded that the unlawful use of force by the State violated the power in which it was intrusted, and in doing so, it unlawfully exceeded the boundaries prescribed by the people.[397]

President Lincoln himself had been personally influenced by the writings of Wayland. The historian David Donald noted that Lincoln had studied his *Elements of Political Economy.*

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[396] Ibid., 391-395; quote on 393; See 390-395 for Wayland's anti-war views.

[397] Wayland, "Obedience to the Civil Magistrate," 269-277; quote on 276. By way of comparison see Daniel Sharp, *A Plea for Peace. A Discourse Delivered on Fast Day, April 2, 1846* (Boston: William D. Ticknor and Company, 1846). Sharp, pastor of the Charles Street Church, Boston, argued along similar lines. Published in the midst of the Mexican War, Sharp argued that war was self-destructive and immoral except in legitimate cases of self-defense or conscientious objection to immoral laws; for "just-war" theory and wartime in relationship to the Civil War see Harry Stout: *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006) and Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008).

He learned much from his "lucidly written text" though he rejected his "free-trade doctrines" in lieu of tariff protectionism. Lincoln did however, endorse the "labor theory of value" that Wayland and other economists expounded. Lincoln's longtime law partner, William Herndon, wrote that "Lincoln ate up, digested, and assimilated Wayland's little book."[398] Historian Allen Guelzo noted that Lincoln most admired Wayland on economics, and furthermore, every political issue that Lincoln represented, and even his Gettysburg Address, was "undergirded by his unwavering allegiance to the Whig ideology" and "to the reading of Mill, Wayland, and Carey." William Lee Miller, argued, though he admitted circumstantially, that Lincoln may have borrowed from the antislavery selections in Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science* when he composed his October 16, 1854 speech in Peoria, Illinois. Many passages, or at least the idea behind them, match the content of Wayland's writing. Miller also alluded to an antislavery letter written by Lincoln of April 6, 1859 and to an unpublished one dated August 1, 1858 that mirrored Wayland's thinking.[399]

"The division of the Union is now inevitable. It seems only a deeply laid treason of long standing waiting only for a favorable occasion. This was furnished by the imbecility of {President James}Buchanan if not by his complicity." Wayland wrote this in January 1861, in the same letter that he indicted the Buchanan administration with treason and argued that negotiation with the South was unlikely since the two parties no longer shared common viewpoints. He did not foresee any workable compromise and lamented that it was likely would not end without bloodshed. Wayland felt confident that if the Union separated, "we have the best

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[398] David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 110 and 234; William Herndon to Jesse Weik, January 1, 1886, in Emmanuel Hertz, ed., *The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon* (New York: Viking Press, 1938), 117.

[399] Allen C. Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (Grand Rapids, Mich., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 107; 121-122; 137; quote on 458; William Lee Miller, *Lincoln's Virtues: An Ethical Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 277-279; for Lincoln's Peoria Speech, see "Speech at Peoria, Illinois, October 16, 1854" in Roy P. Basler, ed. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 9 vols. 1953), 2:247-283.

of it" and that the Union had "the sympathy of the whole world, even Italy and Russia." He was optimistic of victory but weary of what price would be paid for it.[400] Three days later, he confided to his son Francis Wayland Jr., that slavery was ripping society apart and he chastised proslavery arguments. He argued that slavery was indefensible unless it was made the law of humanity. If so, it would justify all oppression necessary to enforce it, but logically, it would equally preclude the enslavement of any man whosoever. This, he concluded, would destroy all society. Wayland also argued that it was biblically unwarranted to assume that Jesus sanctioned Roman slavery. Finally, since Jesus no where sanctioned Roman slavery, it was "blasphemy" to argue that he sanctioned Southern slavery.[401]

By January 1861 Francis Wayland had little faith in the South. On January 14, 1861, he again confided to his son that he felt that the North and South were worlds apart, and the North had compromised so often, that the South "supposed that we all might be frightened or bribed." Things looked as if the South intended treason all along. God, Wayland suggested, may have "designed to break them off from us" but he lamented that he saw no grounds for reconciliation and even suggested that the two halves may have to exist side-by-side.[402] Five days later, he wrote that secession was the inevitable outworking of a society built on slavery and that he personally reached the point "that I do not want any thing more to do with them."[403] Wayland reiterated these sentiments, in February 1861 when he stated flatly that if the South wanted to go "to let them go." He called them traitors, asserted that the North and South no longer shared the same moral values, and again reaffirmed, "I want to have no more to do with them."[404] In a letter to a Southern minister, he stately sadly, but honestly, that the general tenor in the North was that

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[400]Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R.I., January 5, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-14, 1861 Jan-Feb.
[401] Letter to Francis Wayland Jr., Providence, R.I., January 8, 1861,Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-14, 1861 Jan-Feb.
[402] Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R.I., January 14, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-14, 1861 Jan-Feb.
[403] Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R.I., January 19, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-14, 1861 Jan-Feb.
[404] Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr. Providence, R.I. February 8, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-14, 1861 Jan-Feb.

the gulf between Northern and Southern Christians may have become "utterly insurmountable."[405]

These words, admittedly written in private letters, were nonetheless, uncharacteristic of the man who worked tirelessly to prevent the separation of the churches, revealed the depth to which Wayland had shifted in his attitude toward the South. These sentiments may indicate a shared intolerance for southern violence and uncompromising attitudes toward the North. No doubt, he likely felt personally betrayed after his unwavering support for Southern Christians, his willingness to separate slavery as sinful from the guilt of slaveholding, and his work toward reconciliation of the churches. All of it, of course, came to naught. His attitude, while very real, may rather have represented his feelings in the moment, for when the war ended, he encouraged the nation to move forward and to lay aside all thoughts of recrimination and malice.

Wayland, like so many Northerners, expressed early confidence in Union victory. In January 1861, he wrote: "I dare not pray for any one thing, only that a just and holy God would glorify himself, and deliver the oppressed, and show himself in favor of justice, by giving strength to right and to those who preserve it. Can it be doubted on which side God will declare himself? Can we doubt that, if we look to him in faith, he will bring forth judgment unto victory? That same month, he wrote his son and suggesting that God was soon to bring slavery to an end, and God had let the South go "to free us from complicity."[406] In May 1861, he contended that God was using the North as an instrument against the institution of slavery and confided that black troops should be used. The Union, he said, was not a motley collection of states, but a unified whole.[407] In July 1861, writing after the First Battle of Bull Ran, he noted that Union

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[405] Letter to Rev. Sampson, Providence, R.I., June 10, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-14, II-80, 1861 Jan-Feb.
[406] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, 2:262-263.
[407]Letter to Rev. Sampson, Providence, R.I., May 20, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, II-80, Jan-Feb.

soldiers had died with "honor" in the late battle.[408] Although beaten, the North awoke to the possibility of a long and protracted war which only fortified their determination. Wayland took note of this, although his optimism was clearly premature. He wrote in August 1861 that: "The North is taking strong hold of the war. The South might be failing as it seems to me."[409]

The nature of the war naturally infused the theological climate with heightened religious sentiment as to what the war meant. Wayland was no exception. In November 1861, Wayland wrote to his son, Francis Wayland Jr., and reminded him that God would end the war in his good time.[410] In August 1862, Wayland confided that God was using the war as an instrument of good, but confessed his ignorance as to how God made sense of the all the suffering. He suggested the answer might lie in the liberation of the slaves.[411] In a letter written one month before Lincoln issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, he was more optimistic, noting that God used the war "for the good of the great cause." He noted, however, that the war would not end until it could be done so "with good conscience," but he feared it would cost much in "blood and treasure." Wayland was on to something. Much of this "blood and treasure" was spent three weeks later on the single bloodiest day of the war at the battle of Antienam on August 22, 1862.[412]

In letters, reproduced but anonymously addressed generically in his memoirs, he further expounded on these views. Writing to a Congressman, for example, he encouraged him "to look to God for the wisdom of his Omniscience and the strength of his Almightiness." To an army chaplain, he encouraged him to look beyond his distaste for the enemy, "and to cherish no feeling that would prevent you from praying for those whose wickedness you abhor." Wayland

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[408]Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R,I., July 30, 1861, Hay, MC-IC-4, IV-18 1861 July-Aug.
[409]Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R.I., August 11, 1861, Hay, MC-IC-4, IV-19, 1861 Sept-Dec.
[410]Letter to Francis Wayland, Jr., Providence, R.I., November 18, 1861, Hay, MC-IC-4, IV-19,Sep-Dec.
[411]Letter to E.C. Delevan, Providence, R.I., July 17, 1862, Hay, MC-IC-4, IV-81, 1862.
[412] Letter to E.C. Delevan, August 2, 1862, Providence, R.I., Hay, MS-IC-4, II-81, 1862

even spoke to Sherman's officers before they set sail. Most certainly speaking of slavery, he noted that the war showed "the magnitude of the atoning sacrifice, which is sufficient to change this whole race, to expel sin from the earth, and to justify God in pardoning the ungodly!" To his sister, Wayland confided that God used slavery to bring judgment. "He will chastise and humble us," he wrote to his sister," and then he will pour out his wrath upon those who, in addition to sins in common with us, must answer for the sin of slavery, and for laying it at the door of the Holy one." To a chaplain he wrote, "The temper of the south in this war has been about as bad as it can be, and in the professors of religion worst of all. If they were hungry, I would feed them; if thirsty, I would give them drink; if sick or in prison, I would visit them, but beyond this, I *eschew them*." Yet again to a chaplain, he lamented that Union battlefield success, if anything should remind all people to thank God, but he feared that final victory would "possess the heart, and to drive the Holy Spirit out of it."[413]

Between May 1862 and December 1865 Wayland maintained a warm correspondence with the Secretary of State William H. Seward. The Secretary had known and corresponded with Wayland's father, Francis Wayland Sr., for many years. Wayland wrote Seward requesting a copy of the letters that his father had written to Seward, only to learn that he was unable to comply since that the letters were bound together in multiple volumes for the sake of preservation. Yet, Seward in his reply letter, fondly recalled his long-term friendship with Wayland's father, which established at minimum, that Seward had a friendly connection to the Wayland family.[414] Though exactly what he requested is not fully known, but in a letter dated November 20, 1862, Wayland implied he was privy to inside information that he could not make public.

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[413] Wayland and Wayland, *Memoirs*, II: 264-268.
[414] Letter William H. Seward to Francis Wayland, December 30, 1865, Hay, MS-IC-4, III 3.

> Accept my thanks for your kindness in noticing my request. If however, I had known the facts which you state, I would never have made it. I hope that I am incapable of asking a favor which by its example might tend to embarrass the Government, or injure the service of my Country. I wish the facts you state could be known to the whole country; their bearings are significant and explain many things that were before inexplicable,-especially the differences between the Secretary and General McClellan, for which the former has been blamed.[415]

His wartime correspondence, though not voluminous, is important, in that it revealed his steadfast devotion to the Union cause, his uncharacteristic animosity toward Southerners, though he not infrequently separated the cause from the people, and his theological interpretation that God provided special sanction to the Union. In a letter to Seward, for example, dated May 9, 1862, Wayland spelled out his theological view of the war:

> What glorious news every day is bringing us! On the anniversary of the Battle of Bull Run, it seems as if there would not be a rebel company in existence. It really seems as if the good God, almost by miracle, had spoken and declared his hatred of the cause which they have claimed as under his special protection. To Him be the glory.[416]

In a letter dated May 17, 1862, Wayland reaffirmed his trust that God would see the Union through to victory. He praised Seward for his leadership, and asked, somewhat humorously, that Seward shake Lincoln's hand on his behalf. Seeing that Lincoln read his books, he most likely did. He wrote:

> I do not know of a living man who is making history and sowing the seeds of destiny for our race, as rapidly as yourself. I incline to consider the present trouble as a preparation for something of mightier moment for mankind. We shall have to fight the battle for free institutions against the two foremost nations on earth; who will unite with them, God only knows. It will probably be a final struggle and we shall come out of it the leading nation of the globe. You are placed at the very switch and it will depend on you under God how the course is directed. May God verify his promise to you "whosoever lacks the wisdom, let him ask God and it shall be given him." That promise is given especially to men placed in such circumstances as you are in now. It will give me pleasure to ask for

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[415] Letter to William H. Seward, Providence, R.I.,

[416] Letter to William H. Seward, Providence, R.I., May 9, 1862, Hay, MS-IC-4, III 3; see Northern theological interpretations of the war see: James H. Moorhead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860-1869* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

> you the teaching of Omniscience. But, I am not preaching. I do not know Our Lincoln-except through his work. I honor him. When you next see him, shake hands with him for me.[417]

By October 1863, Wayland moderated his optimism. He had good reason to. The twin Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in July 1863 had neither ended the war nor completely crushed the Southern spirit. In a letter to a friend, confided:

> I agree heartily with you in hoping for peace. I can however hardly hope for, or expect it until the sad work is carried to the end with vigor and united action. The heart of the Southern people is as savage as ever and as relentless as ever. May God give them better minds![418]

Although the reelection of Lincoln seemed in question, his enthusiasm returned, when he learned that Lincoln had been reelected on November 3, 1864.[419] This proved a key turning point in the war for it ensured that the Union would see the war through to the end. The war indeed seemed in good hands, especially when he learned that General Ulysses S. Grant was fighting in Chattanooga.[420] He wrote with open enthusiasm on the news that the city of Savannah fell to General William T. Sherman in December 1864.[421]

In his most clear and precise statement as to the origins of the war and the meaning behind it, in December 1863, Wayland wrote a lengthy indictment of Peace Democrats and directed it to Andrew Jackson Brown.[422] Lincoln's rearguard political enemies were the Peace Democrats, dubbed Copperheads before many assumed that some among them not only opposed the war effort, but only worked with the Confederates. To Brown's accusation that had there

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[417] Letter to William H. Seward, Providence, R.I., May 17, 1862, Hay, MS-IC-III 4. Two additional letters provide insight into his opinion of Seward: Letter to Francis Wayland Jr., May 3, 1861, Providence, R.I., Hay, MS-IC-4, IV 16 1861 April-May; and Letter to Francis Wayland Jr., Providence, R.I., June 27, 1861, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-17, 1861 June.
[418] Letter to Sheldon Smith, Providence, R.I., October 28, 1863, Hay, MS-1C-4, III 7.
[419] Letter to Francis Wayland Jr., Providence, R.I., November 5, 1864, Hay, MS-IC-IV-22, 1864 Aug-Dec.
[420] Letter to HLW, Providence, R.I., November 27, 1863, Hay, MS-IC-4, IV-41, 1863 Nov-Dec.
[421] Letter to HLW, Providence, R.I., December 19, 1864, Hay, MS-IC-4, V-44, 1864 Sept-Dec.
[422] For background on Peace Democrats or Copperheads see, Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

been no abolitionists, there would have been no war, Wayland cleverly responded that had there been no slavery there would have been no abolitionists. Wayland indicted the South for having conspired to overturn the government for the past twenty-five years. The election of Lincoln, was not the cause, "but only marked the culmination of the treason, and furnished the shallow pretext for its first overt acts." Brown, he argued, denied this, not because it was erroneous, but rather because he did not care for the conclusion. How, Wayland asked, did the Democratic Party not win election in 1860 when the party controlled the Supreme Court, the Senate and House of Representatives, unless the division within the Democratic Party was deliberately timed to lose the election and therefore force succession?[423]

Wayland leveled several charges against the South for triggering secession. First, Southerners wrongly justified secession on the false premise that Northern antislavery sentiment might spark a general slave-insurrection. He noted, however, that no substantial slave insurrection had occurred in the Confederate States two years into the war, even though nine-tenths of the white male population was away from the home-front. Second, Southerners then interpreted the lack of an insurrection as proof that slaves were content in slavery. Peace Democrats hammered the Administration on its general antislavery policy, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the arming of black soldiers. Wayland dismissed this as excuse-making and argued that Peace Democrats "had no stomach for the fight." He reminded Brown that the Emancipation Proclamation was a nececcesary war measure, its constitutionality ultimately to be decided by the Supreme Court, and if their indictment was true that it was not legally binding, what were they afraid of?[424]

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[423]Francis Wayland, "Letter to a Peace Democrat," *Atlantic Monthly* 12 (December 1863), 776-789; quote on 177.
[424]Ibid., 778; For analysis of why so few slaves revolted see Allen C. Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 227.

Wayland goaded the Peace Democrats for their absurd opposition against arming black soldiers. If slaves were chattel, why restrict their use? If they were human beings, with free will and the intelligence to know the stakes involved, and the physical means to help, how could one justify refusing their offer to fight? Furthermore, although slaves did not explicitly fight for the South, their production of food and provisions for the Confederate army contributed to the war effort. The Peace Democrats, not only refused to arm black soldiers, but kept their own family members from enlisting. Wayland, playing on their prejudice, asked how they could logically refuse arming black soldiers, if for every black soldier that fought, it meant one fewer white soldier was needed? Their policy, he wrote, was nothing short of shameful:

> Shame on the miserable sneer, that we are spending the money and shedding the blood of white men to fight the battles of the negro! Blush for your own unmanly and ungenerous prejudices, and ask yourself whether future history will not pronounce the black man, morally, not only your equal, but your superior, when it is found recorded, that, denied the rights of citizenship, long proscribed, persecuted, and enslaved, he was yet willing and even eager, to save the life of your brother on the battle-field, and to preserve you in peaceable enjoyment of your property at home. Is the efficient aid of such men to be rejected? Is their noble self-sacrifice to be slighted? Shall we, under the contemptible pretext, that this war must be waged-if waged at all-for the benefit of the white race, deprive negroes of an opportunity to risk their lives to maintain a government which has never protected them, and a Constitution which has been practically interpreted in such a manner as to recognize and sanction their servitude?[425]

Andrew Brown's opposition made little sense to Wayland. Neither in public nor private had he ever justified slavery. Yet, at the same time, he considered slavery a regional institution, and warned Northerners not to meddle in Southern affairs. In the abstract, Wayland conceded, Brown was antislavery in principle. Yet, his fidelity to the Democratic Party, which long ago abandoned its Jeffersonian heritage, bordered on idolatry, by its willingness to regain power at the expense of the Union. "Lay aside party prejudice," he asked, "for one moment, my dear Andrew, and tell me if the world ever saw a more humiliating spectacle?" Even more mocking,

[425]Wayland, *Atlantic Monthly*, 779.

he asked what reward existed for Northern Democratic loyalty when their Southern counterparts "sold their birthright" and abandoned them to secede from the Union? And, even if reluctant Southern statesmen now demanded complete separation and rejected all overtures toward reconciliation unless the South became independent, how far were Northern Democrats willing to go to meet their demands? If Northern Democrats rejected secession, and abhorred the idea of permanent separation, and if winning the war proved the only means to prevent this, why were they unwilling to support the war effort? "We must deal with an armed and powerful rebellion; and so long as it is effectively armed, and powerful enough to hold in subjection the whole Southern population, it is moral, if not legal, treason for a Northern man to talk of peace."

It was undeniable, he argued, that Northern Democrats had long been hostages of the Southern Democrats. This sentiment had not infected the entire party however. The War Democrats, unlike the Peace Democrats, had not acquiescenced to Southern bullying and "are acting heartily and zealously with the Administration. Even worse, Peace Democrats actively impeded the war effort and yet tactfully avoided criticism of their Southern counterparts. They were, to be sure, active allies of the Confederacy. Copperheads, in turn, complained that free speech was threatened, yet ranted about wickedness every day, immune from prosecution, and thereby affirming what they denied. In fact, Wayland argued, that Copperheads were grappling for salient civil liberty violations, and were incensed that they were generally immune from prosecution. "That such political monsters are possible in the Free States, at such a time as this, sufficiently demonstrates towards what an abyss of degradation we were drifting when this war began." The North, he warned, had been educated to "connive at injustice and wink at oppression for the sake of peace" until "the public sense of right was blunted, and the public conscience

seared as with a hot iron." The South, committed to its singular goal, patiently plotted, while the North, lulled by the accumulation of wealth, blissfully ignored political reality.[426]

The South, intolerant of dissent, blasted protestations as the fanatical work of "Abolitionists" or a "Negro-Worshipper." The North, complacent in their ignorance, or too invested in Southern interests, was contemptuous of statesmen who forewarned of the impeding ruin of the Union by Southern politicians and slaveholders. In a tirade of condemnation, he blasted politicians, merchants, pastors, the politically illiterate, and the gentleman-class for their timidity. He chastised individuals, whose intelligence in other fields, should have qualified them for sounder judgment, willfully sold out the country to protect their financial and social interests with the political party that promised the surest return. These individuals, he argued, hid behind conservatism, which was "only another convenient name for a most dangerous type of moral and political paralysis." The Democratic Party, though it grew in numbers and in intelligence, did not develop in "public virtue or private morals." The Party itself, he argued, had become the central goal, which explained why maintaining the status quo became the chief good.

The chief failure of the Democratic Party, was the fateful alliance of aristocracy and democracy. Slavery, representative of aristocracy, and majority rule, representative of democracy, were incompatible ideas. Yet, the Slave Power overplayed its hand, and falsely believing the superiority of its institutions, waged a war to the death. Wayland urged Brown to support the Union, if for no other reason, than the surest means to save the Democratic Party was to first save the Union. Peace Democrats falsely assumed that by supporting the war effort they were supporting the Republican Administration in office, and though the Lincoln Administration was the legal one, the Union was bigger than any one party. It was shameful, he warned, to dissolve the Union, simply to dissolve the party in office. These individuals were the most

[426] Ibid., quotes on 780; 782; 784; 785.

threatening of all. It was necessary, Wayland concluded, to look beyond partisan loyalty, and to put loyalty to the Union first.[427]

This letter, perhaps more than any other statement, revealed the meaning that Wayland gave to the origin of the war and the political deal-making that made it possible. First, Southern secession had been planned for decades before the war. Second, Northern Democrats, blind to the ambitions of their Southern counterparts, or bullied into complicity, shared the blame. Third, Northerners in general were responsible, whether through indifference, complacency, fear of financial ruin, or genuine sympathy for aristocratic culture, were lulled into believing that compromise made them immune from social or economic disruption. Fourth, Southern propagandists severed dissent within their own ranks, but equally branded Northern antislavery protestors as wild-eyed fanatics or crazed abolitionists who promoted equality of the races. Fifth, Peace Democrats, blindly chose Party over Union, and the inevitable consequence, was that both would be destroyed in the process. In a nutshell, Wayland leveled the charge that though Southern apologists had long engineered secession, it would not have been workable or possible without the complicit or perpetual compromising of the North.

The Civil War molded and shaped the individual lives and expressions of Americans who experienced it. It remade and created a new sense of nationality for the Union as a whole. Union victory ended the notion that the Union was simply a voluntary association of sovereign states. Indeed, the word "Union" gradually gave way to "Nation." The term "United States" was used in a singular, rather than a plural sense. The history of the United States became landmarked into pre-war and post-war historical periods. The first eleven amendments of the Constitution limited the power of the Federal government; beginning with the Thirteenth Amendment, Federal power was greatly expanded. The federal government, not state governors, directed the drafting of

[427] Ibid., quotes on 785 and 786.

troops. The presidency itself was greatly expanded. Lincoln declared martial law and stationed troops throughout the states whereby their wartime power exceed those of local courts. The United States government levied taxes, establish a collection agency, printed paper money, and established a national banking system. The Freedmen's Bureau, the nation's first social welfare agency was established. Indeed, it is hardly an overstatement to add, that the war produced a complete social revolution in the South, no matter how imperfect its effects were implemented.[428]

Wayland himself was ideologically and politically affected by the war. He had risen a long way from his earlier education and writing career at Brown to his assistance to the freedmen. By temperament, he remained conciliatory in spirit, but by precept his fierce partisanship to the Union cause increasingly provoked his hostility toward Southern secession. Yet, this attitude was expected, even understandable in light of the political fallout that had occurred for nearly two decades. The war, rather than diminishing this intensity, only magnified it and elevated the stakes. For Wayland, means not ends changed in light of the war. A once committed pacifist, Wayland actively supported the war; once beholden to moral suasion for change, Wayland countenanced active and bold defense of the Union; though he once encouraged reconciliation between the churches, he demanded a restored Union freed from slaveholding; once committed to the position that not all slaveholders were equally guilty, he increasingly charged Southerners in general with duplicity and treason. This is not to suggest however, that Wayland abandoned his earlier idealism. His viewpoints, simply put, were tempered and shaped by the war, not uprooted by it.

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[428] A concise summary of the wartime effects for the nation is found in McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 486-489; For a historical overview of the changing image of the Union see Paul C. Nagel, *One Nation Indivisible: The Union in American Thought, 1776-1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

In light of the accusations by his abolitionist critics that Wayland acted too conservatively toward emancipation, it is notable that he ended his life working among the same people whom he had supposedly worked too little for. Wayland had not abandoned his commitment toward the value of moral suasion, but wartime conditions and the emancipation of the slaves created new conditions for social activism. His "limitations" in peacetime turned into "activism" in wartime. The different ideological and moral climate produced by the war broadened the parameters in sympathy could be translated into action. Timing, rather than a more heightened ideological or moral attachment to the cause, which he always shared, provided greater opportunity to express in public action what he sympathized with in moral principle. Put differently, though no doubted his resignation from Brown had freed Wayland to be more expressive in public, the wartime conditions were such that made bold commitment, rather than compromise, more fitting to circumstances. This does not suggest that his actions and attitudes were simply swayed by public or political sentiment, but that in much the same manner that President Lincoln timed the release of the Emancipation Proclamation, Wayland, realizing all hopes for compromise and reconciliation was lost, unhesitatingly cast his support behind the Union war effort.

CONCLUSION

Francis Wayland in Historical Memory

Late in the afternoon on April 15, 1865, the day that Lincoln died, Wayland was asked to attend and address a meeting of concerned citizens in Providence. Not feeling well, the sixty-nine year old former Brown University president declined the invitation, but when asked if he would address the townspeople from his home, he agreed. Later in the evening, fifteen hundred people stood in the pouring rain on the streets in front of his house, and listened to what became his last public address. In the judgment of many it was his best. This speech is suggestive for his post-war viewpoints of Southern reconstruction.

> But again what course should be pursued with the leaders of this rebellion. Against them we indulge not a vindictive feeling. We have no malice to gratify. The lives they have sacrificed cannot be brought back again. The property they have destroyed is destroyed forever. But here has been committed a series of most heinous crimes. We profess to be a Christian people. In the sight of God and man, we are bound to manifest our detestation and abhorrence of their fearful inequity. Let us put away from us the idea of wrong done to us; but let us show that we can have no fellowship or throne of inequity that frameth mischief by a law. Let them be meteted out, pure, unmixed, and unadulterated justice, nothing more and nothing less. Polished manners can be no justification for wrong doing. Let none of these men ever be eligible to the least office under our government. Let no one of them ever hold a position such that any one of us shall be called upon to raise his hat to him, in virtue of his official station.[429]

This speech on behalf of the townspeople reveals a lot about the post-war mindset of Wayland, and if nothing else, the affection with which the citizens of Providence felt toward their esteemed mentor. In also shed light on his post-war mindset. First, much like Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, Wayland warned against malice and a vindictive spirit, because nothing lost could be restored. Second, he warned not to personalize the heinous deeds done, but

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[429]"Wayland Speech Before Street Crowd in Providence, Providence, R.I, MS-IC-4, II-85 1865 March-July (April 15, 1865 reprinted in *Providence Journal*, April 17, 1865). For a collection of sermons on Northern clergymen opinion on the Lincoln assassination see: David B. Cheesebrough, "No Sorrow like our Sorrow" *Northern Protestant Ministers and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1994).

warned that fellowship was not possible with those who committed such acts. Third, the quality of the individual involved in no manner justified the deed done. Fourth, he cautioned that the men who committed such acts, must not be given public office. To understand his mindset, it is essential to understand the fuller impact of the war on American society and theology.

The Civil War was a watershed event both in the history of the United States, and in the history of American theology. It was, in the judgment of historian Mark Noll, a "theological crisis."[430] On any given week, the clergy had the largest regular audience of any institutional or corporate body in America. Numerically, evangelical Christians formed the largest subculture in antebellum America. Be it through Sunday sermons, published sermons that circulated in pamphlet form, periodical, journal, and newspaper publications, tract societies, philanthropic and humanitarian agencies, and missionary work, both domestic and foreign, their influence reached far and wide. Outside the public realm, the theological schools reached and shaped the minds of a scholarly audience, and administratively, approximately ninety-percent of all college presidents before the Civil War were clergymen. The clergy, of course, did not have a monopoly on American thought, nor did their influence directly shaped congressional legislation, but in short, the opinion of the clergy mattered.

Yet, there were kinks in the armor. Protestants, even in the colonial era, had always shared space with non-Protestant sects. Evangelical theology, while pervasive and influential, and numerically predominant, increasingly shared space with the rising tide of non-evangelical sects, such as the Unitarians, Universalists, Mormons, and Transcendentalists. The so called "Free Thinkers" in a class all to themselves, while statically small, in general rejected all theological creeds and dogmas, and suggested the direction in which American intellectual leadership was moving. Individually, the influence of non-evangelical sects was limited

[430]Mark A. Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

geographically or concentrated like the Mormons in Utah or the Unitarians in Boston, but their combined strength was mounting. The Unitarians, for example, while concentrated in Boston, dominated New England literature and arguably produced the best literary writers in antebellum America. Although decline can be greatly exaggerated, it is notable that following the Civil War, the scientists and philosophers assumed a great intellectual role than did the theologian.[431]

Yet if anything suggested the slacking influence of evangelicals, it was their inability to settle theologically the slavery question. No other issue so plagued or burdened clergymen and theologians alike than the scriptural interpretation on slavery. The theological dispute was not simply a debate over slavery, but the hermeneutical methodology employed to interpret the scriptures. For the Southern theologian, and for many in the North as well, to interpret the scripture in a non-literal sense, or to suggest that the scriptural teaching on slavery warranted any other conclusion than that slavery was biblically sanctioned, was to charge the scripture with error and to side with the infidels. In America, then, the rhetorical war over slavery took on a notably theological taint, and though theological language was the language best understood by Americans , theologians proved in the end unable to reach a consensus on slavery, and in this manner, contributed to the division of the Union. E. Brooks Holifield explained:

> Nonetheless, the debates over slavery revealed the importance of theology in American cultural disputes. Political economists and politicians debated about slavery in their own language of constitutionalism and power, but the theologians spoke in the language that made sense to the largest number of Americans. The irony is that the slavery controversy among the theologians revealed, as well, the inability of theology to unite Americans or to help them transcend the pull of economic and political interests. The cultural language that supposedly united Americans proved itself able to contribute even more forcefully to their division.[432]

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[431] For diversity in general see Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); for Unitarians see David Walker Howe, *The Unitarian Conscience: Harvard Moral Philosophy, 1805-1861* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[432] E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 504.

Mark Noll suggests that perhaps American evangelical success worked too well. The tragedy for many was that if the Bible afforded no resolution on the perpetual moral problem of its day, and if no Biblical solution could be found, then Christians either had to rest content with this irresolution, or to walk away from it institutionally, and thus become less Christian, and more broadly theistic in belief.[433] The Civil War then, no less than a political and military crisis, was also a theological crisis of the highest magnitude In the end, the gun, not the Bible, settled the question of slavery.[434]

Abraham Lincoln, in less thundering and more meditative fashion than many theologians of his day, wrestled with this same reality. Writing after the Second Battle of Bull Run, in September 1862, Lincoln privately penned his thoughts on the conflict and wondered if any side could justly claim the support of God. In the judgment of many historians, this writing, although penned privately, was his most profound, if not the most profound theological commentary on the war.

> The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both *may* be, and one *must* be wrong, God can not be *for*, and *against* the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party-and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say this is probably true-that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere quiet power, on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either *saved* or *destroyed* the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.[435]

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[433] See George M. Frederickson, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).
[434] Mark Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 437-438.
[435] Abraham Lincoln, "Meditation of the Divine Will," September 2, 1862, in Basler, *Collected Works,* 5:403-403.

In his Second Inaugural Address, Lincoln publicly returned to this theme. Compared to his First Inaugural Address, his second was far more religious in tone.[436] More than one and a half years had passed since he privately penned his thoughts, but he reiterated, this time on the eve of the end of war, that neither the North or the South could claim the higher moral ground or the special sanction of God.

> Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other's men faces, but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered, that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes…Fondly do we hope-fervently do we pray-that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.[437]

Lincoln's views are highly instructive for several reasons. First, he never formally joined a church, though he did regularly attend while in office. Second, as previously mentioned, Lincoln's Second Inaugural was far more religious in tone than his first one. Third, one would not expect such mature theological reasoning from someone generally unconnected to a church. Fourth, despite this fact, his reasoning was noncommittal as to the will of God in the war. This was highly unique in wartime theorizing. The historian Harry Stout argued that it was rare during the war for either side to critique its own moral failings. Even Southern clergymen, at the end of war, spun their interpretation to suggest that God had better plans for the South within the Union than outside it and that in the end, their lost would vindicate them. Though Lincoln, by contrast, suggested that God

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[436] Ronald C. White, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).
[437] Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, 8:333.

used the Union to eradicate slavery, he equally suggested that neither side could unequivocally claim the unquestioned support of God. [438]

Clearly, there existed a range of theological and moral reasoning on the meaning of the war. Wayland's wartime theological reasoning was the product of his changing attitudes over the previous two decades. His conciliatory spirit toward the denominational splits gave way to resentment, even outright anger over Southern secession. It was the last straw for Wayland. But, these two viewpoints are not at odds with one another. He fought secession in the churches before it occurred, but once secession in the nation occurred, mediation was out of the question. It, like the Fugitive Slave Law, which washed Northern hands in the sins of the South, and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which violated the good faith compact of the Missouri Compromise, blatantly sundered all ties and rejected all compromising measures. His rhetoric toward the South, as evidenced in his "Letter to a Peace Democrat" and his oratory following the Lincoln assassination, highlighted the depth to which he had lost all confidence in his Southern brethren. He never lost faith in the individual to do good, but he increasingly and blatantly chastised the South as a monolithic whole.

Secession, for Wayland, was not a momentary ruse to grab attention, but rather a well orchestrated plan that had been long in the making. He was not a conspiracy theorist, but he did see what so many in the North believed; that Southern good will only extended as long as they dominated political power, and once the compromising well of Northern peace-making dried up, the South bolted to establish an independent nation. He always maintained the illegality of

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[438] In general see Harry Stout, *Upon the Altar of a Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006), xvii; For Northern perspectives see, David B. Cheesbrough, *"God Ordained This War" Sermons on the Sectional Crisis, 1830-1865* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991) and James H. Morehead, *American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860-1869* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978); For Southern reactions see Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens: University Press, 1980) and Eugene D. Genovese, *A Consuming Fire: The Fall of the Confederacy in the Mind of the White Christian South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998).

secession, but he equally rejected any compromise that did not include emancipation as a precondition to returning to the Union.

If a consistent theme is found in Wayland's interpretation of the war, it was that he felt God used it to emancipate the slaves. At times, he remained non-committal on its theological meaning. On the one hand, he suggested that he did not know how God justified the suffering, yet on the other, he felt certain that God used the war to chastise the South. In either scheme, he linked the theological meaning of the war to the eradication of slavery. Clergymen, both Northern and Southern, wrestled with the meaning of the war, and particularly in Fast Day Sermons, boldly claimed God's support and thundered blatant epithets about the infidelity of the opposing side. Wayland's theological and moral reasoning, while confident that God supported the Union, and ultimately used the war to liberate the slaves, remained subtle and unpretentious by way of comparison.[439]

Francis Wayland died on September 30, 1865 at the age of sixty-nine. The eulogies and editorials written after his death reveal a great deal about his public persona. C.A. Bartol compared the "galvanic shock" of his presence next to that of Daniel Webster. He best exemplified his text on moral science by living what "he penned." He was "a foe of human slavery" and anxious to be rid of the system "only by means that were lawful and good." His debate with Dr. Fuller best illustrated this philosophy. A sound scholar, yet not a sound metaphysician, his heart was bigger than his head. Theologically sound, he hated "human classification by external signs and symbols" and opposed "clerical gowns and artificial songs and ritual worship." Democratic at heart, he "never put himself above his race" and "knew nothing of better blood, but only of *one* blood." He opposed "all tyranny and caste" and his "communion with humanity" inspired him to offer collegiate courses to the community at large.

[439] On Fast Days, see Stout, *Upon the Altar*, 46-52, 90-94.

In the Dorr Rebellion "though the object lay in the direction of his own hopes, the violent method he eschewed." Despite his educational and philanthropic work, "he never loved anything better than the pulpit." [440]

G. P. Fisher lauded Wayland as a disciplined scholar, but not a notable logician or metaphysician as evidenced by parts of his debate with Fuller. His read less extensively than might be presumed, but few, he argued, could "not be stuck with his superiority." He welcomed student opinion, but his teaching was spell binding. He had little respect for authority, perhaps too little, Fisher suggested. Although sound theologically, he warned against elevating man-made formulas above the Scriptures. Strong-willed, he opposed all yokes, whether religious or political, and warned against devotion to party over principle. "Individual rights, individual responsibility and liberty, he exalted, in contrast with deference to antiquity, church authority, political party, or public opinion." His mind was pragmatic, not philosophical, he liked results, not dogmas. He liked the common man and through expanding the curriculum at Brown sought to elevate him. Though respectful of law and order, in his hatred of slavery and his love for the common man, he sometimes exposed his radical tendencies. He was beloved as a teacher, but disciplined "with a strong hand" administratively. A fine educator, he often "doubted whether he had not made a mistake in leaving the pastoral office."[441]

Fisher lauded his *Limitations of Human Responsibility* as his most "original" work, but doubted whether Wayland believed everything he wrote, particularly "his idea as to the power of Congress with reference to slavery in the District of Columbia." He did, however, represent in his devotion to individual rights "and his predilection for personal, as distinguished from associated, action." His practical ethics, he argued, were better than his philosophical ethics in

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[440] C. A. Bartol, "The Good Man: A Sermon on the Character of Francis Wayland, D.D., preached in the West Church, October 8, 1865." in *The Monthly Religious Magazine*, 34 (November, 1865), 257-268.
[441] G.P. Fisher, *The New Englander*, 25 (January 1866), 135-142; quotes on 136, 138, 141.

the *Elements of Moral Science* and his *Elements of Political Economy* were practical and workable, but not original. No sectarian, Wayland even confided that when the Protestants came to "hand-to-hand conflict" with the Roman Catholic Church, "each of them would have to give up something." [442]

The *Liberator* applauded Wayland as one of the nation's finest and most respected clergymen in the field of education, in which he enjoyed "distinguished ability and great success."[443] The *North American and United States Gazette*, recorded that "Few of our college presidents have won and retained a more enviable fame than Dr. Wayland, or left their labors with a better record for the further instruction of their pupils." He is better remembered as an author than a teacher, and in his debate with Dr. Fuller, "he bitterly opposed slavery and took strong grounds for freedom."[444] "Though decidedly attached to his own communion," the *Vermont Chronicle* wrote in reference to his theological mindset, "he was catholic in spirit and eminently evangelical in his views; and during the last years of his life exhibited a high degree of spirituality, showing that he was coming to his grave as a shuck of corn fully ripe in its season." [445]

More insight is gleaned from two books reviews on Wayland's *Memoirs*, composed by his two sons. W.P. Atkinson argued that his greatest trait was not in his genius, but in his communication of ideas as evidenced by his legion of students who testify to this fact. He was "hampered by a narrow creed" and he though did not "possess a liberal education" he was second to none in communicating general principles to students and demonstrating their

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[442]Ibid., 140, 142.
[443] The *Liberator*, 40 (October 6, 1865), 159.
[444] *North American and United State Gazette*, 26,614 (October 2, 1865).
[445] *Vermont Chronicle*, 40 (October 7, 1865).

applicability in universal settings. By linking one thought to another thought, he helped students follow the logical train of thought and in connecting one idea to another.[446]

G.P. Fisher, in a lengthy book review, shed even more light and more pointed opinions. His commentary merits greater attention since his analysis, rather than an abbreviated eulogy, was an extended perspective on Wayland's career. Two elements in this book review are particularly notable. First, he did not sense that Wayland truly believed his own rhetoric that since the states of Virginia and Maryland ceded the District of Columbia to Congress, that Congress was bound to attain their consent to abolish slavery there for the sake of good faith. He felt that Wayland soon changed his opinion, and that "he never entertained any sentiment concerning slavery itself but that of intense condemnation." His core argument in the book, Fisher argued, was "the rights of free opinion and independent action on the part of the individual, as opposed to the meddlesome and intolerant spirit, and to the exaggerated influence and dictatorial tendency of reform associations."[447]

Second, he rejected Wayland's notion that the Baptists had departed too far from their earlier simplistic roots by replacing piety with education and that by concentrating on the latter, lost the essence of the former. It was beyond the scope of the unlearned individual, to understand an ancient text, written in an ancient language, in a far off land, and to enlighten the pulpit week after week and in an increasingly skeptical age, to fend off infidels, without ministerial education. Learning, he argued, did not create "a dry and frigid intellectualism" but rather the unparalleled work of men like Luther, Whitefield, Wesley, and Edwards did, who were all accomplished scholars. It is true, he conceded, that learned men have introduced into the pulpit false philosophies, but equally so have the ignorant, in their "wild opinions and disorganizing

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[446] W.P. Atkinson, *The North American Review* 106 (April 1868); 698-704.
[447]G.P. Fisher, *New Englander* 27 (1868) 57-77; quote on 69.

wasting excitements" encouraged equal danger. Learning then, did not "chill piety" but rather increased biblical literacy and guarded against ignorance. [448]

Fisher felt that Wayland would have agreed with his above analysis, but that Wayland "made the impression of being unfriendly to theological study" and that Baptist theologians "complained that this influence was cast in the opposite direction." Fisher conceded that Wayland was justly concerned that Baptist churches were short of ministers, and that seminaries were not producing pastors fast enough, and his justification for elevating "gifts" and "spiritually" to the same level as education. Fisher felt that in principle Wayland was right, but in elevating the value of the former, he wrongfully devalued the latter. He concluded that "while we think, also, that his efforts to impress this idea on the churches were timely and useful, we are still of the opinion that, to say the least, he sometimes used unguarded language."[449]

These obituaries elucidate the public perception of Wayland, and also insight into his viewpoints. To fully comprehend this, it is necessary to sum up the major theme in the writings and speeches of Wayland. First, in regard to morality and ethics, Wayland divided duties and obligations into two molds; man's duty to God and man's duty to man. The latter cannot be in harmony unless the former is. Although right and wrong are fixed, an action alone is not, but it is predicated on the motivation and intent behind the act. Guilt is attached to the knowledge of the wrongdoing, not the act itself. First, passion is driven by the basest motives and seeks only self gratification. Second, self-love is more calculating, postpones immediate gratification for future rewards, but stills seeks self-pleasure. Third, the conscience judges actions by their moral quality and seeks only legitimate means of self-fulfillment, both for themselves and for others. Fourth, revealed religion unequivocally establishes an individual's obligation to God and then to each

[448]Ibid., 72-73.
[449]Ibid., 74-75.

other. From this latter, flow all of man's duty to God and man. In fact, Wayland separated virtuous acts from pious acts. The former is done in good faith, but the latter is done simply in obedience to God, and thereby merits higher praise. Reciprocal duties, not selfish self-interest maintain ethical harmony. An individual must seek the good of his neighbor, or do nothing that violates the liberty of his neighbor.

Second, though noted as a great teacher and scholar, he was not recognized as a sharp logician or metaphysician. Conspicuously absent from his writings are historiographical engagements with complementary works or authors. Neither in his *Elements of Moral Science* nor his *Elements of Political Economy*, did he give more than a cursory nod at competing works or rival systems. A prodigious writer, he nevertheless remained focused, not on the finer details and interpretational squabbles in the field, but on the big picture and generalized principles that were applicable in multiple disciplines. In many ways, this formed the core of his teaching philosophy and it is aptly borne out in his major writings. In his mind, generalized principles, not specifics and weighty details, transcended localism and momentary value, and made for broader and universal application. This, in turn, was the strength of his educational philosophy. He demanded that education transcend the moment and be made universally applicable throughout life.

Third, this fixity of principles spilled over into his theological views. A committed Baptist, he was equally sectarian and ecumenical in Christian fellowship. Though he tolerated no compromise on Christian theology, he was against human doctrines, creeds, dogma, or ritualistic practices that he felt, elevated man-made rules over that of Scripture. Never, he argued, was human dogma, not matter how lofty or noble, permitted to transcend Scripture. This explained the apparent paradox that while he was an educator, he argued that educational requirements

were not applicable to ministerial qualifications, because they were not so delegated in Scripture. He even suggested that excessive education might interfere with pastoral care, because excessive learning tended to elevate pride over humility and put an unnecessary wall between the learned and unlearned. He did however, encourage pastors to value education, but that education was not mandated for pastoral candidacy.

Fourth, Wayland remained committed in his antislavery convictions, but he modified his philosophy toward civil disobedience and social activism with the changing political climate. He never wavered from his conviction that slavery was sinful, nor his conviction that the guilt of slaveholding was predicated on the amount of light each had on the subject, and their subsequent response to it. He did change his views toward emancipation and the Southern States. In his *Elements of Moral Science*, he limited emancipation to the slowing working of moral principles and to the actions of the slaveholders themselves. His viewpoints, on the surface, seemed more conservative in his *Limitations of Human Responsibility,* published three years later, whereby he not only reiterated that moral accountability stopped at moral exhortation of wrongdoing, but in his suggestion that if Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, that is was an act of bad faith because the states of Virginia and Maryland never conceded this authority for this action. In principle, this line of argument conceded Southern will over Congressional legality. If Congress had the authority to legislate for or against slavery, why did the wishes of the South triumph over the wishes of the North? This in short, provided the South ammunition to charge the government with "an act of bad faith" anytime congressional legislation threatened the institution of slavery.

Yet, for all the lament that this document promoted too little change, it laid the seeds for some radical conclusions. He argued that any institution, civil or otherwise, could only legislate

within their prescribed duties. If they transgressed these boundaries and legislated in areas outside their jurisdiction, this negated their legislation. In this same document, so noted for its conservatism, germinated the seed for civil disobedience. He attached guilt not only to sins of commission, but to sins of omission. If one knew right and did it not, he was in sin. Regarding slavery, citizens were legally bound by the constitution and could only legally impact slavery within its boundaries. However, this did not negate moral suasion which individuals were equally bound to. God held individuals responsible, not for how the individual slaveholder responded to moral suasion, but as to whether man preached that it was in fact wrong. Guilt, then, might equally rest with the slaveholder and the individual who knowing that it is wrong, refused to acknowledge it.

He pushed this point even farther in his sermon the *Responsibility for the Moral Condition of Others*, by noting that wrongdoing is the cumulative effect of others who know right, but refused to model by example. No man, he argued, existed in isolation, but individual actions had corporate consequences. He did not encourage meddling, but he did encourage inculcating moral principles by example and modeling what one preached. If the State legislated an act that was morally wrong, man was not to comply, but be to patiently be willing to pay the penalty. Resist, but do not interfere, could have been his motto. In the same manner, if the State forbid a moral act, and he argued this was the more difficult to do, man was still to commit this act, knowing that it was right, but again, to be willing to accept the penalty of civil disobedience. He expanded this theme is his *The Duty Obedience to the Civil Magistrate*. Written in light of the Mexican War, he stated flatly that if the State passed legislation against the will of its citizens, and if it no longer served the function for which it was created, then the people had the right, if not the obligation, to ignore its laws and establish a new one.

Wayland cast off all restraint with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law. He flatly touted civil disobedience to the law. He cautioned however, that it should be restrained to non-interference, but not active interference. Put differently, one may hide and shelter a fugitive slave, or not report the whereabouts of one, but he may not actively interfere in the affairs of the state. Storming a jail cell to rescue a fugitive or assaulting slave-catchers was outside proper boundaries. Resistance stopped at the immediate immoral law, and it in no manner condoned or licensed disobedience to all laws, only the specific law in question. An unjust law alone did not imply an unjust government, but rather an unjust act, by a still lawful government; only the accumulation of unjust laws, perpetual violation against the people, or negating what the State was granted the power to do, subverted the authority of the government. He always maintained the distinction between the civil magistrate in office and the institution itself. In general, one could refuse the former, but respect the latter. He was true to his word, even confiding that he had sheltered a fugitive slave. He blasted the Kansas-Nebraska Bill as breach of good faith and as a violation of the Missouri Compromise. From here, his Unionism became more noticeable as well as did his distrust of the South.

Fifth, his politics were consistent with his antislavery sentiments. A committed Whig, Wayland voted Whig in the 1844 presidential election, Free Soil in 1848, Republican after that. Consistent with his party philosophy, he opposed the Mexican War and supported the Wilmot Proviso. The Fugitive Slave Law he regarded as an unlawful infringement of Northern rights and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill as a violation of good will and the product of Southern bullying and Northern cowardice. Never one to sit idly by, he wrote encouraging letters to Senators and Congressman and even gave a farewell speech to Rhode Island recruits.

In light of the thesis of this work, what may be concluded of the antislavery position of Francis Wayland? His position is best understood against the backdrop of the antislavery camp. Members of the Garrisonian camp generally rejected constitutional and legislative channels. The opposite pole, represented by men like Moses Stuart and Charles Hodge, both Northerners, conceded that though the Bible sanctioned slavery, its teaching worked against it in principle, but citizens nonetheless were bound by the law, while they themselves remained antislavery in principle and wished for its abolition. Between these two poles was a rather large middle current. The Tappan brothers, James Birney, Garritt Smith, Thomas Weld, and Frederick Douglas represented one such position, for they rejected Garrisonian polarization, and found the Constitution a tool, not a hindrance to abolition. They worked within political parties to legislate against, if not the abolition of slavery, at minimum its containment. Change was constant in the abolitionist ranks, if not the norm. Frederick Douglas, for example, left the Garrisonian wing and set out on his own. The American Anti-Slavery Society fractured into the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. This did not negate their essential unity, for they disagreed over ends not means, and their actions were often complementary. In short, maneuverability, rather than stagnation, suggested the tempo and sway within the abolitionist camp.

Wayland, though he contended that slavery was sinful, and he deplored the act of slaveholding, did not indict them with equal guilt, and argued that the best way to emancipate the slaves, was not through legislation, but through the inculcation of moral principles that convicted the slaveholder to emancipate the slaves themselves. While this many seem naïve and too non-committal, Wayland constantly drummed up examples of men like the English slave-captain John Newton, who piloted a slave ship, but after twenty years in the business, renounced the African slave-trade; or men like Ezra Stiles, former president of Yale College, who emancipated

his slaves and advocated against the institution, as concrete examples of men who through the infusion of moral light, turned from slaveholding. More could be multiplied. James Birney, the Alabama slaveholder, who emancipated his slaves, turned abolitionist and became the two-time presidential candidate of the Liberty Party. The Grimké sisters, Angelina and Sara, who though the daughters of a wealthy Charleston slaveholding father, left the South to join the abolitionist cause, the former who even married an abolitionist. These examples defy simple categorization and demonstrate the difficult in pigeon-holing individuals. Classification helps to compartmentalize, but it often misses the ambiguity in human life and negates the reality that identity is rarely fixed or immutable. In this light, Wayland never lost his faith in the individual capacity for change.[450]

Wayland had a point. A simple glance at the denominational wars helps illuminate this. Wayland warned that if the churches split, the North would lose all influence over their Southern brethren. He was right. Yet, repeatedly, abolitionists argued incessantly that churches could not tolerate sin, could have no fellowship with it, and if slavery itself was sinful, then logically and morally slaveholding *had* to become a condition for church fellowship, and excommunication of slaveholding members was the only solution. Yet, even politicians recognized that denominational separation established a frightful precedent for the nation. The dilemma then was this: If it was morally right to expel slaveholders, but if in doing so, it greatly harmed the nation at large, did the consequences then exceed the act? Should the churches have tolerated the slaveholder? This question cannot be answered here, but it illustrates the complexity of the issues involved, and at minimum, they afforded no simple solution. Yet, the fact remained, that the Baptist renunciation of slaveholding missionaries and the Methodist expulsion of slaveholding

[450] See David B. Cheesbrough, *Clergy Dissent in the Old South, 1830-1865* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996).

ministers, did if fact, spoil the atmosphere between the North and the South, and in its own way, did pave the road to Fort Sumter.

Wayland clearly shifted from his philosophy of public expediency to open engagement. His political and sentimental evolution has already been traced, but to suggest that he merely reflected public opinion is to mischaracterize him. Historical actors cannot be detached from their time, place, and historical context. Wayland, maintained his antislavery position, but in avoiding its political implications, he protected his influence in wider circles. The survival of his textbooks in Southern colleges suggested that his influence outlasted others. Perhaps, as he argued, how could the North impact the South if all communication ended? In the end, the Union army, not the clergymen, emancipated the slaves. Wayland, in championing compromise and the maintenance of Christian fellowship over the excommunication of slaveholders, had underestimated the extent to which sectionalism triumphed over Christian unity.

However, it should not be overlooked that moral exhortation did in fact contribute to the emancipation of the slaves. If proslavery pastors can be accused of legitimizing the institution in the South, antislavery pastors and abolitionists can be credited with spoiling the moral atmosphere and contributing to the defensive and militant culture in the South. The heightened political conflict over slavery was the product of militant abolitionism and antislavery writers like Wayland. If the abolitionists thundered denunciations that shocked the sensibilities of the South, less temperamental writers like Wayland created an intellectual atmosphere hostile to slavery. The intensity of the political climate, while real in itself, cannot be imagined without the equal intensity of the moral climate. It can hardly be denied that Union success was in part predicated on the moral climate under which its military fought and its politicians legislated. Of course the Union was reunited through battlefield success, and slaves in turn were liberated by

this same success, but in the same manner that the Emancipation Proclamation changed the moral grounds of the war, antislavery writers infused the Union war effort with a heightened moral framework. In short, the political conflict created the military reality, but the moral conflict, created the intellectual climate under which the war was fought. In this light, the Civil War was the military result of a moral and theological conflict that proved irresolvable in the end except by force of arms.

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