

Maharaja Chandra Shum Shere
Jung Bahadur Rana's

APPEAL

to the people of Nepal for

THE

Emancipation of Slaves

AND

Abolition of Slavery

in the country.

KATMANDU

(NEPAL)

1925.



H. H. MAHARAJAH OF NEPAL.

Lakshmi Art, Bombay, 8.

**An appeal for the abolition of slavery
in Nepal made on Friday the 14th Marga
1981 (28th November 1924.)**

by

**His Highness Maharaja Chandra Shum
Shere Jung Bahadur Rana, G. C. B.,
G. C. S. I., G. C. V. O., G. C. M. G.,
D. C. L., Thong Lin Pim-ma
Ko-Kang Wang Syan.,
Prime-Minister and
Marshal, NEPAL.**

*Kazi Narayana Shrestha
Kathmandu
Nepal*

*1924
Nepal*

Gentlemen,

To-day we meet to consider a delicate and difficult question. The world progresses and with it there is change, not only in our mode of living, in our relations with our neighbours, in our methods of administration and many things besides but in our domestic arrangements too. Our country and our people have now come much more to the fore than ever before. That alone should be an incentive to retain untarnished our reputation as a brave people, as a just people, as a humane people; in short as the fit progeny of our forefathers, the heroes of a hundred battles, ever the champions of the weak and oppressed. Yet there rests on us, according to the present standard of the civilised world, a stigma, a slur on our name which diminishes its lustre. They say we yet nurture the hated institution of slavery; we, who are so fiercely jealous of our independence, retain in vile bondage some of our own people and abandon them from generation to generation to continue in that state without lifting a little finger to sweep away a custom unworthy of our glorious tradition.

Whatever we may put forward in extenuation, and we can in reason urge many points to show that the institution as pre-

valent here differs from what was current not perhaps thirty years ago in Zanzibar and Pemba or some three quarters of a century back in Mauritius, British Colonies and elsewhere and is as different in aspect as poles asunder, yet, gentlemen, we cannot but plead guilty to the charge in general. We have bond slavery in our country, it may be it is in name only ; but it is there.

We need not go deeply into the origin of the custom which lies ridden away in the dim ages in the past when a conquering nation could find no other use for the conquered people except in requisitioning their services as slaves condemned to propagate slaves till eternity. The descendants of **Haihayas**. the conquered slaves of the Purans. are now as extinct as the palaeozoic animals, We pass by the Grecian and Roman periods, the invasions of India from the Pauranic age down to historic times; and the subsequent struggle for supremacy, with their tales of plunder and desolation, the captures and triumphal processions, the growth and death of a slave population ; till under the ægis of some devoted philanthropists this institution, which has on account of abuses inherent in it earned the epithets of “barbarous and inhuman”, ceased to exist and is rare to-day in every civilized part of the globe.

The other source of the traffic in human beings is to be found in poverty accentuated by famine, in dire necessity which parted children from parents. We must not be so uncharitable as to suppose that it was the love of pecuniary gain but rather the more humanitarian instinct to preserve life that parted those who are in the natural course parted only in death. Apart from military subjugation and economic necessity there were and are other sources which were and are criminal and immoral. It must be remembered that this institution is no part of our religion : whether it stays or goes it does no good or harm under that aspect. But there are other aspects in which it touches us as closely as religion does.

The institution is as old as our religious tradition though it does not form part and parcel of the latter. Leaving aside the stories of **Kadru and Binata**, of **King Harishchandra**, and others which figure in the Purans, we find that it has a place in the Smritis and Tantras which regulate in our domestic life, our dealings with slaves. In essence the treatment advocated is a humane one and forms the foundation of our treatment of them and of the legislation regarding their status under certain circumstances. The institution has become fused into our every

day life and has gathered around it the false sanction of a custom. But customs generally keep our nationalism intact and when they become effete are either discarded or yield place to others more vigorous. There are some which may have possessed a temporary utility but have continued when that is passed until attention is drawn to them through change of circumstances. Opinion amongst the learned pundits is unanimous that so long as a change in custom does not violate the basic principle of the Shastras it is permissible. So that it may be legitimately inferred that any change or even abolition of this institution, time-honoured though it is, is not beyond the range of practicability. If such a custom, moreover, is definitely prejudicial to the best interests of the people, the community, and the country, it is incumbent on us to change or abolish it forthwith for the common good.

It has become worth our while to consider well the effect which the system had and is still having on the slave community and the rest of the people in the country. Let us look at it from the view point of the slaves. Will they have the same interest in their surroundings as their brethren who are free like you? In your infancy you grow up in an atmosphere of love and affection from

your parents and relatives. They are anxious for your education, to find for you some means of honest livelihood. You reach the adult age, have a family and very soon you have a home of your own or, it may be, you share your parents' roof and repay to some extent the care bestowed on you in infancy by taking care of them in their old age. Mark, gentlemen, how at each step there is an uplift in your sense of responsibilities, how you grow to look upon them as loveable duties rather than as tedious burden, how they expand your hearts and engender in you a higher love: a love for your country. You resent aspersions against it as much as you would do one on your home. You become inquisitive on seeing a neighbour doing well and try to emulate him and to better your own condition. You have a motive for work and you find the reward not only in your earnings but also in the happiness of the dear ones in your home. When you enter the street at the end of which your home is, be it a lowly thatch or a sumptuous mansion, your heart begins to beat fast, you are filled now with joy, now with fear; joy at the prospect of meeting, fear at the apprehension of any mishap that may have befallen in your absence, till you reach your threshold and enter the house, receive the greetings of your

dear ones and kiss your children. You sit down happy and content. Let us leave the scene there-, may such multiply in the land!- and turn our eyes to the other picture.

Think of a slave. May be he was purchased when very young and has no recollection of his parents; still he is young and looks on with jealous hungry eyes when you are showering kisses on your children. A kind man,-granted all are equally kind-you have a kind word for the slave boy. But children instinctively discern the difference. He wonders if ever he had parents; if so, where they are and why he is there, His little brain cannot find a solution but it sets him thinking. He begins to understand that there is a difference between him and the rest. The sentiment grows, and his heart begins to harden with age towards his surroundings, his masters' household, his neighbours and all the world. His childhood passes, not as yours has passed. He is grown up and has learnt to know his position although he has been allowed to mix with your children and humbly share some of their joys. He is your asset and you spend on him frugally, expecting a return. Your slave is now grown up, he is one of your farm hands and has been taught his duties carefully. You be lenient with him as you know kindn ess

pays better than cruelty. But he has learnt the bitter truth and knows he is a slave and is in hopeless bondage, knows that there is the brand of servitude on his brow, while his co-workers, hired men perhaps of the neighbourhood, wear the dignity of labour as a diadem which brightens their faces and lightens their work by the thought of those at home for whom they are working. They return after the days' work and so does he but with what different feelings! You notice the gloom upon him, and find a mate for him, to attach him to the house and of course, with the shrewd instinct of a business man, to get golden eggs laid for you. But how long can you keep him contented? He gradually realises that the wife given him and the children of his are not his own in the sense in which they are to a free man. If the master cannot afford to keep the slave's increasing family, or if his circumstances become straitened, it is the slaves' family life which is broken up first, the husband is separated from the wife, the mother from the child. Many of you have heard or read the story of **Harishchandra** and remember perhaps how the king sold himself, his wife and child to redeem his pledge to the inexorable **Viswamitra**. If they shed scalding tears at the pathetic separation, at last the Gods on

high took pity and reunited them. But to-day in this Kaliyuga the slaves may shed red blood instead of watery tears, yet the flint heart of our custom and institution, more exorable than Vishwamitra, does not melt. What wonder then that the bulk of the slaves hate mankind, lose all interest in men and country, have no stimulus to work, have no sense of responsibility and gradually sink to the level of beasts and chattels. This has been very feelingly expressed in the following couplet.

“ मनुष्यजातौ तुल्यायां दासत्वमतिगर्हितम् ।
 प्रथमो यो न तत्रापि स किं जीवित्सु गण्यते ”

While asserting the universal equality of men the poet declares slavery as altogether despicable and asks “Can the slaves be counted amongst the living?”

Gentlemen, you are perhaps thinking that the colour is too deeply laid on, that light and shade have been unduly intensified to give contrast. It is readily admitted that there are households with septuagenarian slaves presiding over the family deliberations and practically directing the family affairs during the nonage of the heir; there are households in the hills managed by the slaves while the owner and his relatives are away on business or pleasure; and that there

are households where but for certain limitations the distinction between master and slave is practically abolished. But look at their mentality under the limitations and you will readily admit that that cannot be different from what is depicted, otherwise human nature would not be what it is. If to-day you are told that your earnings will not be your own, all activities will cease, accumulation will vanish, prudence and thrift be known in name merely, and people will live simply from hand to mouth doing the least that will secure bare subsistence. Can you expect the knowledge of such restrictions to have any other effect on the mind of a slave? The evil of it was recognised and a law was passed in the year 1978 investing the slaves with the right of ownership of property and devolution by succession. But that has not produced any visible result as yet, no doubt because the time of the slave being wholly his masters', there is little opportunity for him to earn much and all his property remains confined to his few personal belongings—he has not built a home or purchased a farm to give him a stake in the country. You build him a family by marrying him, but do you not agree that half the enjoyment of it will be gone as soon as the slaves realise that they may be parted at the sweet will and

convenience of their masters? You say that the slaves' intelligence is low and that they never think of these things. Are they more obtuse than the dumb cattle? Have not many of you seen the exasperation of the cow, noticed the tears running down her cheeks, when such separation is forcibly effected? Besides, gentlemen, is it honourable of you to take advantage of their helplessness? Does it bespeak high intelligence and high morality thus to negate Nature's laws of family association, to traffic on the ignorance or obtuseness of a class of your fellow beings? However that may be, it would be idle to expect the slaves to have the same patriotic fervour, to have the same interest in short, to shape themselves as true citizens like their brethren, the freemen.

Apart from the mentality which is inseparable from the institution it is necessary to investigate what economic advantage, if any, is secured by retaining it. This institution has been common at one time or another all over the world. In most places it was the superior force of the conqueror exercised over the conquered, or barefaced robbery, which had brought the so-called slaves into the possession of the owners, 'man-merchants' as they were called. The stronger people had obtained land, by force of course, and they

required labour to cultivate it. The slave merchants sold the kidnapped people to these planters in open markets—yes, there were regular markets for dealing in slaves just as you now have to deal in chattels and produce! This slave labour was used to bring vast lands under cultivation. It was forced labour and required very harsh treatment to extract as much work as possible. The incentive to forced labour was the lash behind. The slaves while they worked looked behind to protect their back while the freeman labours looking forward to his hire which he knows will be proportional to his work and upon which rests his hope of provision for his family and himself. There is thus a fundamental difference between slave labour and free labour, and this was forcefully illustrated when slavery was abolished in many parts of the world. The slave must be fed and clothed whether he works ill or well, he must be nursed in illness, and at death or desertion his value will have to be written off as a loss. The slave will require more constant supervision than the free labourer, because sure of a bellyful whether he works or not, he will naturally prefer to do the least possible; you cannot starve him, because his physical weakness will be your loss. The superiority of free labour

to slave labour is not a matter of mere speculation. History has proved it and I doubt not that the experience of those who have occasion to use both descriptions of labour in this country will bear out the fact. In the pre-abolition days history of the Hottentot colony at Kat River furnished a striking example of the difference in the quality of work of the same people in an enslaved and in a freed condition. They were considered as absolutely worthless as labour and even the African Negroes despised them as a lazy and good-for-nothing people. In the colony the freed Hottentots proved themselves the most industrious people and transformed the barren tract into a veritable garden, rich to overflowing in agricultural products. It is slavery which prevents the slaves from acquiring industrious habits and which stunts their power of exercising the virtues of prudence, foresight and discretion.

General considerations of the superiority of free labour to slave labour will hardly appeal to slave owners because their bias will stand in the way. Their happy-go-lucky style of living can never suggest to them the necessity of testing the proposition practically, and, until they do so, no argument will ever convince them of its truth. In the many domestic duties such as fetching fuel,

fodder or water from a distance, there is a way to do them either expeditiously or dilatorily. The hired labourer prefers the first mode of working as he fears dismissal and subsequent non-employment if he is slow over his job. The slave, having no such fear, prefers the latter. Your threat that you will sell him does not carry much weight with him as the slave knows that it is all one to him wherever he is. You also know that you can seldom get a better man, and chastisement will only exasperate him and might even make him run away. Even if you do not care to make the experiment, only observe how the work of the household of your neighbour, whose family is like your own, but who is not a slave owner, is carried on more expeditiously than at your place. In foreign countries the masters had to employ paid overseers to supervise the work of slaves and those supervisors treated the slaves very harshly to get as much work out of them as possible. Even with such conditions at Pemba, when a commission was appointed prior to the abolition, Mr O'Sullivan, the President put down after experiments and recording of evidence, as his considered opinion, that "The superiority of the free labour in Seychelles as compared with the slave labour in Pemba is

very striking I should say that the Seychelles Negro is fully three times more efficient, from an agricultural point of view, than is the Pemba Negro under existing conditions." Here, where you do not treat the slaves so harshly, it will perhaps be found that one hired man is equal to two slaves in point of efficiency. Thus if you replace all your able-bodied slaves by half the number of hired hands and pay each latter twice as much as the expense you incurred for each slave replaced, your work should not suffer, neither should your expenditure increase. Then again, some slave owners have to maintain unproductive hands such as the old, the ill or infirm and the young, along with those that are productive. Under a hired labour system this encumbrance will be removed, and there will be some saving too, that way. Furthermore, no slave owner can deny that in maintaining slaves he is exposed to constant risk of loss by death or desertion; and that with a hire system he has not to pay a lump sum down as he has to do in the purchase of slaves. In defence of the first statement the owner will perhaps turn a fatalist. Argument with such is impossible. We must not forget also, that the household is increased by the addition of slaves and their dismissal reduces the worry of the master on account of the

ness of a large number of slaves. While considering the economical aspect of domestic slavery I should not pass over the point urged by some masters that they can rely on slaves for watch and ward over their property as they cannot on outsiders, because if the slaves violate that faith by any dishonest action, the defalcators, being the personal property of the masters, can under the law be got hold of anywhere in Nepal. The hollowness of this argument should be patent to everyone; for, any defalcator, be he a slave, or a Bani or even a Darmahadar, can be prosecuted in any part of the country under the laws. The idea of forced honesty in slaves is absurd. Law can never make a people honest or dishonest, and it is only secular, religious and moral education that keeps people in the right path.

The other point for consideration would be the carrying on of agricultural work. There are few who do not know that to maintain many slaves for only occasional work is a waste of money. When agricultural operations are forward, slave owners as well as other people call in outside help for the labour required. There is an excellent system of co-operative labour supply known by the familiar appellation of "Parma". Under it every household furnishes what labour it can

in times of transplantation or gathering-in of crops, receiving as much in return when its own farm work is on. So that the economic effect of the abolition of slavery cannot be as dark as some of the slave owners would have us believe. Sometimes the help available under the Parma system may not be sufficient for large holders of land and then they call in what is known as "Bani" labour or "Darmahadars". These are different kinds of hired labour but with some peculiar features of their own. The Bani labourers are Darmahadars are employed at other times too by middle class people. For occasional work of a day or more, Bani labourers are given food, and a little more besides as wages, either in kind or money. The food can be equated in cost with that of a slave, and the extra which varies in different localities, will hardly be found to be as much in value as the feed for the day; often it is less than half. The special feature of the Bani system is that the contract for service may extend to a month, or to several months, or even to a year, and may be renewed on expiry. In some of the hill districts, the terms are food and clothing, and about Rs. 12 mohar per year. The food consists of the current 7 pathis 4 manas per month and a mana per day for the "khaja" or mid-day meal of corn flour or rice or whatever else

is available ; and the clothing of a whole piece of " khandi " and a blanket which lasts about three years. Generally the total inclusive expense works out to Rs. 6 per month. Upon enquiry from those who have occasion to employ them you will, I am sure, be told that Bani work is far superior to slave work. If you make careful and proper observations and calculations, you will find that outturn from Bani labour will be at least twice as much as that from slave labour. For feeding and clothing a slave, averaging from figures from some districts, we arrive at about Rs. 4 per head per month. So that while you get double the work from a Bani labourer, you pay him only 50 p. c. more, and thus save something over the expense you would have incurred for two slaves. If the Bani labourer be a female she will require only the extra payment in kind or money over and above the expenses that would be necessary for a female slave. You will not grudge that little extra expense when you realise that a Bani female servant would be found thrice as efficient and industrious as a female slave who, even if plain-featured, will pass most of her time in flirting with the men slaves of the household or the neighbourhood.

Since there is this system prevalent in all the hill districts, Bani servants will very well

replace the slaves employed in domestic work. Here again the question may be raised as to where-from so much Bani labour will be forth-coming, to which we might return the reply that liberated slaves themselves will furnish what is required and will, in all probability, leave a surplus behind, as only one man will be employed for every two let off.

One other case to be considered is that of owners who have allotted a portion of their land to their slaves to cultivate and feed themselves out of the produce of the field. This is hardly a different question economically from what has been already discussed. Slaves have no motive to produce more corn by intensive cultivation; and the land is taken over by the masters, they are bound to be more benefitted than when it was under slave management. Considered from every point of view then, free labour is economically superior to, and in every way more desirable than, slave labour.

Some may say that though all that has been said is true, as I firmly believe it is, the slave, when married, will beget children who will furnish additional hands in time to make up for the inferior quality of work by increase in the number of the workers. From considerations entered into before the fallacy of

the argument should be self-evident. Quantity can not make up for quality—several unwilling hands can not perform as much good work as can some willing ones, though few. Apart from that, you must purchase a woman slave as your first outlay in the venture. After she has given birth to a child, you incur some expenses year by year to rear it up till it is, say, sixteen years old and becomes an adult hand able to work. The simple total shown in the appendix annexed, in which the expenses have been kept low to compensate for any light work you may get out of the young slave, comes to Rs. 410/- nearly. If you had invested this at the outset at ten per cent the annual return would have been enough to provide extra wages necessary for a hired labourer or Bani whose work would be twice as much as that of your slave. If you had invested the first outlay and subsequent year to year expenses on your child slave, as shown in the appendix, at even ten per cent per annum, a rate allowed by the usuary laws of the country, instead of the sixteen to thirty per cent prevailing in the hills, your child have earned about Rs. 1100/ which would be a handsome asset. In fact, if the slave owners were to invest money thus, the high rate of interest in the hills would gradually fall, to the immense relief of the ryots, and with no

less benefit to themselves; because a lower rate of interest is more easily realisable and the capital less liable to become a bad debt. Some masters, however, say that they can recoup their loss in another way—by selling the child slaves. This inhuman practice is beyond all condemnation, and is rightly looked upon as the worst feature of the institution. When the practice is condemned even in the case of slaves who are aliens, how much more reprehensible it is when applied in the case of slaves who are our fellow-country-men, and who are almost our equals when liberated? And do the masters really gain? From figures in the appendix it will be seen that if they had husbanded the expense incurred for the first child till the completion of its sixth year, they could have earned Rs. 290/- nearly, and expenses on every subsequent child invested as in the appendix would have brought the masters about Rs. 60/- by the time. If the woman bear six children the saving by investing the expenses would have amounted to about Rs. 98/- per child, and if she bear eight children, to about Rs. 88/-. The legal price which the master can realise by the sale of such a child is only Rs. 35/-, which is far below what the master can earn by the method of investment suggested, and that without incurring the obloquy attached to that hein-

ous practice. Those who say that they get better prices at prevailing rates should remember that a woman of child-bearing age would also cost more than the legal price, and the larger sum and the other expenses, if invested as in the appendix, would have brought them sums which it is very difficult for them to obtain by sale of children. Again the woman may die, or may turn out to be barren, or less prolific and, as infant mortality is so heavy here, the child also may die before attaining a saleable age. These probabilities discount greatly the expectations built by the masters. Investment as interest-bearing advances is but an instance instance. Other ways of remunerative employment of capital, such as horticulture, cattle-rearing, intensive cultivation etc. will no doubt suggest themselves to you as more lucrative, and without the limitations attached to this practice. Slave-rearing then, either for labour or for sale, is not the profitable business you believed it to be.

But this is not enough. There is yet another practice humiliating to any nation amongst which it prevails and subversive of morality. The law provides option to the father, if he be a freeman other than the master, to emancipate a child of his by a slave girl by payment of the legal amount to

the master of the girl. The framers of the law thought that the father's feelings would be potent enough to procure the manumission of his own begotten issue. But alas! this has been a vain hope. A reprehensible practice is prevalent with some slave owners of giving slave girls to share the bed of men who are themselves poor and needy and can not emancipate their children who therefore remain slaves and the property of the master of the girl, to be disposed of as he pleases. If the children were by the master himself, they would have been automatically set free under the law. Our best intentions have thus been frustrated and have to the shame of all, led to legalised prostitution. What example has been set to the family of the masters who could descend so low to circumvent the provisions of the law? It is by such demoralising ways that slaves can be bred for the market bringing an apparent profit to the master of the girl. It is difficult to distinguish between this and the keeping of a brothel. And when every good man tries his best for the suppression of the latter, should you suffer the former to exist? If selling slave children, parting them from their mothers at a tender age, is reprehensible, this way of breeding them is more so. It would not surprise us, after this, to be told that if

disappointed with one man in the number of children begotten, the master in some cases compels the girl to share the bed of another just as a breeder does with his cattle and lets one bull after another serve a cow; and all this, let it be remembered, in a country where matrimonial relations are held so sacred under the laws that the wronged husband is allowed to get the most severe and humiliating punishment awarded to the adulterer! Is it not extremely revolting? Not only that; often the master seduces the girls and then to hide his shame makes them over to others. To what depth has this institution sunk the morality of the people! You will scarcely find persons engaged in such trade prosperous; they cannot be, as the curse of the Gods rests on sinners.

Let us lift ourselves from this depth to the other extreme where through self-sacrifice practised by owners in deference to ancestral reputation, they permit themselves to be ruined by hugging this institution to their bosoms. They argue that the legacy of slaves received from their fore-fathers must be maintained, though they might have been increased, multiplying through generations. In some cases they cannot find work for the number they possess and think it would tell against their prestige to discharge superfluous

hands. Not only that, but they must find other slaves, male or female, to make couples with those that are single under them. For that purpose some go to the length of mortgaging their lands, which often they cannot release, as with increasing expense and diminishing income the margin becomes inadequate. Others distribute some of their lands to the slaves to cultivate and raise their own food crops, only utilising their services occasionally. The obvious solution of their difficulty lies in liberating the slaves and using the services of only such as they require. While regretting the false sense of honour and prestige under which they maintain a white elephant, we cannot but admire their humane feelings which revolt against engaging in human traffic with as much nonchalance, as owners of a poultry, pig or cattle farm.

Many instances have come to our notice of late as the victims of the system have approached the Government for redress of grievous wrongs done to them. A few typical cases only will be narrated to show how that is brutalising the nature, blunting the sensibilities, and even drying up the milk of human kindness in some of the slave owners. In one case the owner honoured a slave girl with his attentions and had a child

by her. He was abroad on service when the child was born and on his return home he found the issue of the unholy union dead. Then conscience made a coward of him and, instead of liberating the slave and giving her the position she was entitled to according to law, he basely made her over to another; but his unsatisfied lust made him pay visits to the girl even in her new home. Tired of her life of concubinage, she came to us to get justice. Another case hails from one of the eastern hill districts. Picture to yourselves a happy slave family comprising of the husband, the wife, a six year old daughter, and a baby ;boy of two years suckling at the mother's breast. But their happiness is not to last; the master has sold them. His avarice has blunted all feelings of the sympathy in him. The mother with the child at her breast goes one way and the father with the daughter thrown in as a make-weight, goes the other, the two perhaps never to meet again. Think of the parting scene, digest it well in your mind, and draw what moral you can. Yet this man has not reached the refinement in cruelty to be exemplified by the last of the pathetic tales I now narrate. The mother, a slave, had given birth to seven children, and her master, despite her protests and tearful prayers, had already disposed of one daughter and four

sons by sale. The woman in her petition through the Niksari Office, wrote that the bitter lament of the children at thus being forced to separate from their mother sent a pang through her heart more acute than any she had ever suffered; that she summoned resignation to bear the misfortune and drew consolation from what was left her; that she submitted to it as the work of that fatality, the result of the accumulated Karma of her previous births, which had followed her like a shadow to her present existence; but that when to her dismay the hard-hearted master arranged to take away the baby slave that was still suckling at her breast, her endurance broke down completely, she supplicated and prayed,-as parents to pray, as you and I pray to the Gods on high when the dearest of our children lies in the clutches of grim death-, to her master, the arbiter of her destiny, and to her as omnipotent in this crisis as Fell Death himself. But all to no purpose. The adamant heart did not melt: the master completed the transaction. Then maddened at a treatment which is resented even by irrational beasts, she came all the way to see if the Maharaja "the common father of all people," could do aught to allay the consuming sorrow at her breast. As this was so different from the ordinary run of com-

plaints the people concerned were sent for and the matter on investigation turned out to be true to the letter of the petition: the child had been sold by a regular deed, the Parambhatta. The master was asked if he did not feel pity for the poor woman, though a slave; what would have been the feeling of himself or the mother of his children if such an infant of theirs were either forcibly taken away or sold elsewhere; what reply could he make to his Creator when summoned to His presence to answer this charge of inhumanity? He replied and the purchasers replied that that was the custom in the hills and the law did not forbid it. Now, what does it mean to us all? That so long as we permit this sort of thing, every one of us must bear a part in the sin, must share the curse of the weeping mothers, in as much as we tolerate the custom and uphold such laws. The poor woman was given the where-withal to free her sold children according to the law which provides that on sale of slaves their kith and kin or those interested can liberate them on payment of the legal amounts to their masters.

These and many other such cases have left an unpleasant impression. It is difficult to overlook the fact that purchase and sale of human beings is prevalent in the hills. On

the strength of having once spent money in the purchase of a slave, the owner claim the descendants of the slave, however distantly removed, as his property, his chattles, to be sold to the highest bidder from any locality irrespective of health or other conditions, and separating them from their kith and kin. Perhaps few will deny the injustice and inhumanity of it, and will deny that it is a real, shameful, and grievous wrong. The contrast becomes glaring when compared with "Bandhas" who agree to work without hire till they can pay off the capital or work it out in service. In their case if they die or escape not even their sons can be claimed as property: The lien for money exists but not on the person of the descendants. The defect is inherent in the system of slavery itself when we permit rational man to have the same claim over his fellow-beings as over animals and so long as this is permitted, the abuses and sufferings will continue. Not only that, it leads to other results no less serious than the moral deterioration and economic loss referred to before.

It has already been pointed out how the slave's mentality is shaped without developing any attachment as strong as that of a free-man to bind him to his country and his hearth and home. The minimum that is likely to

furnish the attachment and give him a motive in life would, in the opinion of some, consist in consecrating the natural ties between husband and wife, and parent and child, and in preventing them from being separated and scattered. The consideration of these, along with many other suggestions received, is reserved for the end of this discourse. Let us here follow where that mentality leads to. A slight difference, some hardship, some bad treatment at the master's hands, or temptations held out by scheming touts of labour employers, who find in these slaves a fertile ground to sow their seeds of discontent, is enough to make them leave the land of their birth. Not only to the discontented slaves go themselves but they take others also who are intimate with them. A few here, a few there, make up quite a respectable number and the drain is such that it is felt. The sale of a slave spreads a consternation amongst his fellows, who begin to tremble for themselves and lose confidence in their masters. The sold slave, again, if he has not already escaped, finds himself or herself in strange company, cut asunder from the little attachment he or she may have possessed for the old household, on being passed on to a new master. Evil effects of the practice should be patent to every one. Thus detached, the slave falls an easy victim

to the belief in the wondrous tale of wealth and fortune awaiting him in India which is skilfully brought to his notice by recruiters for labour who in various guise ply their nefarious trade of catching the unwary in their net. Too much caution can not be exercised against such selfish recruiters who, to secure their commission, do not scruple to consign their fellow countrymen to woe and misery in a foreign land. The freeman can, if he is wise, test the veracity and standing of one who is trying to pose as his friend and guide, and perchance may learn his real character and past records in time to save himself. But the slave cannot make enquiries, for his design to desert will then be known, or at least suspected; and thus left to his own judgment, he becomes the first to succumb. The slave wants to leave the country where he meets mostly with scant sympathy even with his lowly ambition of being recognised as a rational being. He knows that once away he is out for good or at all events for pretty long. But the freeman goes with hopes to return and should evil betide him in his sojourn, he could wend his way home, unless forcibly detained.

Let us follow the fate of the slave deserter in India. As soon as he reaches the boundary the scales drop from his eyes and

he begins to see the recruiter in his true colours. The prospect of service in the British Army, an alluring prospect for the military castes in the country, which was held out to him as a temptation, vanishes into thin air. Perhaps he is made over to human sharks hunting for labour for employment in large concerns such as the Collieries and Plantations. If the slave is a female, all trace of her is lost till one day she is discovered as a street-walker, stranded, derelict, in a hospital through devious ways followed by those recruiters to save themselves from the laws of both the lands. If a male, he goes to serve underground in collieries practically as a chained galley slave. Verily the poor slaves have gone from the frying pan into the fire in their attempt to avoid a harsh treatment at home they meet with a harsher one abroad. Tales of the woes of Nepalese labourers in the Assam Collieries have for some time past been brought over to us. Steps were taken to ascertain the truth through officers sent by this Government. The gruesome tales were more than substantiated and when this Government, with the help of our friend, the British Government in India, got those who were detained against their will released from the bondage no better than slavery, to their astonishment and regret, it was found that

while some of them readily availed themselves of the ways and means placed at their disposal to return to their country, there were others who prayed to be excused from availing themselves of the opportunity. Enquiry brought to light the fact that these were slaves; and they prayed to be permitted to end their days somehow in a foreign land rather than come here and meet the savage rage of their masters. These slaves, and perhaps many before them, in ignorance of the Law passed in 1978 S.E. providing that escaped slaves who have resided for three years in a foreign land may, on return, claim emancipation on payment of the legal amounts to their former masters, and those who have been away for ten years can claim to be liberated without having to make any payment, preferred a lifelong exile away from their country and kith and kin.

An exodus of population from whatever cause is a source of anxiety and much concern to the Government of the country. This institution of slavery is a fruitful source of such exodus and is much worse than the temporary absence of freemen in quest of more remunerative employment abroad than is available at home. Such absence in quest of fortune is to be found in every country; but the absentees return and bring along with

them either wealth or new art, new skill and new knowledge to enrich their country. The exodus of slave population stands on a different footing. They go to escape persecution which cannot be dissociated from the institution unless by an abolition of the practice. They are indifferent to the advantage offered by the legislation referred to, as they know that, even if they can free themselves, those for whom they would come would still remain in the abject position of slaves; and their earnings after maintaining themselves in a foreign land are not enough to liberate them all. It will be agreed that steps should be taken if we wish to avoid serious difficulties in the future. Since 1872 S. E. when the British raised the first Gorkha Battelion from the soldiers of Amar Singh Thapa after the fall of Malaon, the people of this country have been taken out to India by the recruiters of the British Gorkha Regiments to serve in the British Army there. But it would not be out of place to utter a word of warning against the dishonest men,—recruiters in disguise, the enemies of the country—who do not scruple to hand over their fellow countrymen, slaves or freemen to the tender mercies of labour recruiters. The men thus entrapped unfold a tale of woe and misery in comparison with which the dry crust which they could earn at

home by hard labour would appear far preferable. Every one of us as a true patriot and with love for our fellow beings should convey the warning to every home to prevent as far as possible the unsophisticated men of the hills from coming to grief in this way. The freemen amongst the enticed hie back home as soon as they can get away and carry a more vivid warning in their emaciated bodies, sometimes no better than skeletons, wherever they go. But the slaves, poor things, remain away.

The absence of slaves, away in a foreign land, brings loss and trouble to their masters, - loss because of the money value of the slave which has now to be written off, and trouble because the owner partly depended on the slave for the carrying on of his work. It is a piece of good luck that the institution prevails in the hills only, as otherwise, since the desertion of slaves is an attendant evil of the institution, the suffering would have been more wide-spread. Though death and desertion of the slaves sometimes handicap the masters in their domestic and farm work, it is argued that an abolition of slavery as it prevails in the hills of Nepal will entail very great hardship on them. The contention requires careful consideration, as otherwise the Government in their attempt to improve the

lot of one class would be guilty of involving another class, though a very small one, in trouble. A careful register has now been compiled of owners as well as of the slaves they actually possess. The number of owners according to the returns is 15,719 and the number held in slavery is 51,419. As the total population of the country is about 55,73,788 we find that 55,06,650 of it are neither slaves nor slave-owners. They form therefore very nearly 99 p. c. of the total population. Now if 99 p. c. can carry on their every day work without slaves, it is curious that the masters, who are a little over one-quarter of the one p.c. remaining, should feel abolition as a hardship and be under the apprehension that their every-day work will come to a standstill. Is it that the owners fear that with the abolition of the status of slavery the slaves themselves will vanish? This absurd idea requires only to be stated to be rejected. Such fears might have reasonably been entertained by slave-owners of the West Indies, Mauritius and African islands where the population were aliens forcibly taken from their homes and retained in slavery. But even there it was found that the freed slaves did not go to their erst-while homes but remained to work on hire. Here the slaves are our own people and why should we be afraid of dislocation in work by abo-

lishing the status? The European planters and Arab slave-owners had greater reason to fear an exodus because the slaves with them were mostly aliens and their number also was very large. In Zanzibar there were about 2,00,000 slaves to less than 1,00,000 freemen and in the West Indies the slaves numbered something like 7,00,000 and these none too well satisfied with the treatment at the hands of their Christian masters. As this huge number of slaves cultivated a very large area and could not have been easily replaced if they had gone away, the apprehension was understandable. But with us, with slaves who are children of the soil, who have family ties and who are generally employed on domestic and farm work in the home-land, such fears are baseless.

While owners will admit that liberation of slaves will not dislocate work in general, they say that for certain special work they will suffer; in fact according to them such work, essential in domestic life, will altogether cease for want of proper labour. At present they say that slaves do such work as the carrying of the "kalas" in marriage or the "dolies" in transport and that when liberated the slaves will object to do such work which will remind them of their previous status. This was just the sort of argu-

ment used by slave-owners of other countries which, however, did not materialise when abolition came. In the abstract it looks plausible enough, but in practical life the force of it is much reduced. The liberated slaves must live upon work and when that is made remunerative they are not likely to pick and choose. In fact those who have to live by labour will not refuse work when they can earn their living by it. The stress of the times has introduced violent changes in the once rigorously compartmented "**Vritties**" of the different "**Varnas**" and castes. That stress is a result of social economy, and change of occupation has now become so common as to have ceased practically to draw the attention which it did in the past. In many parts of India, the Brahmins regularly carry on the cultivation of their lands with their own hands. Many of you have been to **Badrinath** in course of your pilgrimages and must have noticed the higher castes of Kumaon and Gharwal, both hill men akin to ours, with sacred thread, engaged in the work of porters and "dolie" bearers. The **Dharma Sastras** say that in "apatkâl" such things are not blameworthy. This **Kali Yuga** may be taken as a continuous "apatkal". Consider all honest work as dignified and you will not lose in self-esteem, neither become degenerate in

morals. No one should be in trouble because of the occupation he follows for his living, and lest the caste people become perverse enough to create such trouble, laws have been framed to guard against such communal abuse. It is provided that no one should stand in the way of another's earning his living by honest labour, that any one may engage in any decent or proper work without incurring obloquy. These should be found adequate to prevent the trouble likely to be engineered by obstructionists. There is a dearth of the Jyapu or the Kasai class of persons in the hills, but there are other classes, such as Baramu Bhoteys in some places and Pareghartis in others. To gauge the strength of this argument of dislocation in work census figures have been summarised for certain districts. These show that in nearly every place there are considerable numbers of freemen open to engagement.

Slavery of the same kind as ours was at one time prevalent in India and in the Malay Peninsula in such places as Perak and elsewhere. But neither History nor tradition shows that any trouble or difficulty followed the abolition. The slavery in the hills adjoining our western and eastern frontiers was practically identical with ours. Since the abolition they have got on quite well. Neither



Speech delivered at Tundikhel for the abolition of slavery.

therefore from consideration of conditions in countries closely analogous to our own nor from a common-sense view does it appear that the abolition of slavery is likely to lead to the confusion and trouble as anticipated or apprehended by the present owners. If it had been a good institution it would have survived all attempts to get rid of it. When many countries have abolished it, it would be foolish to maintain that those who did so were less wise than we are. It would be idle to be apprehensive that we may fail where nearly the whole world has been successful. That would be owning some inferiority in us and this imputation, if made by any outsider, you would be the first to resent. In face of the judgment of the wide world, even of a country like Abyssinia, which you have read was the abode of aborigines and which has very lately abolished the legal status of slaves, how could we maintain that we are in the right in upholding the institution in our midst? Does not your conscience every moment accuse you of perpetuating a wrong to a class of your fellow beings?

Let us study a little attentively the group of men who are owners. Broadly they may be classified thus. First, we have those who have received slaves as patrimony and who have maintained them, in some cases at a loss,

for prestige, to uphold the honour of the household. They detest the money that can be got by sale of human beings, their fellow creatures, in appearance, feelings and sensibilities like themselves and only thrown into a position of perpetual servitude by an evil destiny. Such owners have taken care of their slaves as their children, have married them, given them assistance to rear their young children and support their old parents. It would not take long for these masters to be convinced that the institution is fundamentally bad, and they would be the first to volunteer in this good cause to liberate their slaves. The slaves are attached to them and they have, therefore, nothing to fear on their liberation. In some cases the slaves are so only in name even now,—then why should they not be freemen? The Government have the greatest hope that such will come forward in their numbers to offer the example and the lead needed in such a movement. The Government count upon them most and expect not to be disappointed. Then come those who maintain slaves purely for their labour. Such owners have apprehensions as to their future if slaves are freed. The masters live perhaps isolated and depend entirely on their slaves to carry on their household and farm work. An attempt has already been made to

show that their position would improve under a free labour system, that their fear of a dearth of labour did not appear to be well founded and was against ordinary economic laws. They have the sympathy of the Government to the fullest extent and Government are prepared to consider any reasonable suggestion they may make to prevent dislocation of business and at the same time to ameliorate the condition of the slaves. May we not expect that such owners also will come forward to help the Government in abolishing the institution? Their voice would be the deciding factor, and will they be so hard hearted as to vote against the slaves? Let us hope not. We come to the last group: those who maintain slaves to carry on their nefarious trade in human beings; who do not scruple to separate the husband from the wife the mother from the child; who do not scruple to resort to base methods to circumvent the law; who hope to become rich by a trade upon which rests the curse of Heaven, a trade which is overloaded with the leaden tears of parents and children. This aspect of it is the most reprehensible, the most revolting of all. It is so repugnant to the civilized world that they feel disinclined to have friendly intercourse with nations who retain the institution: they oppose recognition of such

nations as civilised till an end is put to it. Apart from questions of morality, leaving aside the growing number of desertions amongst slaves to the detriment of the best interest of the country and the Government, this consideration alone is enough to compel any progressive Government to take immediate action to maintain its position in the estimation of other nations in this age of civilisation. It is to be fervently hoped that the Government will have the support of all loyal subjects and all citizens who take pride in the good name of this country.

The Government for a long time past have realised, as every right thinking man will do, that the institution is fraught with evils. As far back as in 1896 S. E. they promulgated a Lal Mohar in which all the four "**Varnas**" and thirty-six castes were emphatically prohibited from recruiting or giving any free man, woman or child into slavery. This was no doubt intended to dry up the very source of the system. This has passed into a law and has been re-enacted under every successive Government since then. Subsequent legislation was also directed towards ameliorating condition of the slaves, and anything which would be a crime if committed against free-man was declared to be so when committed against a slave. Some enactments such as the

exemption of slaves from being captured and restored to their owners during their sojourn in some parts of the country such as Naya Muluk, Morang etc., were made ostensibly with the object of colonising such places.

Some enactments of a different nature dealing with sojourn in foreign countries as also some aiming at a restriction on the purchase and sale and bestowing a property qualification on the slave and so on, have already been referred to. But the effect of the laws is not much in evidence and the reason for that is not difficult to guess. Till recently the law codes remained confined within the four walls of a court and knowledge of their contents was the monopoly of the few. Now all that has changed and with the progress of education, with the law codes placed within reach of all, it would not take long for even the slaves to pick up a knowledge of their rights. You are aware that if the slaves take advantage of some of the clauses, they can practically become freemen. Morang and Naya Muluk are no longer the unhealthy regions they were considered to be some years ago; India is easy of approach from nearly every point of the country owing to the extensive Railways marching with the southern frontier. With the multiplication of educational institutions, which are daily

increasing, dissemination of general information has become more common, too. The inevitable effect of all these would be that the slaves, if not made free, would find a way to become so. It is merely a question of time. Then why not anticipate what you cannot prevent, when by doing so you can cut your losses and become the pioneers of a patriotic and humanitarian movement in the country? Why not accept what the Government is now offering, why not make a virtue of necessity and earn the gratitude of the fifty one thousand odd of your fellowmen? As a wise people you should look ahead and fore-stall trouble. The laws indicate the feelings of the Government, their sympathy with the sufferings of the slaves and their efforts, unfruitful though they have hitherto been, to improve the lot of those in bondage. But we do not deny that the Government are as much responsible for the continuance of slavery here as slave-owners themselves. Their unfounded dread that it might bring distress to the whole population, though slavery was limited in incidence, their vacillation in the past, together with some disinclination, possibly to incur heavy expenses for compensation, formerly made them move half-heartedly in the matter.

The enlightened opinion of the civilised world, with whom we are coming into more

and more intimate contact now, is pressing on us with all its moral force in every matter and we are compelled to move in this matter also to be abreast of the times. You remember I think, how, despite some opposition, we totally put a stop to the heinous practice of **Sati**—a practice which was more intimately connected with our religion—by an enactment on Thursday the 25th day of Ashar in 1977 S.E. I now ask you what unwelcome results have followed this abolition as apprehended by the small dissentient minority then? Now knowing that this institution of slavery is founded upon a wrong and unholy principle which permits a rational being to have the same right of property over another as over beasts and animals; knowing that with the best organisation it cannot be freed from evils and vices inseparably associated with it; knowing that the institution is degrading the morality of slaves and their masters lower and still lower from day to day, and above all, knowing that the continuance of the institution in our midst rests like a black patch of tar on the otherwise fair name of the nation; shall you not, shall not the Government and we all, exert ourselves vigorously to remove it at any sacrifice, at any cost? We have learnt on the authority of figures in the register that the removal of slavery will affect only a very

small number of us in the whole population. We see that 99 p.c. of our people even now are living without slaves; that our own people, so to say, living in Darjeeling, Almorah and the adjacent hill tracts under almost identical conditions can manage without slaves; we see that we alone labour under the incubus, when even countries known in the past as uncivilised have become free from it. Knowing all this it is fervently hoped that the unanimous opinion of this assembly, the representative of the best in the land, will be that this inhuman, barbarous, immoral and worthless custom be put to an end.

If you are all agreeable, as I ardently hope you will be, let there be a total abolition of this institution: an institution so abominable in its very nature that it should not be allowed to continue in any country and which, as you all must feel, is contrary to every sentiment that ought to inspire the breast of man. In order that the masters may not be losers, and to prevent any possible dislocation in the social economy, the following proposals are placed before you for careful consideration and opinion, with suggestions to ensure practical success and to avoid any difficulty or distress to either masters or slaves. It is proposed that:—

1. On and from a certain date, to be fixed as early as possible in consonance with the general opinion, the legal status of slavery do cease and terminate throughout the Kingdom of Nepal.
2. The owners be given the statutory price for every slave held by them according to the register, over whom claim has been fully established.
3. The slaves, freed from the fixed date, are to be apprenticed to their former owners for a period of seven years : that is, the slaves should be bound to labour for their masters, the latter in return providing them with food and clothing as at present.

It will be seen from the above that the Government are disposed to pay the statutory price for every slave on whom the claim of the master is fully established, and that for seven years from the date of general emancipation the owners will receive the additional benefit of retaining freed slaves as their workers without pay just as they are doing to-day subject to the above proviso. During that time the money, if invested at the moderate rate of interest at ten per cent and the interest added to the capital at the end of every year, will be almost doubled, while at the usually

prevailing rate of interest at sixteen per cent it will be nearly trebled. All the liberated slaves will remain with their masters for those years just in the same way as if they were not liberated, and it is hoped that the time allowed will be sufficient for the transition to a system of hire. It is believed that freed slaves will thus get accustomed to the new condition of things. The hire charge will also adjust itself. The freed slaves having to do the same work as freemen during the seven years, will not find it objectionable to continue doing so after the period and will settle down as hired labourers in the localities where they are. In fact, if the masters utilise the time with tact and gradually change from finding the feed and clothing into paying money wages the transition can confidently expected to be a smooth one, and to eliminate many of the apprehended difficulties which are more imaginary than real.

Questions of right and lien are involved in any scheme of total emancipation. To be fair to all when such doubts arise or when slaves dispute the claims of their masters, the Government will give each party every opportunity to prove his or her statement. On the other hand failure to have slaves registered would give rise to a strong presumption against the masters. It would of course be

necessary to frame rules for the guidance of investigating officers when the work is undertaken, and it is superfluous to say that these will be considerate and calculated to minimise hardship and expedite work. Now as regards compensation, statutory prices seem to be the best to follow. Slaves in this country are not quite sort of commodity which they were considered to be in other places where slavery was prevalent. There were markets where the prices could be studied and averages struck, but here, purchase and sale, though prevalent, take place between individuals and the prices they pay or accept are dependent upon many personal considerations and are not simple questions of supply and demand. In some places a purchaser is on the look-out for a slave, but there are none available and if he is in urgent need or has taken a fancy to one he will and does pay more than the statutory price. Another owner may possess too many and would gladly part with some at any price offered if only he could find a purchaser. Here of course the prices are determined by necessity and satisfaction. An attempt was made to collect prices from different localities for the last sixteen years in order to strike an average; and it was found that for various reasons the price for a young female slave of statutory age, which is the

basis of calculation in law, varied from Rs. 50 to Rs. 350. Thus it will be seen that no average can be satisfactorily established, neither can the actual price paid be taken as the basis because in most instances trustworthy documents will not be forthcoming. Hence the statutory prices are the only practicable basis of calculation.

In the process of readjustment the old, the infirm and the children amongst slaves who used to be maintained by their masters as idle hands will naturally become dependant, the old and infirm upon their adult sons and daughters, and the children upon their parents. Amongst liberated slaves those who can will work on hire after the seven years' apprenticeship to support themselves and their families; the rate of hire cannot be different from the prevailing local rate. The wise master will use the interval of the transition period to change the system of maintenance to wages in kind or money and increase the same as the burden of dependants is thrown on adult workers till the local rate is reached. Some old and infirm slaves may happen to have no adults to depend upon and will probably be maintained by the masters out of charity as they are doing even now. Some of them again may find an asylum in the Government charity homes, if their

master, after having received compensation from the Government, is so unkind as to drive them away after the seven years' period. This will probably be the usual method of adapting themselves to the change. The masters who will really study their own interests will not hesitate to give the liberated slaves a home to live in and to treat them kindly so as to bind them to themselves more firmly than through the bond of slavery. A small gift or advance in their time of need, a little care and solicitude for their welfare, goes a great way, and grateful servants will be found more dutiful, industrious and efficient than dissatisfied slaves. One cannot help thinking that those who fear that the slaves, after liberation, will leave them wholesale, are either exaggerating or have treated them in such a way as to have cause to fear desertion. Many of the objections generally advanced against total emancipation have been already dealt with and the advantage of free labour, which is now the custom all over the world, is proved by popularity. The point for consideration now is whether the system of apprenticing freed slaves for a period of seven years would be preferable or whether you would prefer a wholesale and immediate emancipation to come into force on a pre-determined date. Upon a cursory survey of

the history of the abolition of slavery it will be found that in some British dependencies the system of apprenticeship was tried, while in some colonies and other places immediate abolition was preferred. It is a question to be decided on the majority opinion of you all. On the one side it will give time for readjustment and will help to augment the compensation and on the other some may be inconvenienced by the arrangement.

If on the other hand you feel that total abolition is not desirable at the present time, the Government, compelled under circumstances already detailed, will have to introduce certain measures to eradicate this most glaring of abuses. The slaves must be given a greater certainty in their family relations by prohibition of the separation of members of a family by a purchase and sale. Traffic in slaves appears to have been repugnant to some of our **Shastrakaras**. **Apararka**, the talented commentator of **Yagna Valka** says thus:—

“ नारीणां विक्रयं कृत्वा चरेच्चान्द्रायणं व्रतम् ।
द्विगुणं पुरुषस्यैव व्रतमाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ ”

in other words: in the opinion of the gifted sages one who sells a female should perform a “**Chandrayana**” and one who sells a male should do twice that penance.

Yagna: Valka Smriti, Markandeya, Linga, Bhavisyottara and other **Puranas** contain many particular injunctions against the practice. For example in **Vishnu Dharmottara** we have :—

“ कन्यां ह्यं च दासीं च स्वगृहे सम्भवान् शुभान्,
पोषयित्वा द्विजो मोहात् पश्चादेतांश्च विक्रयेत् ।
सभुक्त्वा यातनाः सर्वा पश्चाद्व्याधो भवेदिह,
तस्य देहविशुद्धयर्थं प्रायश्चित्तमिदं शुभम् ॥ ”

Those among the ‘**Dvijas**’ (i.e. who wear the sacred thread) who out of greed sell a daughter, a horse or a slave girl, born and brought up in their households, will be born in this earth as “**Vyadhas**” (the low class hunters) after having suffered endless tortures.

Then again in **Debaladharm Samhita** :—

“ द्विजः सम्पाद्य यो दासीं गृहधर्मसुखाप्तये,
पश्चात्तां विक्रयेद्यत्नात् स चाण्डालो भवेद्भुवि ॥ ”

i. e. the “**Dvija**” who having assiduously got a slave girl for his household work, sells her afterwards reduces himself to the level of a “**Chandala**” in this world.

A typical one from **Markandeya Purana** provides that :—

“ दासीं द्विजोनुगृह्णीयाद्भोगार्थं पतितो भवेत्,
 नित्यं नैमित्तिकं काम्यं सद्यः क्षरति पापिनः
 विक्रयेद्यदि तां मूढाण्डालत्वं तदाप्नुयात् ॥ ”

This means that **Dvijas** who take slave girls for carnal purposes become fallen ; the (merit of) every day religious works, those undertaken for particular occasions, as also those for fulfilment of desires of these sinful men, all become lost ; these obsessed (men) would degenerate to low caste “ **Chandalas** ” were they to sell the girl slaves.

So let us stop purchase and sale of slaves and separation of members of the family from each other ; let the law providing an opportunity of emancipation for any slave when about to be sold be made more effective and comprehensive by the Government itself taking place of the kith and kin when none comes forward. The Government will be ready to buy any slave or slaves whenever the master is inclined to part with them and to liberate such after the purchase. The liberated slaves will have the option to continue with their erstwhile masters as hired labourers or to leave them as they may think suitable. Another effect will be to make the slaves more industrious when they know the law, of which at present they appear to be ignorant, that

whatever they earn would remain their property to give them an opportunity to build a home out of such earnings. Thus two things now wanting to attach them to their land of birth will have been achieved. But a little consideration will show that the Government cannot stop here. Even when the purchase and sale of slaves is stopped, the growth in slave population from new births will still continue. The Government cannot be expected to take upon themselves an unlimited liability of buying up such children for an indefinite period, in order to set them free. So another law will have to be passed along with those referred to just now that children born either of slave parents or of slaves and freemen, after a specified date, will be free *ipso facto*. That date will be fixed when the Government are in possession of the considered opinion of the assembly. But as the avowed purpose of the Government is the abolition of slavery to remove the slur which rests on the country, and as that object can never be achieved unless and until start is made in right earnest, they intend to liberate all slave children of nine years of age or below on the said date by paying the statutory prices to the owners. On the announcement of the date, owners of such slave children shall be permitted to put in and prove their

claims before the constituted court on pain of forfeiting such claims if they fail to do so. The freed children, till they attain majority, will remain with the masters of their parents rendering such services as they are capable of. Thereafter they will be left free in their choice of masters. While fresh recruits to slavery is prohibited by earlier enactments the one now proposed will stop accretion to the number by births. Even in this way it will take a long time to eradicate the institution, during which the stigma will continue to rest on the country. But if the majority opinion adopts this as preferable to total abolition the Government will take their view into careful consideration and may agree to it as a preliminary step to total abolition. In fact such laws were passed in some places such as in Zanzibar in 1889 and 1890 A. D. prior to the total abolition in 1897.

As I have said at the opening, it is a delicate question, it is a social and an economic question, concerning a little more than sixty-seven thousand of us, about sixteen thousand of whom are owners and the rest slaves; and though this number is small, very small indeed, in comparison with the total population yet it is of importance enough to require that we should take counsel together and adopt such measures as are agreed upon to be the

best. The whole subject has been discussed from many points of view but just as the wearer alone knows where exactly the shoe pinches, the slaves and the owners will be the parties best able to see whether all the pros and cons have been considered. You are all invited to represent your opinion, on the many topics of to-day's discourse, in writing under your hand and seal for the consideration of the Government. The alternatives are set forth before you and if you can point out others so as to achieve the object or, if you think one preferable to the other, your views will have proper weight in the action which Government may take. You know that a good action is its own reward, as it secures for you the favour and approbation of God Almighty before whom there is no distinction of slaves and free men; you know the religious merit attendant upon the liberation of slaves and you will surely participate in it by your active co-operation with the Government in ending the institution; yea, even in helping to ameliorate their condition. I have already dedicated a sum of fourteen lakh Rupees for the work and I shall do my best to secure as much more as will be necessary. Apart from the demands of Religion, Justice and Humanity—no mean considerations in themselves,—recollect that the best and vital interests of

society, the good name of the country, the weal and woe of fifty-one thousand of your fellow beings held in slavery—slavery of body and soul—rest in your hands; so that the opinion that you will give, will be one uninfluenced by any selfish consideration, will be one which might with propriety come from the scions of the great and mighty ancestry, which is the pride of the country. Gentlemen, what I have said I have said from a sense of public duty. I have no hostility to the owners of the slaves: compensation to the owners, emancipation to the slaves, these are my desires; this is just the consummation on which all my hopes are planted and to which I earnestly beg you all to give your most vigorous help.

With earnest prayers to God that He may give us all wisdom to select the proper course, courage to pursue it, ability to perform our allotted part in it and turn the heart of all to feel for and incline us to help those held in vile bondage, let me bring this long discourse to a close thanking you for the patient hearing you have given to it and big with hope that with God overhead and heart within we shall be able to achieve success in the good cause in which we are all engaged.

APPENDIX A.

The schedule below shows the calculated out-turn in the same period in which a child completes his or her sixteenth year, if the money spent on the first outlay and the year to year expenses, were put out at various rates of interest. The maintenance expense for the mother has been left out, as the master is recompensed for that by her services.

Particulars of expense.	When same is put out at 10%.	When same is put out at 16%.	When same is put out at 20%.	Taken simply	Remarks.
Initial outlay on a girl ...	120'00	120'00	120'00	120'00	
Interest for the year. ...	12'00	19'20	24'00		
Total ...	132'00	139'20	144'00	120'00	
Lying-in and sundry expenses. ...	10'00	10'00	10'00	10'00	
Maintenance, 1st year ...	142'00	149'20	154'00	130'00	
Interest for the year. ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	0'00	
	14'20	23'80	30'80		
Total ...	156'20	173'00	184'80	130'00	

APPENDIX A (Contd.)

Maintenance, 2nd year ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	0'00
Interest for the year ...	15'60	27'60	36'80	
Total ...	171'80	200'60	221'60	130'00
Maintenance, 3rd year ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	0'00
Interest for the year ...	17'10	32'00	44'20	
Total ...	188'90	232'60	265'80	130'00
Maintenance, 4th year ...	12'00	12'00	12'00	12'00
Interest for the year ...	18'80	37'10	53'00	
Total ...	219'70	281'70	330'80	142'00
Maintenance, 5th year ...	12'00	12'00	12'00	12'00
Interest for the year ...	21'90	44'90	66'00	
Total ...	253'60	338'60	408'80	154'00
Maintenance, 6th year ...	15'00	15'00	15'00	15'00
Interest for the year ...	25'30	54'00	81'60	
Total ...	293'90	407'60	505'40	169'00

at Re. 1'00 per month.

Do. Do.

at Rs. 1'25 per month.

APPENDIX A (Contd.)

Maintenance, 7th year ...	15'00	15'00	15'00	15'00	at Rs. 1'25 per month.
Interest for the year ...	29'30	65'10	101'00		
Total ...	338'20	487'70	621'40	184'00	
Maintenance, 8th year ...	18'00	18'00	18'00	18'00	at Rs. 1'50 per month.
Interest for the year ...	33'80	77'90	124'20		
Total ...	390'00	583'60	763'60	202'00	
Maintenance, 9th year ...	18'00	18'00	18'00	18'00	Do. Do.
Interest for the year ...	39'00	93'20	152'60		
Total ...	447'00	694'80	934'20	220'00	
Maintenance, 10th year...	24'00	24'00	24'00	24'00	at Rs. 2'00 per month.
Interest for the year ...	44'70	111'00	186'80		
Total ...	515'70	829'80	1145'00	244'00	
Maintenance, 11th year...	24'00	24'00	24'00	24'00	Do. Do.
Interest for the year ...	51'50	132'60	229'00		
Total ...	591'20	986'40	1398'00	268'00	

APPENDIX A (Contd.)

Maintenance, 12th year...	27'00	27'00	27'00	27'00	at Rs. 2'25 per month.
Interest for the year ...	59'10	157'70	279'60	27'00	
Total ...	677'30	1171'10	1704'60	295'00	
Maintenance, 13th year...	27'00	27'00	27'00	27'00	Do. Do.
Interest for the year ...	67'70	187'40	340'80	27'00	
Total ...	772'00	1385'50	2072'40	322'00	
Maintenance, 14th year...	27'00	27'00	27'00	27'00	Do. Do.
Interest for the year ...	77'20	221'60	414'40	27'00	
Total ...	876'20	1634'10	2513'80	349'00	
Maintenance, 15th year...	30'00	30'00	30'00	30'00	at Rs. 2'50 per month.
Interest for the year ...	87'60	261'40	502'60	30'00	
Total ...	993'80	1925'50	3046'40	379'00	
Maintenance, 16th year...	30'00	30'00	30'00	30'00	Do. Do.
Interest for the year ...	99'30	308'00	609'20	30'00	
Total ...	1123'10	2263'50	3685'60	409'00	

APPENDIX B.

The schedule below shows the calculated out-turn in the same period in which a child completes his sixteenth year, for second and subsequent children by the same mother, if the money spent year to year were put out at 10 p.c. per annum. The maintenance expense for the mother is left out on the same considerations as given in the previous appendix.

Particulars of expense.	When same put out at 10%	Same taken simply.	Remarks.
Lying-in expenses ...	10'00	10'00	<p>If the woman bear six children and if the expenses were put out at interest parallelly with those incurred on the children, then for the first child's expense the amount reached at the end of the sixth year in Appendix A would be Rs. 294/-. The same for each subsequent child as shown here is Rs. 62/- and for five Rs. 310/-, or about Rs. 101/- for each child. For eight children it would be about Rs. 91/- per child.</p> <p>About Rs. 3/- is deducted from each for the slight services which the masters get,</p>
Interest for the year. ...	1'00		
Total ...	11'00	10'00	
Maintenance, 1st year ...	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	1'10		
Total ...	12'10	10'00	
Maintenance, 2nd year ...	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	1'20		
Total ...	13'30	10'00	
Maintenance, 3rd year ...	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	1'30		
Total ...	14'60	10'00	

APPENDIX B (Contd.)

Maintenance, 4th year ...	12'00	12'00	
Interest for the year ...	1'40		
Total ...	28'00	22'00	
Maintenance, 5th year ...	12'00	12'00	
Interest for the year ...	2'80		
Total ...	42'80	34'00	
Maintenance, 6th year ...	15'00	15'00	
Interest for the year ...	4'20		
Total ...	62'00	49'00	
Maintenance, 7th year ...	15'00	15'00	
Interest for the year ...	6'20		
Total ...	83'20	64'00	
Maintenance, 8th year ...	18'00	18'00	
Interest for the year ...	8'30		
Total ...	109'50	82'00	
Maintenance, 9th year ...	18'00	18'00	
Interest for the year ...	10'90		
Total ...	138'40	100'00	
Maintenance, 10th year ...	24'00	24'00	
Interest for the year ...	13'80		
Total ...	176'20	124'00	

APPENDIX B (Contd.)

Maintenance, 11th year ...	24.00	24.00
Interest for the year ...	17.60	17.60
Total ...	217.80	148.00
Maintenance, 12th year ...	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	21.70	21.70
Total ...	266.50	175.00
Maintenance, 13th year ...	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	26.60	26.60
Total ...	320.10	202.00
Maintenance, 14 year ...	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	32.00	32.00
Total ...	379.10	229.00
Maintenance, 15th year ...	30.00	30.00
Interest for the year ...	37.90	37.90
Total ...	447.00	259.00
Maintenance, 16th year ...	30.00	30.00
Interest for the year ...	44.70	44.70
Total ...	521.70	289.00

APPENDIX C.

In this schedule the price of a slave woman is taken at Rs. 350/- and the calculation has been carried out in the same way as in the other appendices.

Particulars of expense.	When same is put out at 10%	When same is put out at 16%	When same is put out at 20%	Remarks.
Price of a girl ...	350'00	350'00	350'00	The calculated out-turn of the sum to be spent on the first child according to this schedule, on the completion of the sixth year would be Rs. 742'00. For 5 others, at the rate of Rs. 62'00, the sum would be Rs. 310'00, or a total of Rs. 1052'00 which, if distributed over 6, would produce an average of about Rs. 175'00 each.
Interest for the year ...	35'00	56'00	70'00	
Total ...	385'00	406'00	420'00	
Lying-in expenses ...	10'00	10'00	10'00	
Total ...	395'00	416'00	430'00	
Maintenance, 1st year ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	39'50	66'50	86'00	
Total ...	434'50	482'50	516'00	
Maintenance, 2nd year ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	43'40	77'10	103'20	
Total ...	477'90	559'60	619'20	
Maintenance, 3rd year ...	0'00	0'00	0'00	
Interest for the year ...	47'70	89'40	123'80	
Total ...	525'60	649'00	743'00	Taking 8 children in the same way the average will come to about Rs. 147'00 per child.

APPENDIX C (Contd.)

Maintenance, 4th year	12'00	12'00	12'00
Interest for the year	52'50	103'80	148'60
Total	59'10	764'80	93'60
Maintenance, 5th year	12'00	12'00	12'00
Interest for the year	59'00	122'20	180'60
Total	661'10	899'00	1096'20
Maintenance, 6th year	15'00	15'00	15'00
Interest for the year	66'10	143'80	219'20
Total	742'20	1057'80	1330'40
Maintenance, 7th year	15'00	15'00	15'00
Interest for the year	74'20	169'10	266'00
Total	831'40	1241'90	1611'40
Maintenance, 8th year	18'00	18'00	18'00
Interest for the year	83'10	198'50	322'20
Total	932'50	1458'40	1951'60
Maintenance, 9th year	18'00	18'00	18'00
Interest for the year	93'20	233'20	390'20
Total	1043'70	1709'60	2359'80
Maintenance, 10th year	24'00	24'00	24'00
Interest for the year	104'30	273'40	471'80
Total	1172'00	2007'00	2855'60

APPENDIX C (Contd.)

Maintenance, 11th year ...	24.00	24.00	24.00
Interest for the year ...	117.20	321.10	571.00
Total ...	1313.20	2352.10	3450.60
Maintenance, 12th year ...	27.00	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	131.30	376.30	690.00
Total ...	1471.50	2755.40	4167.60
Maintenance, 13th year ...	27.00	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	147.10	440.80	833.40
Total ...	1645.60	3223.20	5028.00
Maintenance, 14th year ...	27.00	27.00	27.00
Interest for the year ...	164.50	515.60	1005.60
Total ...	1837.10	3765.80	6060.60
Maintenance, 15th year ...	30.00	30.00	30.00
Interest for the year ...	183.70	602.40	1212.00
Total ...	2050.80	4398.20	7302.60
Maintenance, 16th year ...	30.00	30.00	30.00
Interest for the year ...	205.00	703.60	1460.40
Total ...	2285.80	5131.80	8792.00

APPENDIX D.

Value of Rs. 100 in 9 years at 10 and 16 p.c. is given below.

Description.	At 10 p.c.	At 16 p.c.	Remarks.
Capital.....	100-00	100-00	
Interest 1st year...	10-00	16-00	
	110-00	116-00	
„ 2nd „	11-00	18-50	
	121-00	134-50	
„ 3rd „	12-10	21-40	
	133-10	155-90	
„ 4th „	13-30	24-90	
	146-40	180-80	
„ 5th „	14-60	28-80	
	161-00	209-60	
„ 6th „	16-10	33-40	
	177-10	243-00	
„ 7th „	17-70	38-80	
	194-80	281-80	
„ 8th „	19-40	44-90	
	214-20	326-70	
„ 9th „	21-40	52-10	
Total ...	235-60	378-80	

APPENDIX E.

Showing free and slave population of the different districts.

Names of districts.	From Census figures of 1977 S. E.				Figures of 1980 S. E.		Percentages.
	Total number of houses including both pucca buildings and thatched houses.						
	Population, including slave owners less number of slaves.						
	Slaves.						
	Total.						
	Slave owners.						
	Slaves.						
	Percentage of slaves to total population of Districts.						
	Percentage of slave owners to house owners taking one owner for each house.						
Inside the Valley	64440	305580	1329	306909	534	1409	1.2
Outside the valley	10361	59860	241	60101	109	214	1.3
West No. 1	74801	365440	1570	367010	643	1623	1
West No. 2.	39897	163895	1356	165251	608	1893	1.34
	14597	79188	1015	79203	403	1071	1.2
							2.34
							4.5

APPENDIX E (Contd.)

West No. 3	14976	81275	935	82160	478	1885	1 1/2	3
West No. 4	29523	179072	4345	183417	1428	5082	2 1/2	5
Palpa and Gulmi	63615	370207	6693	376900	2206	7492	2	10
Pewthan	21345	120387	1676	122063	527	1629	1 1/2	2 1/2
Dang Sallyan	36531	213194	1135	214329	200	1027	1 1/2	1 1/2
Doti	24332	153226	900	153229	278	1030	2	1
Baitadi Dadelhdura	9116	77302	593	77895	145	507	3/8	1 1/2
Dahilekha	11789	83750	423	84173	87	323	2 1/2	2 1/2
Jumla	14296	88433	889	89022	381	1220	1 1/2	2 1/2
<hr/>								
Koski Lamjung	278517	1607679	19960	1627639	6741	22605
Falawang	23775	136044	3521	139565	1483	4236	3	6
Jajarkote	790	4475	55	4530	27	111	2 1/2	5 1/2
Bajhang	12137	75579	295	7874	69	247	1 1/2	1 1/2
Bajura	5821	42596	447	43043	109	492	1	2
	2485	19848	371	20220	56	360	1 1/2	2
<hr/>								
	45006	276543	4689	281232	1744	5446
<hr/>								
East No. 1	323523	184222	24649	190871	8455	8051
East No. 2	39669	211381	2322	213703	810	2563	1 1/2	2
East No. 3	31785	172921	4151	177072	1366	4718	2 1/2	4
East No. 4	20699	104768	3338	108106	1478	5047	4 1/2	7
	49954	265145	453	269668	1011	3445	1 1/2	2

APPENDIX E (Contd.)

Dhankuta	56784	349818	3244	353062	1404	4307	1-1 4	2-1 2
Illam	14970	87028	447	87475	152	518	3 4	1
	215865	1191061	18025	1209086	6221	20596		
Birgunj, Bara, Parsa, Routhat	77065	414515	142	414657	23	69		
Mahutari, Sarlahi	71279	470900	392	471292	43	111		
Saptari	62766	377453	372	377855	115	366	1 15	1 5
Udaipur	9032	48397	516	48913	126	525	1	1-1 3
Morang (Biratnagar, Jhapa.)	36257	211240	68	211308	44	121		
Khajahani, Sivaraj	19156	122269	14	122283	2	6		
Palhi Majkhand	28644	184555	26	184581	3	4		
Bankey, Bardia	17405	104455	11	104466	1	6		
Kailali, Kanchanpur	4777	46815	1	46816				
Makwanpur	10106	56294	222	56516	7	25		
Kandrang	1425	9557	2	9559	6	12		
Chitwan	2088	50506	14	20520				
Soonar	351	2726	2	2728				
Surkheta	3069	17289	36	17327				
Total for the whole Kingdom of Nepal.	343420	2087001	1820	2088821	370	1247		
	957609	5527724	46054	5573788	15719	51519		

* N. B. The figures for the total number of houses here are taken from the Census of 1968 S. E. as the figures of 1978 S. E. seem to be wrong.