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# THE GOOD CAUSE

OF

# PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

## A LECTURE

BY

## PROFESSOR F. W. NEWMAN.

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# A LECTURE

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THE people of the Free States of North America have in this war for the supremacy of Law over Lawlessness risen to a patriotic self-devotion, to which nothing known to me in English history can compare, except the spirit in which the English yeomen and townsmen resisted the tyrannical attempts of Charles I. The sympathy of the English millions with the cause of the North has been again and again solemnly recorded in the first three months of this year; and it will undoubtedly aid to nerve and sustain the Northern resolve. But besides this, it does our own hearts good to sympathize with a just cause, and with men who are sacrificing self for noble ends. Perhaps our highest idea of God himself is that of One always and everywhere loving Righteousness and rejoicing in the Just: and we ourselves earn some portion of the divine joy, when our hearts go out in warm affection to a good cause solely because it is good. How wicked are the aims of the South, I need not any longer insist; but how good and wise has been the aim of President Lincoln and of the great party which raised him to power,—has not been at all adequately set forth in this country. Englishmen have put the Union into contrast with freedom, and have actually made it out to be a guilt to fight for the Union, which is really to fight for Law, for Nationality, for Civilization, for ultimate freedom to All, against sheer Barbarism, Lynch Law, and despotic unlimited crime.

For the forty years which preceded 1860, the Free States had endured the reproach of Europe for neglecting their duties

to the enslaved negro. Nor only so, but through an instinctive dread of the convulsion which has now overtaken them, they shrank from too rude a shock with the encroaching Slave Power, and made concessions after concessions, which, even when they did not really strengthen the adversary, yet puffed him up with pride and fresh audacity. A main reason for moral weakness in the North, was, that they did not know their duties; and no nation of industrious men will ever willingly take up a war in which they are to bleed, except from a sense of duty. All Europe has carped at the Union, as implicated in the guilt of slavery; but the millions of the North imagined, that, as the Free States had no power by the law to alter Southern institutions, therefore they had no responsibility. Europe replied "Not so: it is true that you cannot do *all*; but by law you can do *some* things. Do all that you can, and power will come to you *to do more*." But it needed much exhibition of illegality, ferocity, and unscrupulousness on the part of the South, before the North could learn how vital was the necessity for resisting the Slave Power. The cause of their dullness lay in the Constitution itself, which left the relations of the slaves to the Federal authority very indefinite. At this we cannot wonder, when the framers of the Constitution expected slavery soon to die out, and did not wish to recognize it at all. From the mere words of the Constitution one may reason to opposite results: nevertheless, there is decisive proof in its historical development, that Southern statesmen regarded the slaves to be, equally with white men, *direct subjects of the Federal Commonwealth*. This is demonstrated beyond question, by the liability of negroes to serve in the Federal army. When an English fleet, in the war of 1812, invaded New Orleans, General Jackson pressed slaves into his ranks against us. Many of them were killed; but neither the Congress nor President Madison (a Southern President) would listen to the demand of the masters for remuneration; nor was any further appeal made. Thus was settled historically and *ex post facto* the place of the Southern negroes in the Commonwealth. They are called in the Constitution "*persons held to service*," not *chattels*: and by practical fact we see, that they are not foreigners, are not persons outside the Union, but are *subjects* of the Union, who owe to it warlike duty at risk of their lives. Thus to the Federal Power they were as minors in a family, or as women,—without direct political rights, yet still

members of the political community, owing loyalty, and therefore claiming protection. Out of this position of things rose the obscure problem—What were the Free States to do? How were they to protect the negroes from cruel local laws and lawlessness?

A solution was devised by an English Bishop, and solemnly approved by an Archbishop; a professed Political Economist; no less a person than Archbishop Whately of Dublin; who has recently published the scheme anew in his reply to Mrs. Beecher Stowe's letter. His solution, suggested by his friend Bishop Hinds, was, to impose an *ad valorem* tax on slaves, after allowing the owners to fix the values; and then empower the Federal Government to purchase any slave or slaves it pleases at that price, when convenient. Unfortunately this Archiepiscopal plan was just as practicable as the rule for catching a sparrow by putting salt on its tail. The slaveowners were resolved that slavery should *not* be terminated. Had they been willing, there were many ways of effecting it, as the experience of the Spanish colonies shows. But they did not choose to fix prices, or to tax themselves, or to do any single thing with the view of overthrowing a system which they fanatically glorified and were struggling to extend. We cannot wonder at the arrant nonsense and injustice printed and talked from end to end of England, when an experienced economist, politician, and peer could deliberately recommend such a scheme, even after actual trial had shown that the slaveowners of the loyal State of Kentucky refuse to accept from Congress the pecuniary aid it offers to gradual emancipation.

A second solution of the problem has met wonderful favour with those who seem above all things to desire a break-up of the Union; while they profess to seek the benefit of the slaves and the interests of philanthropy. It is simply this: that the Free States should *peaceably separate* from the Slave States, and thus liberate their own consciences. I must beg you to attend in detail to all that is involved in this much applauded scheme. 1. In no case could it have done any good to the slaves, but must have made their prospect more hopeless than ever. The South has but now rebelled, expressly in order to have undivided control over itself—in order to keep down free speech, free writing, and free thought concerning slavery, even among white men called free. It declares that slavery cannot be

maintained otherwise. In order to intensify and extend the horrible system, to have its hands unfettered for renewing the African slave-trade as soon as it pleases (by stealth, if not legally), and shut out the action of the Northern mind—it has seceded. And now forsooth, the friends of the slave advise, as if in the interest of the slave, to let the South go and work its wicked will, unmolested by any rights and duties of the North, and even by moral suasion. What else would this have been on the part of the North, but a cowardly dereliction of duty? And this, it seems, is the way in which the North is *to liberate its conscience!* But 2. It would have been treason, not only to the negroes, but to the industrious portion of the Southern whites, who do but endure slavery, while they have interests wholly, and inclinations generally, adverse to it. Look at the map, and see how the Alleghanies run southward. Their slopes are unfit for slave culture and are tilled by freemen. Western Virginia, East Tennessee, the mountain-land of the two Carolinas, of Georgia, of Alabama, and even a portion of the State of Mississippi is in like case. Maryland and the Chesapeake bay have loyal Unionists of the same character—industrious peasant farmers. The great State of Missouri had a larger mass of industrious whites than of slaves; so perhaps had Texas. If the North had seceded, it would have cast most unjustly upon these men the whole battle of slavery, into which they would inevitably have fallen, as indeed the Hon. Mr. Spratt of Carolina distinctly intimates; but the freemen of the mountains must have been crushed by the planters and by the idle whites who are their tools. Further, 3. Without a Fugitive Slave Law peace would have been impossible. The North, after secession, would have had to maintain great armies in defence of the vast frontier, over which fugitive slaves would have been pursued by marauding hunters. But if the Northerners consented to give back fugitives, they would once more be implicated in sustaining the guilty system, and their secession would fail of its supposed object. In fact it shows the shallowest understanding of the case, to imagine peace under disunion *possible* between powers so intensely unlike as the North loving freedom and the South fanatical for slavery. War must have been eternal between them while living side by side, with countries interpenetrating, and rivers running across them. But 4. (what is more decisive still), the North could

not have *seceded peaceably*. The Southern planters would rather rule the Union than separate; though they would rather separate than be ruled. A Slave Empire is their darling idea, the goddess of their adoration. If New England and the North-West had tried to “secede peaceably,” while the executive power of the Union was in the hands of the South, the President would have crushed the movement with a high hand. All the Slave States, all the Democratic party of the North, would have sided with the Union, and thereby with the Slave Power. Illinois, Indiana and Ohio certainly, Pennsylvania, New York and even Connecticut probably, would have gone with the South. The seceders must have been subdued in the attempt, and the slave power would have moved many degrees northward. In short, the attempt *to run away* from the responsibilities of the Union would have been more foolish than a direct crusade to liberate the negroes; for it would have involved the same war, but in a more ignominious and less hopeful form; having no elevating moral principle, no chance of rallying Southern lovers of freedom, no possibility of arming negro regiments, no claim of recognition by European powers. It would have surrendered the capital and its traditions to the enemy, and have taken pains to put itself into the wrong with all the world. Yet this most stupid, unpractical, cowardly scheme of abandoning responsibilities, is to this day vaunted and held up in England as that which was the duty of the North; that of which it ought, even now, before it is too late, to accomplish a fractional part. The friends of the slave among us implore the North not to conquer *all* the Gulf States, but to leave at least *a little* independency devoted to glorify slavery, for the curse of its neighbour and of the civilized world.

I unwillingly confess that this scheme once found advocates in that very small, very devoted, very useful and noble-hearted band of enthusiasts in the Northern States, improperly called Abolitionists, more properly Garrisonians. I honour and esteem highly these martyrs to freedom. They have given the great moral impulse to the glorious struggle now in progress; but they are moralists, prophets if you please, not statesmen; and have been unable to understand the difficulties of statesmen. What is still more to the purpose, their conduct in the present crisis shows that nothing but sad despair ever made them talk of secession. Their most eloquent leader Wendell Phillips,

within a week of Mr. Lincoln's first call for troops, seeing the enthusiasm of the country, went into the war with all his heart. So too did Garrison, who not long back wrote to a friend in England his wonder that any friend of freedom could fail to sympathise warmly with the North, in a war which will beyond all doubt extend freedom from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Previously, the Garrisonians were vehement and invaluable preachers against slavery, and brave helpers of fugitive slaves, with enormous losses and risks to themselves; but they did not propound any political scheme for freeing the slaves. In fact they declined all political action. Hence, to call them "Abolitionists" is misleading.

But the Republican Party of the North adopted a practical political course, and are justly entitled Abolitionists by the Southern press and the Southern manifestoes. They maintained, that, having been born under the Union, and having experienced under it countless blessings, their duty was to cling to it, and use *constitutional* means of correcting whatever was defective. All such means were of two kinds,—first, the political action of the Federal Government, whether executive or legislative,—secondly, moral persuasion directed towards the whites of the South, who alone had legal power to alter the local laws. For the former they wanted a President devoted to freedom, and a majority in the Senate; for the second, they wanted a suppression of every form of mob-rule and lynch law which embarrassed peaceful suasion, and impeded free speech in the South. For this suppression again was needed a President energetically on the side of law and right.

The spirit and purpose of the Republican leaders is well summed up in the following passage of a speech of the Hon. Henry Wilson, senator from Massachusetts and Chairman of the Military Committee of the United States:—

"Abhorring slavery in every form, loving equal and impartial liberty for all men, I am ever ready to exercise *all the powers of the Constitution* of our country to relieve the nation from all connection with and all responsibility for slavery . . . and I am also ever ready to use *all means sanctioned by law, humanity and religion* to persuade our countrymen of the slaveholding States to undo the heavy burden, and let the oppressed go free. But *I am utterly opposed* to all appeals, by whomsoever made, *to force and violence*. Ours is a Government of constitution and law; a Government of the people for the people. Not therefore to the rifle nor the pike should the friends of the slave appeal; but to the

"heart, the conscience, the reason, and the enduring interests of the people of the Slave States, upon whom rests the responsibility of slavery in the States."

Is it not a cruel slander to say that men who hold these noble sentiments are *not* friends of freedom, *merely because* they utterly deprecate selecting War as the appropriate means of promoting it?

But the question arose,—Supposing a President to be elected (as Mr. Lincoln was elected) by the votes of the party of freedom, what steps could be taken in accordance with the Constitution for the benefit of the negro? This has been so little discussed in England, and is so little understood, that it deserves attention. The fact is, that there was everything for the enthusiasts of freedom to hope, everything for the fanatics of slavery to fear. The alarm of the South was expressed aloud in every State manifesto, and was evidently unfeigned.

Nothing can be more decisive than the address of South Carolina, in taking the first step:—

"Responsibility follows power; and if the people of the North have the power by Congress to promote *the general welfare* of the United States by any means they deem expedient, why should they not assail and overthrow the institution of slavery in the South? *They are responsible* for its continuance or existence *in proportion to their power*. Experience has proved that slaveholding States cannot be safe in subjection to non-slaveholding States. . . . The people of the North have not left us in doubt as to their designs and policy. United as a section in the late Presidential election, they have elected as the exponent of their policy one who has openly declared that all the states of the Union must be made Free States or Slave States. It is true that among those who aided in his election there are various shades of anti-slavery hostility. But if African slavery in the Southern States be the evil which their political combinations affirm it to be, *the requisition of an inexorable logic must lead them to emancipation* . . . When it is considered, that the Northern States will soon have the power to make the Supreme Court what they please, *what check can there be on the unrestrained counsels of the North to emancipation?*"

It is needless to quote further; but I add the opening words of the manifesto from Louisiana on seceding: "Whereas it is manifest, that Abraham Lincoln, if inaugurated as President of the United States, *will keep his promises* to the Abolitionists; which *will inevitably lead* to the emancipation of the slaves of the South; . . . &c," therefore Louisiana resolved to secede. Englishmen have strangely disbelieved alike what the South and the North have said on this matter: and yet all is

very plain. The *short* of it is this. So ruinous, so immoral, so impure, so hateful to humanity is that worst form of slavery, which the Southern planters have hugged to their heart, that it would soon fall before free speech and free press, if these were maintained: and the planters knew it. Jefferson Davis indeed distinctly claimed that the North should have no beliefs about slavery unpleasant to the South. Without tarring and feathering of white men, without house-burning, assassination and lynch law, such slavery as *that* is untenable. With a free press the poor whites of the South would soon learn that the system is their degradation, and would overthrow it. In order to keep up lynch law and popular violences against the free speech of white men, a President was needed who should abuse the powers of his high office.—Yet it is well also to mention in detail, what might have been done against slavery *by* or *under* President Lincoln, if the South had remained in the Union.

First, even unsupported by the legislature, the President himself could enforce the law against slavetraders, could declare free coloured men to be citizens of the Union, could liberate all slaves who were taken by their masters into a territory, could enforce faithful delivery of letters and newspapers at the Post Offices—(a very important point)—and could do much, if not everything, to defend speakers and preachers from the violence of lawless mobs. His patronage also has much weight with the poor whites of the Slave States.

My friend Mr. Francis Pulszky, who with Kossuth visited all parts of the Union, informed me in 1853, after his return, that Southern leaders had avowed to him, exactly as had the Northerners, that if the President's Cabinet were permanently in the interests of freedom, *the poorer whites might ere long out-vote the planters in their own States.* In Missouri they did so several years back, and much was there to be hoped, of which indeed we see the fruits. But the Southerners, to meet the danger, have since baited the idle class of poor whites in the Gulf States with the promise of cheap slaves from Africa; and, as it seems, with much temporary success.

But secondly, as soon as the President could count on a majority in the Senate, his power would be immensely increased. He was sure to be able to do the very things which he has now done;—to recognise Hayti and Liberia, and receive black ambassadors; make treaty with England for mutual right of

search, in order to stop the slave trade;—free the district of Columbia in which Washington is; we may add,—free all the arsenals, forts, navy yards of the South in which Congress has exclusive jurisdiction. The intention to do all this was imputed to Mr. Lincoln confidently by the South in their manifestoes.

Now this majority in the Senate might be counted on at no distant day; for by Northern colonization one and another territory were sure to be admitted as Free States; while the Southerners, having no immigrants and only half the population of the North, cannot people new territories so quickly; or if they did, the President would be able to declare the slaves free, and enforce their freedom, as fast as they came in. And the members of the Senate depend on the number of States. Moreover there was hope that Delaware, Maryland, and even Missouri might soon become Free States, Virginia before long, and after it Kentucky. Different minds will form different estimates of such probabilities. Suffice it to say, that the North hoped this, the South dreaded it, and there were causes in action tending this way. Beside what is on the surface, it may be named, that a Society had been formed in the North for colonizing Virginia by buying up large tracts of land, and sending in freemen numerous enough for self-defence. Western Virginia is wholly unfit for slave-culture, but very valuable to free industry; Eastern Virginia is largely in a state of nature; old fields have long run wild. Slave-breeding has superseded slave-labour; and there is ample room for freemen, who can make a garden of that which is a desert under the forced work of slaves. With Western Virginia more than half-free already and warmly attached to the Union, any large immigration would make it easy to an energetic President to support free discussion and a free press, against illegal violences. Every step in this direction would be sure to give new impetus to the influx of freemen; nor was it at all wild to hope that the free cultivators who were not slaveholders might at an early period enforce laws to ameliorate slavery. If they had begun even to *discuss* many delicate topics,—such as the right of a State Legislature to reduce a class of men to slavery,—say red-haired men,—squinting men,—or woolly-haired,—or its right to define whether Mulattoes are or are not negroes,—the free discussion itself would have shaken slavery to its foundation. Nearly the

most disgusting atrocity of the American institution to white men, is, the selling away to strangers as a slave the child of a white father,—her own father perhaps getting a large price for her beauty! Any discussion whatever opens at once the question of *fact*,—Is a Mulatto or Quadroon a negro? and the question of *right*,—ought the Inter-State slave-trade to be tolerated?

This Inter-State trade was judged by Lord Macaulay to be even more atrocious than the African slave-trade. The intention to stop it was deliberately charged against Mr. Lincoln by the Convention at Mobile. There is great uncertainty on this point as to the powers of the Federal Government,\* nor was any one able to foresee what might be the ultimate opinion. But from the day that the Senate had any permanent majority for freedom, the right of this cruel trade would be sure to be questioned; and when the Supreme Court received judges of a new character, appointed by the President from the ranks of freedom, no one can say but that ere long the right of Congress to stop the trade would have been decided. In the address of South Carolina, quoted by me above, you heard the alarm which the planters justly expressed of new blood being poured into the Supreme Court.

Thus, the key to the whole political movement was the

\* The Constitution gives express power to Congress "to regulate Commerce among the several States." I am informed on authority "which I cannot doubt, that if the North would accede to the Southern theory, that negroes are to be classed with "jackasses" and "nutmegs," (such are the very phrases of eminent Southerners,) then Congress would have full legal power to suppress the Inter State slave-trade. But the North has treated negroes, not as chattels, but as "persons held to service," and, in fact, as part of a family: hence the right of Congress to interfere with their passage from State to State, at the will of the head of the family, becomes doubtful; for citizens, with their children, have an absolute right of travel from State to State. Yet there is another side of the question. In Section IX., Art. 1, it is expressly enacted concerning the Powers of Congress, that "Congress should not before the year 1808 prohibit the migration or importation of such persons as any of the States then existing might think proper to admit." This was allusive to the African slave trade, yet Africa is not mentioned. That trade was stopped in 1808. Since the word *migration* is used as well as *importation*, it is open to inquiry, whether the limitation to 1808 does not imply the competency of Congress to stop the migration of persons of African descent from State to State, after 1808, equally as to stop the importation of such persons.

possession of the President's cabinet, for while this was in the hands of the South, the executive power was purposely abused; Lynch law, and every form of violence in favour of slavery, was winked at: free speech in the Senate was checked by brutal assault; the slave trade was left unpunished; the Supreme Court was filled with judges devoted to slavery; and (as the case of Kansas showed) the Federal army itself was made a tool of lawless violence. Both sides therefore betook themselves to the Presidential election as decisive of the struggle.

It cannot be pretended that the Republican party, which is counted by millions, looked much farther on than the first step of the programme. They felt that it had become absolutely essential to resist the Slave Power, and they took their first step resolutely. Nevertheless, the leaders looked on steadily to an early termination of the system of slavery. Both Mr. Seward, who at first was the leader of the party, and Mr. Lincoln who was finally chosen as candidate for the Presidency, had in distinct terms declared that it was the duty of the North, not only to check and limit slavery by law, but to take measures for its ultimate extinction. It suffices here to quote some of Mr. Seward's public words:—"Slavery can be *limited* to its present bounds. It can be *ameliorated*. It can be, and it must be, *abolished*: and you and I can and must do it." The South has not ceased to treat Mr. Seward and Mr. Lincoln as avowed abolitionists; and so they were, though they intended only to use legal methods, which would necessarily be indirect and gradual. Is it from ignorance of this that so many friends of the Northern cause have spoken as if Mr. Lincoln had become an enemy of slavery only by the stress of the war?

But I must add some words on the very singular programme (or platform, as the Americans call it) on which the election was made to turn. The Southerners were firmly convinced, rightly or wrongly, that exclusion from new territories is to them not only politically, but *commercially* ruinous. Seeing all around them the blight of the soil by slavery, and mere wildernesses made even out of what was abounding in fertility ten or fifteen years before, they dread to be choked by want of space. So frightful is the picture of desolation as not only to fill their imaginations, but to convince English and Northern travellers that their fears are just. Yet there is simultaneously an opposite statement, namely, the vehement cupidity of the South for more

negroes as a commercial necessity. If we believe them, they are in danger of having too little land for their negroes, and too few negroes for their land. In other words, their desire of wealth and power is insatiable. That is intelligible enough: but commercially it is impossible that each article at once should be in excess, when the ease of transporting negroes is so great. Which of the two then are we to believe to be relatively excessive? The reply is decisively given by the fact, that the price of negroes has been perpetually rising for the last half century. This proves that less and less want of land is felt, in spite of the natural increase of slaves. Moreover, we learn that in Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, and Florida, the untouched virgin land is still enormous. I therefore regard the mania for new territory to be a fanatical delusion; and believe that mere ambition, or the escape of slaves over the Mexican frontier, not commercial need, prompts the zeal for new territory. Nevertheless it remains a fact that the South, though already overburdened with empty land and virgin wildernesses, have believed the power of extension into new territories to be vital to them commercially; and the Republican party (very wisely, as the result shows) selected this extravagant ambition of the South for new territory as the critical point on which the election should turn. Mr. Lincoln engaged to refuse to permit new Slave States; the Southern candidate engaged to allow them. On this issue Mr. Lincoln was elected by a "fabulous majority." After the secession had commenced, and negotiation was attempted by Southern advocates who were still outwardly adhering to the Union, we know by the information of one of those negociators, Mr. Morehead, Ex-Governor of Virginia, that they broke off all conference when Mr. Lincoln positively refused to yield on this point.

Whatever may be said of the commercial value of the new Slave States, that certainly was only in the distant future. The *immediate* importance of the point was political. With the certainty of having no new Slave States came the inevitable result to the South of losing its majority in the Senate. Hence the secession was finally determined on by the States which hesitated longest.

I think it well here briefly to state the glaring evidence, which shows the claim of secession to be illegal, and that the separate States of the Union had ceased to be independent.

They had solemnly yielded up every emblem of Sovereignty. The forts on their territory were all, both constitutionally and in fact, in the hand of the Federal Government, which built, repaired, armed, provisioned, manned, and commanded them. It devolved on that Government to defend all the States from foreign attack, and for this purpose had an absolute right to demand soldiers of each for the protection of all. (This one fact is decisive, in itself.) The Federal Congress had also a right to contract pecuniary engagements in the name of all for the protection of each, and to make treaties with foreign powers binding on all. No State had a right of alliance or treaty or embassy, or of coining money: nor could any foreign Government (as England) be unaware that the Union was a single Nation; for it had one Flag and one Ambassador to us, and never had been known or recognised by more than one. Internal transit-duties and custom-houses were totally forbidden. Moreover, of the seceding States, some of the most important, as Louisiana, Arkansas, and Missouri, were formed *by* the Union, on land surrendered to the Union, and paid for by *the money* of the Union. Others, as Florida and Texas, were conquered by the arms and blood of the Union. The manifestoes of the seceding States are those of insurgents against unjust rule, not of sovereigns retiring from a league; nor did they appeal to legal processes for separation. As a final comment, their President Buchanan, who had winked at all the treasonable doings, made public avowal that secession was illegal, when so to do was to criminate himself in the very crisis of abandoning power.

But with the secession of eight or nine States from the Union the whole controversy was violently altered. The matters in contest were changed and the combatants were changed. The previous question had been:—"How to repress, ameliorate, and "utterly extinguish slavery, by purely constitutional means?" To ask that question any longer was absurd, when constitutional proceedings had been defeated by violence. A new and *far greater* question arose:—"How to secure that any laws, any "constitution whatever, shall have any validity?" By confounding these two different phases of the struggle, the English have involved themselves in a maze of error. The North suddenly found itself in appalling danger. Its arsenals, navy-yards, fortresses, treasuries had been seized and emptied; its civil and military service disorganized. For three months was deliberate

anarchy, while President Buchanan sat idle, and allowed rebellion to run its course. Internal dissolution, perpetual civil war, ruin to material industry, general demoralization, ultimate military tyranny; the fate of Buenos Ayres and Paraguay for another half-century;—suddenly threatened the Free States. If at that moment Kentucky, Missouri, and Maryland would have renounced slavery, and thus cleared the residual Union from complicity with it, this could not have brought satisfaction to any wise men of the North. To allow success to the perjured office-holders, who had committed the very worst form of treason, would be a precedent of the most deadly kind:—a precedent, which no power has more reason to deprecate and abhor, than the Queen of England, whose ministers have winked at it, and all but applauded it. Moreover, not to repel the principle, that any State might secede at pleasure, was to dissolve all coherence in the remnant of the Union; was, to permit Maine and Massachusetts to join Canada, Virginia to carry off the Chesapeake to the South, Maryland to carry off the Metropolis, with the mouths of the Pennsylvanian rivers. The South would inevitably soon have verified the boast of Mr. Stephens, its Vice-President, and have become the Paramount Power of the continent, by acting on the hopes and fears of the Border States, and those on the Upper Mississippi, gaining a strong party in them, and drawing them over to itself. All laws for freedom would have been vain. The Paramount Power would have swept them away, and have “reconstructed” the Union after its own programme; extending slavery over the nearer States, and expelling New England as fanatical, with barren soil and harsh climate. If the principle of secession were once allowed, the nationality of the Union was gone; its treasury was without basis, its political influence despicable. To have truckled to the rebels at that moment, and yielded anything to their violence and illegality, would have been a fatal policy to the North, ensuring either its early absorption into the Slave Power, or a war vastly worse than the present. Self-defence being thus urgent, no one has or had a right to call upon the North to think of anything else at such a time. To complain that she did not make war for the negro, and say that it would have been “higher and more generous,” is a perfect extravagance; for *in no case, and at no time*, could any one justly claim that she should prefer extra-legal to legal remedies of negro oppression, and

voluntarily rush into the horrible uncertainties of war: still less *then* had she strength to spare. Nothing carried her into the war, but the overthrow of Legality. Her natural and chosen weapons are those proper to human and moral natures; when those are wrested from her, she must needs fight with weapons of war, but only to regain legal powers. Until legality and nationality had been recovered, the Negro question was necessarily put off, being superseded by a far more urgent controversy. To the South indeed the object of contest remained as at first. It fought for Slavery, first by the Constitution, next against the Constitution. But the North contended, first against Slavery by the Constitution; next, of necessity, for the Constitution itself, as the pledge and means of Order, Civilization, Right, Freedom, and Humanity.

I have indicated to you how entirely illegal was the secession of the South. But mere illegality was the smallest part of the guilt. The great and horrible guilt lay in the end avowedly sought,—the perpetration of that wickedest form of slavery ever known,—a slavery against which English peeresses in 1854 uttered their anguish to the wide world. The anarchical, immoral, and inhuman doctrine is now preached to us (by conservatives!), that because the insurgents are said to be five millions, they have a *natural* right of insurrection, without moral grievances except the fear of being forced to abandon slavery; and we are to take for granted the real unanimity of the five millions, none of whom have had freedom of speech or of voting.

One of our Cabinet ministers is represented to have said publicly, that *our great fear* in England was, lest, if the South should offer to return to the Union, President Lincoln should make peace without securing freedom to the negro! A thousand less eminent have said the same thing, and have treated “attachment to the Union” as equivalent to hypocrisy and treachery. The cry against the President, as *self-condemned*, for declaring that he was at war for the Union and the Union alone, has rung from end to end of the country, and has met one in every drawing-room, displaying qualities of mind in the English gentry, which I decline here to characterize.

The very reasoners who whimper about a fratricidal war, when their duty is to condemn an atrocious conspiracy of ruffianism, which their sympathy has encouraged and in many

cases their wealth has armed, legally and illegally;—these same reasoners have called on us to degrade President Lincoln in our estimate to the level of those ruffians, for being willing to accept peace at the earliest moment at which he could honourably obtain the ends *for which alone* the war had been entered. Whoever needlessly prolongs a war for an end foreign to the original quarrel, does nearly the same as plunge into a new war; and if philanthropy was no adequate cause for forcing the war originally, it is a most doubtful justification for forcing the prolongation of a war. He who volunteers the prolongation, does so at tremendous risk. He will generally discontent his own side, and make the enemy more obstinate. This, which is a general probability, was in Mr. Lincoln's case a certainty: for the Democratic party and the Border States would have been enraged by it. The very fact is made his reproach by his English assailants (and by friends of the slave, forsooth!) whereas it is one of his most obvious justifications. He would have been *highly criminal*, if he had risked mis-carriage in the object of the war—vindication of Law against violence and treason—by refusing to accept an honourable peace, and thus alienating a large part of his supporters. This is what his English enemies have blandly or insolently demanded.

But what would have happened so terrible to the negro, if the South (suppose, last May, when disheartened by the great career of Northern success) had come back into the Union on its old footing without concessions from the North? Every hope ever formed by the Republican party would have been brighter than before the abortive secession. In the interval they had freed Columbia, pronounced the territories sacred to liberty, and had made important treaties; none of which things could have been done so speedily but for the absence of Southern members from the Congress. Thus the party of Freedom had gained at once objects which might otherwise have cost the struggle of years, and the Southerners on their return would have found themselves to their chagrin to be sitting on free soil in the Capitol,—an event which they had in prospect denounced as so unendurable, that it would alone justify secession. Moreover, an immense result had been won by the alienation of the Democratic party from them. For—let the leaders of that party struggle as they may to regain their old importance—nothing could restore to the party its old

numbers: when millions of it resented the attempt of the South to break in pieces that idol of the Democrats, the mighty Union. On the other hand the party of Freedom had been consolidated, and thus all chance had vanished that any future Presidential election would fall on a candidate bound over to Southern interests; in consequence, the real Peace men, Mr. Lincoln's friends, would be able more boldly than ever to devote themselves to bring about by law, and by the pleadings of justice and true interest, a gradual emancipation. Nor only so; but it was within possibility that the President might *in the cause of humanity* interfere against the Inter-State Slave-Trade. Nothing could hinder this, after the South had vainly tried to secede, if the Congress did not actively thwart him. When once the fortresses of the South were given back, its armies disbanded, and the whole force of the Union again in the President's hand, they would have had to resist in Congress as they best might; but would have had no chance by recurring to the game of secession, if disgusted with Congress. But in fact, all these certain disadvantages from Reunion are the very things which have made the South implacable.

When Mr. Lincoln did come to the conviction, that, for military reasons, he not only *might* prudently, but *must*, pronounce the negroes in the rebellious States legally free; I certainly wish that he had enunciated it on the Hon. Charles Sumner's principle,—that slavery, being a mere local enactment, falls away of itself in a State, which by disowning the Federal Government forfeits its own claim to have its local laws recognised. It is doubly clear, that thenceforward the Federal Executive can know no distinction of men on the rebel area, except that of loyal and disloyal subjects. I say it is doubly clear; for even on an earlier occasion of war,\* when there was

\* In a pamphlet on the War Power (Boston, Mass. 1861), will be found many details. I have already alluded to the results of General Jackson's impressing negroes for the defence of New Orleans. Besides this, during the war of Florida, General Jessup (1836) captured fugitive slaves who were with the (Indian) enemy, but refused to deliver them to their masters. General Gaines, then at New Orleans, confirmed the refusal; saying that he, as Federal General, knew nothing of the local law of Florida; and the men were to him prisoners of war, and not slaves. In 1838 a perfectly similar case occurred with General Taylor; and in each instance the Presidents (Van Buren and Tyler) though elected by Southern interest, approved of the conduct of the Generals.

no rebellion, the principle was previously acted on, under Southern Presidents, that the Federal army-officers know no distinction of slave and free, since they are not bound to be acquainted with the local laws. Nothing is more obvious, than that in time of rebellion the President has a *natural* and *necessary* right to summon to his standard all the loyal subjects of the Union without distinction of colour. It is not as slaves, but as loyal subjects, that he knows the negroes. By being silent on this argument, Mr. Lincoln has allowed his opponents to pretend that he is acting against a power *legitimately foreign* to him, and is taking away its subjects for his warlike convenience; as did the Russians in Moldavia and Wallachia, not without grave and just rebuke.

But what results from this struggle are we now to expect? I am not about to attempt speculation on military details, but I shall recapitulate a few facts. In eighteen months of fighting, the North has won half of the territory claimed by the seceders. She has consolidated to her own interests Maryland, Kentucky, Delaware, Western Virginia, and the great State of Missouri. She has recovered the great navy-yards of Pensacola and Norfolk Harbour, and the highly important naval centre, New Orleans. She has recaptured all the original fortresses that were seized, except three. She holds two-thirds of Virginia, of Tennessee, and of Louisiana, perhaps one-half of North Carolina and of Arkansas, with the sea islands of South Carolina, and as much of Florida as she chooses to take. Her navy has risen to a formidable magnitude, and blockades the entire coast permanently. The South has no prospect of a navy, nor has even one formidable ship, except from England. England is the great disquietude to the North, the sole hope of the South. Further, the Democratic party of the North is hearty in the war, and there is no symptom of practical division. But in the South the mountain population is in heart with the North, as are the three million slaves. Especially the men of Eastern Tennessee are confessedly warm Unionists, and if General Rosecrans once can win his way into this central spot, the rebels are cut in two, and the war will have received its death-blow. As to the comparative resources,—the industry of the North was never more active or better rewarded. There is no reason to think Massachusetts more prosperous than the rest; and we happen to know that the sums added to the deposits in the Saving Banks in that State were very large in 1862. On the

contrary, the industry of the South is paralysed. Their supplies even of corn and forage are running short. Blankets and boots have long been in terrible deficiency. Only from the zeal of Englishmen have they got rifles for a year past. Finally, their numbers also fail them; they began to use conscription last May, have exhausted their military population from the limited area left to them, and are in many places fiercely resisted by Unionists in the mountain region. On the other side, the North has as yet most sparingly used conscription, and has the resource of arming regiments of negroes, which will be used in proportion as they are sensibly needed. From such a comparison the inevitable result seems to be—*unless warships from England derange events*—an absolute conquest by the North.

But, I am told, the great and insoluble question remains,—How will the North ever be able to *govern* the South, if victorious? This question seems to afflict with great anxiety Englishmen who did not trouble their heads to ask, how England was to govern India after blowing Hindoos from the cannon's mouth to prevent the possibility of burying them;—after polluting Brahmins with blood before hanging them;—after studying to make their kinsfolk believe, that our generals had deprived the culprits of all hope of a happy hereafter. I have never heard that Earl Derby, nor yet Earl Russell, avowed to the world any misgiving as to our power of governing Oude, when Lord Dalhousie annexed it under false pretences, repudiated the English debt to the king, seized all the king's private property, down to his jewels, wardrobe, library, and furniture, —drove all the nobility by their very patriotism to submit to ejection from the high civil and military service, and hereby reduced thousands to beggary for no other crime than patriotism; or when afterwards, on the province rebelling, barely in order to reclaim its own, we reconquered Lucknow with unspeakable horrors, reducing the finest parts of that beautiful city to "a pestilential heap;" and this, though the resistance was truly national,—the Court, the nobles, and the peasants being all intensely united against us. Nor do I remember that either Whigs or Tories were made anxious as to our future, when English fleets and armies rent away all Pegu from the King of Burma, on pretences lighter than in any war of conquest since the Pope has left off giving away the kingdoms of the heathen. The men, who, if they did not swell the howl for vengeance against innocent Indians, yet made no protest against hangings of

men by the score, and burnings of houses to drive out fugitive mutineers,—these same men loudly proclaim in Parliament their distress and horror that General Butler should use a harsh word against the insolence of Southern women, who are eager partisans of a slavery reeking with rape and incest. Such being the prevalent tone of sentiment among English public men, I, for my part, draw a sponge over all that they have said concerning the American future, and study it from my own point of view.

A rotten tyranny is like a cone poised on its sharp end. Once overturned, it never can be set up again. We all know it in the case of the Spanish colonies, Naples, North Italy. We are sure also, that Poland or Hungary, once free, would not be reconquered. But of all tyrannies the most rotten is that of an oligarchical slave-power. Once set the slaves of the South free, and if there is anything certain in politics, it is certain that the Slave Power is for ever killed. This would be true, even if the Confederacy had the rank and composition of a nation; but it has not. It has no past history, no noble memories to kindle it,—shame on the ignorance which has compared it to Hungary!—no cohesion of orders, no middle class. It consists virtually of a few slaveholding families, (perhaps in all a thirtieth part of the population) with a great mass of despised poor whites, and by their side the three million slaves. All the interests of the poorer whites lie with the North. The most effective treatise against slavery in modern days,—if Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom" is to be excepted,—is the work on the last Census, by Mr. Helper, himself a portionless white of the South. Experience agrees with the prediction, that contact with the Northerners must rapidly convert this class of white men in mass to the cause of freedom. What they can do in that cause, appeared first in Missouri, after the horrors of the war in Kansas. We have since seen how they came over in Maryland, in North Carolina, in New Orleans; nor is the account from Pensacola different. In Alabama they have of late been enduring a martyrdom. In North Carolina they have fought bravely for the Union; in New Orleans they have gladly taken military service. Maryland seems to have been made substantially Unionist by two years' Northern occupation, though in the opening of the war the hostile faction was predominant, and until last autumn the Southerners fondly believed they had but to march in, and be welcomed. The more the poor whites

have been deceived in this war,—even those of the Gulf States, the quicker will be their conversion, after once they are defeated. And in the cause of humanity (even if there were no slaves) they need to be disarmed; that the horrible assassinations and lynch-law and daily frays may be put down. Our experience of Ireland tells us, how effective registration of arms may be made. If negroes and other loyalists were cautiously armed, and the unloyal disarmed, it scarcely would need the influx of Northern settlers to keep the peace. Yet in fact, the soldiers of the Union will probably colonize the South largely: black regiments will hold the fortresses.

But with the positive overthrow of slavery, not only are the slave-oligarchy made helpless: they also lose all motive for attempting new rebellion. Messrs. Lindsay, Laird and Zachary Pearson will not lavish effort upon them again. Their guilty phantasy of a great Slave Empire being once dispelled, would they risk life and fortune for the chance of becoming a petty independency? What bait could they offer to the white millions, when once freedom of speech and press had pervaded the South? New deception would be impossible. What chance of secret conspiracy, when the free negroes are all eyes and ears to watch against it? Once totally beaten in this war, and forced to submit absolutely to freedom, the families of the planters would soon be reconciled, by despair of their old dream, to the not very hard fate of being honourable citizens in the greatest and noblest of republics.

Of course I do not pretend that all difficulties will vanish in a year; but in great events nothing but a choice of difficulties is proposed. This also I will say:—The longer and the harder the Confederates struggle, the less power of after-resistance will they leave to themselves; and as far as they are concerned, the easier will be the task to the North, after once the victory is won. It is not from the now rebellious Confederates that I expect the main ultimate difficulties, but from the States still loyal, which nevertheless retain slavery. All experience of history, and all indications of the present, suggest, that a new and perplexing contest may flame out among the victors, the moment that complete and irreversible victory is attained. But, with three million blacks free and loyal, there can be no graver danger than besets Free States from ordinary civil faction. I cannot know what measures President Lincoln may think needful. I hope he will understand that to have a vast body of

*black freeholders* is of prime importance to the future of the Union. But of one thing I am sure ;—that English politicians need not distress their hearts with these foreign cares. They have yet Ireland to look after, and perhaps do not want advice about it from America.

Nevertheless, it is a question of humanity, of internationalism, and therefore a question for England, whether the North is to allow *a little* South to become independent and sustain slavery? If the North were disposed to this, the folly of the deed would seem to me to be on the scale of a crime; for the watching against border-war would be a permanent burden greater than the task of completing the conquest; and to leave the germ of independent slavery is to ensure the renewal of convulsion. But besides this, NOW on the ground of HONOUR the North cannot leave its work thus incomplete. The President has declared the slaves of the rebels free: Congress has confirmed it. Thus they are finally recognised beyond dispute as citizens, *free* as well as *loyal*. They clearly have a right to protection. This was always true; but it is now solemnly avowed by the Executive and Legislature alike. To abandon them permanently to a foreign and oppressive power, except under the stress of overwhelming force and absolute exhaustion, would be now a treachery. If anything could be likely to precipitate a servile war of the worst kind, it would be such a sudden disappointment of hope. Thus, even if I did not know how the conquest was afterwards to be held, yet if I saw the least indication of faltering, I would urge the North to persevere by a topic (which, alas! it was impossible to use for the conquest of Oude), "*Be just, and fear not!* You are now pledged to set the oppressed free and break every yoke. Break it, in the name of God, and end these accursed inhumanities, with their unspeakable impurities, and the contagion of wickedness which they spread to mercantile Europe."—And as regards the white men of the South themselves, bravely says the wise Mrs. Beecher Stowe, "The children of our conquered assailants will rise up and call us blessed."

THE END.