"Blackwood's"

History of the United States

By

FREDERICK S DICKSON

Price, 20 Cents

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" Still, as we have said, the truth will some day leak out, and then "—
The Spectator, January 25, 1896

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To
My Son

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"BLACKWOOD'S" HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

AN article in the London "Spectator" for January 25, 1896, will probably puzzle more than one American reader. It is entitled "American Dislike for England" and its general character may be fully appreciated from its opening paragraph which I quote as follows:

"To a very large body, nay, to the vast majority of Englishmen, one of the most painful aspects of the present controversy has been the evidence afforded that Americans seem utterly unaware of the strong feeling of friendship felt here for their country—a feeling rising in many minds to something approaching passion. The ordinary untraveled American has clearly never realized that the old country looks with intense pride and sympathy on the splendid daughter-State. We know that within the Union dwell the majority of those whom Carlyle so happily called 'the subjects of King Shakespeare;' and we feel that the Anglo-Saxon race can never 'give its heart its rights' unless the two great branches are brought into harmony, and America can claim a share in the glory of Nelson and Scott, while we take ours in Washington and Lincoln. It is not too much to say that no class here, rich or poor, is without the warmest feeling of sympathy for America. An English

public man, who showed hatred of America, or insulted her in his speeches or writings, would at once lose his place in the national respect—would be drummed out of public life. No poet could direct his verse against America; no man of letters attack our kinsfolk as a nation, or express a desire for the downfall of the Union. The satirist might make fun of the American as he makes fun of the Yorkshireman or the cockney, but anything like a desire to insult the national honor, or to rejoice at the difficulties or misfortunes of America, would most certainly be treated with indignation. The notion of an English Minister or Ex-Minister, or even of an English M. P., prophesying the downfall of the American Union and dwelling on it as a source of gratification for his country, is simply unthinkable. The man who gloated over the notion of America's ruin would be hissed as a traitor to the race. But though the knowledge of this friendly feeling is such a commonplace with us, it seems to be undreampt of in America. There, not only is a great deal of hatred and contempt expressed for the old country, but the people at large seem genuinely ignorant of the good feeling for America which is so general and so genuine here. That the Americans should believe that they hate us, or at any rate should profess to do so, is a very grievous wound to Englishmen; but if it is so—well, all we can do is to wait in the hope that a better feeling will some day arise. Love is not to be compelled, hired, or bought. What, however, is bitter beyond bearing is the thought that the Americans not only do not like us, but do not even know that we like them."

Further on this same article refers to the January number of "Blackwood," in which "a very interesting account is given of the spirit of ill-feeling towards England which is inculcated in the minds of the children of the States." The school histories, it appears, are all wrong in spirit if not in fact, and if the Americans were as anxious as the

English are "to forgive and forget that civil war [of 1776] they would surely not try to keep open these old sores."

But suppose America were willing to accede to "Blackwood's" modest request and expurgate all reference to the Revolution (or Rebellion) of '76, the war of 1812, and various other annoying items of so-called history, and agree that hereafter we would teach our children of England's attitude to America from the more reliable pages of "Blackwood" alone, would that be deemed a satisfactory and sufficient concession? In view of this suggestion it might be well to ascertain what would be the nature and scope of this new "Blackwood's History of the United States." And let me say at the outset of the inquiry that in awarding the palm to "Blackwood," I would not make any invidious distinctions and claim that a "Blackwood's History of the United States" would be entitled to any higher authority as a school text-book than a "Saturday Review History" or a "London Times History," or a "—— History," in which blank almost any other English journal (baring only a few of what "Blackwood" calls "not very creditable exceptions,") may fill in its own name if jealous of the distinction to be conferred upon a rival. Indeed, there is no room for jealousy at all, for, if needs be, we can make a composite history, as those clever photographers make a composite head by photographing on a single plate any number of separate heads, one on top of the other, and the lines of the whole are taken to represent the typical head of the race. What a Yankee we would get by such a process! But that is a task for some clever Briton to work out; it is quite beyond my meagre powers. If I can successfully show the American as "Blackwood" saw him from 1860 to 1866, and as the "Spectator" sees him now, I believe we will find him quite composite enough to satisfy our thirst for knowledge in this direction. If my humble effort to provide suitable instruction for the children of

America meets with the approval of "Blackwood" and the "Spectator" it will be an easy matter to secure its introduction to our public schools, and in the meantime I will take from my own son the text-book that is poisoning his mind and give him in place thereof a copy of this first edition of "Blackwood's History of the United States," instanter. And now to our ideal history!

In January, 1862, we are told that "all American history is written to prove, not that Americans have performed great actions, but that their actions were great because they were performed by Americans."* In America, "the popular idols have been manufactured, generally, of the very coarsest and commonest clay; and, even when permitted to remain on their pedestals, they are objects, at least, as much of ridicule as of admiration."† The people of the North, generally, are referred to as "savage abolitionists," or "fanatic Unionists," or collectively as a "gibbering mob." "Blackwood's" estimate of public men is discriminating, as might be expected. Grant "cannot be set beside McClellan, in generalship, without wronging McClellan." Sherman is "a grissly fanatic," Stanton "a presumptious fanatic," Capt. Wilkes "an impudent pirate," Mr. Seward's State Papers are "inflated nonsense," and so on through the long list of men made prominent by the war. The only Northern man mentioned with approval by "Blackwood," from 1860 to 1865, was General McClellan, and this favorable opinion was not made manifest until McClellan had received the Democratic nomination for the Presidency. He is, however, rather reproved for a want of the nerve of a Napoleon, or a Cromwell, in that after Antietam he did not "conclude an armistice with Lee, march on Washington, hurl from their seats the clique that burlesqued a government, * * * and seize the loose reins of

* Vol. 91, p. 123. † Vol. 96, p. 619.

empire."* Certainly, "Blackwood" had here the satisfaction of shattering one of America's "clay idols," for praise of such a character and from such a source was death to its object.

The editor of "Blackwood" sees in the defeat of the Federal armies simply "the exposure of the empty pretensions of a bully," and he declares that "we cannot even pretend to keep our countenance when the exploits of the Grand Army of the Potomac are filling all Europe with inextinguishable laughter," and he knows "not whether to pity most the officers who lead such men, or the men who are led by such officers."† In January, 1862, "Englishmen are unable to see anything peculiarly tragical in the fact that half-a-million men have been brought together in arms to hurl big words at each other across a river."‡

The "Spectator" tells us that "the ordinary untraveled American has clearly never realized that the old country looks with intense pride and sympathy on the splendid daughter-State," which only goes to prove how very ordinary and untraveled the most of us are, and how difficult it is for us to keep pace with the changing views of the step-mother-country.

In January, 1862, the editor asks, "What despotism has displayed so little moderation in prosperity, so little dignity in adversity, less self control, less wisdom in council, less courage in the field?"§

In April, 1862, we are told that Americans "do not demand our respect because of their achievements in art, or in literature, or in science, or philosophy. They can make no pretence to the no less real, though less beneficent, reputation of having proved themselves a great military power. Their boast is that they are prosperous and free," but "the principal result of American freedom on the char-

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* Vol. 96, p. 640. † Vol. 90, pp. 395, 396. ‡ Vol. 91, p. 118.
§ Vol. 91, p. 121.

acter of the American people in their foreign relations has hitherto been arrogance, intolerance, and aggression."*

Matters have not improved apparently by May, 1863, for our system is then branded as one "which has for years been the most corrupt ever known, and the inability of which to produce any kind of political merit is one of the wonders of the world."†

It is as bad, or worse, in November, 1863, when we are informed that we are "a nation whose conduct of the war has never been marked by a single generous deviation."‡

In December, 1863, we learn that "Europe is so accustomed to Federal mendacity and exaggeration, so convinced of Federal unscrupulousness, that the construction put on a dubious telegram is not generally such as can greatly benefit the Northern cause."§ The Psalmist said, "I have said in my haste all men are liars!" How much more delicate is the touch of "Blackwood."

In November, 1864, the "truculence" of the North is mourned over, and the editor finds it "easy to understand why the majority of the people of the North approve the conduct of the war, if we admit sorrowfully that the base temptations of gain and of gratified rancor may be too strong for ordinary consciences."‖ Of course, any one would sympathize with "Blackwood" in such a sorrow as this.

"Cornelius O'Dowd," as late as January, 1865, is of the opinion that the entire civil war was gotten up as a spectacle for the delectation of Europe, and he is convinced that if Europe had refused to report the affair or comment upon it "the combatants would have been chewing the cud of peace together two years since."¶ To an Englishman such cruelty may seem wit. I have called attention elsewhere to the fact that one year later the "O'Dowd" changed his

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* Vol. 91, p. 535. † Vol. 93, p. 636. ‡ Vol. 94, p. 641.
§ Vol. 94, p. 752. ‖ Vol. 96, p. 644. ¶ Vol. 97, p. 59.

mind, or at least changed his pen to meet altered conditions.

The "Spectator" asks, "What can we do to make the Americans feel more kindly towards us?" and believes the answer is "by getting them to realize what we feel towards them." But, may I ask, when are we to take a census of England's feeling towards America? When we are in trouble and they are not, or when they are in trouble and we are not?

England made little attempt to conceal her joy in the apparent downfall of the Republic. In October, 1861, "Blackwood" exclaims:

"And the venerable Lincoln, the respectable Seward, the raving editors, the gibbering mob, and the swift-footed armies of Bull's Run, are no malicious tricks of fortune, played off on an unwary nation, but are all of them the legitimate offspring of the Great Republic," and the writer was "glad," too, "that the end of the Union seems more likely to be ridiculous than terrible."*

In January, 1862, we are further informed that "Blackwood" did "not desire above all things that the struggle should be at once concluded, no matter how; because a conclusion which would leave the South at the mercy of a vindictive, unfair, and ungenerous enemy would gratify nobody. We do not lament over the unexampled display of weakness made by the Great Republic, because we knew that such weakness existed, and it was not for the interest of truth nor of the world that it should any longer be disguised, or allowed to vaunt itself as matchless force."† The writer is clearly satisfied "in the dissolution of a system that had become rotten and offensive while yet it preserved the appearance of life."‡ "But the secession of the South is not the only nor the greatest peril that threatens the Republic. There is an Abolition Party that is hostile to

*Vol. 90, p. 396. †Vol. 91, p. 118. ‡*Id.*, p. 123.

Union; there is a Union Party that is hostile to Abolition; and though these discordant elements have hitherto been held together by the common tie of hatred of the South, yet they threaten speedily to start asunder. Nor will the North be split by party conflicts alone; territorial differences are likely to cause further dismemberment."*

In the light of history we may see how much the wish was father to the thought.

In September the editor sees "daily more reason to believe that a nation which has all the will to dictate to others is losing the power which it would be certain to misuse."†

"Recent events," a reviewer exclaims in December, 1862, "by weakening the American States, and discrediting the American principles of government, have turned the tables very much in our favor."‡

In January, 1863, no concealment is attempted, but it is boldly proclaimed that "every person who reflects on the matter must be aware that it is the interest of all nations, but especially of England, to have more than one great republic upon the American continent, as the United States were fast becoming such a nuisance in the republic of nations, that if by any accident they should succeed in their war of subjugation, their insolence and arrogance would be more intolerable than ever."§

In November, 1863, the editor exclaims "that the South should achieve its independence single-handed, and by its own efforts, and by the further disruption of the Northern tyranny, is what would be best for itself *and for us.* * * * But it will matter a great deal to us whether there is one great bullying power always menacing us through Canada, or several smaller powers, with any one of which Canada herself would be competent to deal." ||

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* *Id.*, p. 129. † Vol. 92, p. 387. ‡ Vol. 92, p. 710.
§ Vol. 93, p. 25. || Vol. 93, p. 651.

From all this it is entirely clear that the writer or writers of those words *did* rejoice in the disruption of the Union, were anxious that the conflict should be prolonged until the parties were exhausted, and that the secession of the South should be followed by further dismemberment, not for the benefit of the Southern Confederacy, but to serve the selfish interests of the British Empire.

Yet the "Spectator" tells us that "the man who gloated over the notion of America's ruin would be hissed as a traitor to the race."

During our Civil War England did not actively befriend the South while venting her enmity on the North. She was not satisfied that the South was right, while very certain that the North was wrong. "Blackwood" did "not profess to feel sentimentally towards the South any more than towards the North."* It was not a question of sentiment but of *business*. She was not anxious to claim kinship with either party, "but if we must have brothers," the reviewer exclaims, "let them rather be those who have achieved without bullying and boasting, than those who have bullied and boasted without achieving."†

But words are proverbially cheap, at best. What would England *do* for the South? Nothing! Absolutely nothing, if English skins were to be risked. In January, 1862, "Blackwood" was inclined to immediately consider "the recognition of the Southern Confederacy and the raising of the ineffectual blockade, *in conjunction with France*." ‡

In November, 1862, Mr. Gladstone was reported as willing to act as he believed it "as certain as any event yet future and contingent can be" that the South will be successful. § But the Cabinet was not a unit on this. Sir G. C. Lewis was doubtful as to the law, but the real trouble

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* Vol. 92, p. 385. † *Id.* ‡ Vol. 91, p. 129. § Vol. 92, p. 636.

undoubtedly was in attempting to calculate the profits of the enterprise, for we are plainly told in the same article that for England to act alone would be of very little benefit to the South, and "would give offence to the North, thus making an enemy without gaining a friend;" but, "if England, France *and Russia* would agree to undertake a joint mediation and, if necessary, intervention, they would render an important service to civilization, humanity and mankind at large."* As all the world knows now Russia declined to be made a catspaw for English greed, even under the guise of "civilization, humanity and mankind at large," and America has never forgotten the position taken in this instance by Russia *and by England.*

Notwithstanding Russia's desertion, "Blackwood," in November, 1863, was still inclined to join France and suggests that if "we should raise the blockade, relieve our starving population, and break up the political system which is a standing menace to us through the weak point, Canada, we shall be not only acting in consonance with right, but fulfilling an obvious duty to ourselves." Yet, a little fearful of such rashness, the writer hastens to qualify it by saying, "but we do not mean in this place to advocate immediate intervention in connection with France," and he adds that he did not "assert that all the ends indicated would be so gained."† The same uncertainty of the profits again causes hesitation.

So Great Britain and France never came to an agreement on the subject, but went their ways alone, the one to Mexico, the other to her shipyards, where she could turn out vessels to prey on American commerce with certain profit to herself and a minimum of risk, either financial or physical.

Has Great Britain forgotten the story of the *Alabama?*

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* Vol. 92, p. 646. † Vol. 94, p. 639.

A ship of war was builded in an English dock-yard, owned by a member of the English Parliament, manned by English sailors, and armed with English guns and munitions of war. It sailed from an English port, and in its whole career it never once entered a Confederate harbor. It burned and sank American shipping on every sea, and when at last it was sunk by the *Kearsarge* off the coast of France, an English yacht rescued the officers and part of the crew and carried them home to Great Britain. In 1860 America stood second among the nations in the carrying trade on the high seas; in 1865 her flag had disappeared from the ocean, and England, as the direct result of her piracy, had acquired what America had lost.

Does England think the money damages she paid has condoned the crime? Does she think America has forgotten?

Yet the "Spectator" tells us that "one of the most painful aspects of the present controversy has been the evidence afforded that Americans seem utterly unaware of the strong feeling of friendship felt here for their country."

It is odd, is it not?

It is well known that a large proportion of the people of Great Britain welcomed the idea of war with America over the matter of the *Trent* in 1861, and when the difficulty bid fair to be settled through diplomatic channels, a result which was caused by the influence of Prince Albert, the pure, and by the attitude of the common people of England who held in check their aristocratic rulers, the editor of "Blackwood" vented his chagrin in January, 1862, as follows:

"Nor do we, as a people, desire to accept any slight, shifty pretence of reparation for the recent ruffianly outrage, which may be held by some among us, to whom honor is but a fantastic name, to absolve us from the necessity of war; for previous insults from the same quarter still

remain unatoned for, and now that we have, at enormous cost and with patient and self-denying efforts, amassed an armament which adequately represents the power of England, we should have no objection to employ it in administering a sharp chastisement to the vainglorious people who have so often cheaply defied us. Sentiments, conciliatory even to disgrace, are frequently ascribed to us; yet they have no real origin in the heart of the nation. It would be impossible for the national vanity of America, hungry as it is, to extract any nourishment from what is expressed on the subject in the conversation of intelligent Englishmen."*

But it was not, I think, the fact alone that England had an "adequate armament" that made our friends so full of fight, but rather, and in the main, because we were already engaged with an antagonist much more vigorous and stalwart than we liked.

When, in 1863, America objected to British "neutrality," as shown in the case of the *Alabama* and her sister ships, and about to be repeated on a more extensive scale, "Blackwood" is much less fierce, and, while not suggesting war, urges the government to pay no attention to the demands of America, as the Federal Government was not sincere in its "menace of war," as "its indignation is always simulated to serve some base purpose," and that the whole trouble was caused by "that lying, braggart press that would be a disgrace to any country but America."†

As this protest of the Federal Government was made after "Gettysburg" had passed into history, and after the creation of the iron-clad fleet which left the ports of England helpless and her obsolete navy powerless, the vessels in question never were permitted to make war upon what was left of American commerce.

It is both interesting and instructive after this to find

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* Vol. 91, p. 118. † Vol. 94, p. 645.

that in 1866 Blackwood had learned that "a war between Great Britain and the United States would be the most odious war in which either people could be engaged."*

I am inclined to think that this statement contains a half-truth at least, provided always that America did not have her hands full elsewhere.

The "Spectator," in October, 1895, makes this statement:

"Even if the cannon were ready to fire, and the gunner's hand on the lever, there would be in the end no war, for on each side of the Atlantic there are millions of quiet, plain, undemonstrative men who would forbid the outrage and declare that, come what may, humiliation or no humiliation, right or wrong, there should be no war."

This paragraph is reprinted on January 25, 1896, and the editor ventures to think that it was not regarded in London "as in the least overstrained." I can neither answer for London nor Edinburgh, but in America I am sure this paragraph will be deemed very badly overstrained. Though we wish peace with all nations, I am sure that questions of "right or wrong" will have *all* to do with the decisions of America, be the results what they may.

In 1862 "Blackwood" declares that "nobody in private life talks about 'our transatlantic kinsman'—nobody desires to claim peculiar ties with the performers in the absurd and barbarous dances which the American nation executes round its idols of the hour, any more than with the worshippers of Mumbo Jumbo. * * * Nor do we see anything in the circumstance that America was first colonized from our own shores, to induce us to treat with extraordinary indulgence the composite population with whose manners, customs and character we have so little in common."† "A people who have derived the principal

* Vol. 100, p. 167. † Vol. 91, p. 118.

accessions to their numbers from the scum of Europe."* In another place we are referred to as the "hybrid North."† And, again, it is not thought "judicious to be always speaking of the Americans as our brothers and cousins, because nobody thinks of them so."‡ "People write seriously about our American cousins who are not ambitious of claiming Cousin Butler, or Cousin Lincoln, or Cousin Ward Beecher, or Cousin Sumner, as their kin, and, if not those, why so affectionate to the people who seem to regard these as their most famous men?"§ "Why should we conceal our contempt when absurdities far more mischievous, and on an immensely extended scale, are committed by those whom twaddling sentimentalists term 'our American cousins?'"‖

In May, 1863, in a review of "American State Papers," a communication from Mr. Seward to Mr. Adams is quoted, in which the former says, under date of May 21, 1861, Great Britain "will consider what position she will hold when she shall have forever lost the sympathies and affections of the only nation on whose sympathies and affections she has a natural claim." The writer in "Blackwood" has described these state papers as both "comical" and "humorous," and declares with fine wit that this "ominous and prophetic warning is a sad picture of the British Pythias abandoned by the American Damon, and left alone and friendless in the world." How ominous and prophetic this warning was the editor of "Blackwood" did not wait long to learn, and in July, 1866, when the poor relation had again become rich, the same journal, with amazing effrontery, complacently acknowledges that while "we may not always like the Americans, we can never forget that they are our kindred."¶ And in August of the same year "Cornelius O'Dowd" urges us to "grasp manfully and warmly the hand that is outstretched to you, and let the

* Vol. 91, p. 121. † Vol. 94, p. 647. ‡ Vol. 93, p. 384.
§ Vol. 94, p. 648. ‖ Vol. 91, p. 118. ¶ Vol. 99, p. 17.

feeling between the two nations be—not the conventional amity of Cabinets, but the hearty tone and affection of two kindred peoples," and Mr. O'Dowd naively acknowledges that it is precisely because of "the condition of Europe, and the threatening attitude of France" that makes him willing and anxious to claim relationship with America, and to secure for England "one ally who is above being subsidized and not above being esteemed," and because also, England has "neither true friend nor well-wisher on the continent of Europe." He refers to the "marvelous development of the Great Republic, its might, its majesty and its wealth, its greatness in the present and its still grander future," and "would draw closer to those who, once our narrow squabbles are forgotten, could not but regard the old country with affection, and would never stand coldly by to see her assailed by overwhelming odds, or crushed beneath the united forces of despotism."* Is it conceivable that this is the same journal which in January, 1862, asserts that "had the Americans been permitted to see the true reflections of our minds—had they been aware of the extent and depth of the contempt with which we have regarded their doings—it could scarcely have failed to modify their conduct of the Civil War"?† Or is this the country, "the spoiled child Democracy," which, "after playing strange pranks before high heaven, and figuring in odd and unexpected disguises, dies as surely from lack of vitality as the oldest of worn-out despotisms" which is so graphically and generously described by "Blackwood" in October, 1861?‡

When we are told by the "Spectator," on January 25, 1896, that the English school children are taught that "the United States is not and never can be in reality a foreign country, nor an American a foreigner," and that "they and we are one flesh," the conclusion is forced upon us that the

* Vol. 99, pp. 240, 242, 243. † Vol. 91, p. 120. ‡ Vol. 90, p. 307.

education of the average English editor has been sorely neglected in the past.

Abraham Lincoln was naturally an object of interest to the English editor during our Civil War, and the estimation in which he was held by "Blackwood" is most luminously portrayed. Read this passage from the number for January, 1862:

"But to what country shall we look for hereditary princes less fit to wield the destinies of nations than the obscure and commonplace man whose decrees now stand in the place of public law in the North? It may be said that at least he is the choice of the nation. But was he chosen by the intelligence of the nation? Or, to take lower ground, does he represent the material interests and responsibilities of the nation? Not at all; he is the choice of the numerical majority of a people who have derived the principal accessions to their numbers from the scum of Europe. Every four years the Constitution is in travail—all mankind are invited, or rather commanded, to watch the interesting event—all is convulsion—the throes of the mountain are prodigious, and the latest result is—Mr. Abraham Lincoln. The great achievement in self-government of this vaunted democracy, which we have been so loudly and arrogantly called on to admire, is, to drag from his proper obscurity an ex-rail-splitter and country attorney, and to place what it calls its liberties at his august disposal. No country furnishes so many examples as England of great men who have risen from humble beginnings. But it would have been impossible for him, or any of his Cabinet, to have emerged, under British institutions, from the mediocrity to which nature had condemned them, and from which pure democracy alone was capable of rescuing them. Are the best Americans willing to accept Mr. Abraham Lincoln and Mr. W. H. Seward as their best men? If not, can they substitute better men? If they cannot, what other

proof is needed of the inefficacy of their boasted institutions? An imbecile executive above, a restless, purposeless multitude below, linked together like a kite tied to a balloon and drifting at the mercy of the air currents, while respectability, moderation and sense are pushed aside, or dragged helplessly along,—such is the spectacle presented, in the first storm, by the model Republic. A gallant army, whose energies have been displayed chiefly in flight—a free country, whose judges are over-looked by sentries—disinterested patriotism, that requires to be bribed with eight per cent.—a united nation, where the elements of dissolution are rife—a practical people, who are spending more than they possess for an object which they cannot define,—such are a few of the results of those remarkable institutions that have been recommended for our imitation as immense improvements on our own.

"Of course we do not blame Mr. Lincoln for being President. But we venture to pity him. No man is more unfortunate than he who is in a conspicuous position for which he is manifestly unfit. What had this ill-starred man done to merit such a visitation as to be set at the head of an unruly nation that is going to pieces in convulsions? * * * He is said to have exhibited considerable dexterity and muscular power in the splitting of rails. * * * In his public compositions he is distinguished chiefly for a disregard of grammar and an infatuated fondness for metaphor. He gets laboriously on to a figure of speech, which generally runs away with him, and, after exhibiting him in various eccentric postures, leaves him sprawling in an attitude highly unbecoming in the President of a great Republic."*

In September, 1862, "Blackwood" begins "to doubt the shrewdness and common sense of a people who are content to follow with senseless shouting the pigmy impos-

* Vol. 91, pp. 121–122.

tors who are conducting them into such frightful quagmires."*

In November, 1862, the President's emancipation proclamation is described as "a monstrous, reckless and devilish project," and as "an effort to paralyze the victorious armies of the South by letting loose upon their hearths and homes the lust and savagery of four million negroes," and "it proves what every one in this country was loth to believe, that rather than let the Southern States be independent, rather than lose their trade and custom, the North would league itself with Beelzebub, and seek to make a hell of half a continent. In return this atrocious act justifies the South in hoisting the black flag and proclaiming a war without quarter against the Yankee hosts."† This proclamation is further characterized as "the most atrocious act of war-policy which has ever been adopted by a civilized state." And Mr. Lincoln "had previously, with the general concurrence of the people, inaugurated a dictatorship, abolished liberty, and installed force as the supreme power in the States which had still adhered to the Union."‡

In January, 1863, it is stated that "there is no personal sacrifice that the people of the South are not prepared to make rather than again trust their independence, private fortunes, and liberty, to a paper constitution, guaranteed only by the oaths of such men as Sumner and Lincoln, both doubly forsworn."§ The same article describes the United States as "merely the military despotism of a portion of the States, striving under the dictatorship of an insignificant lawyer to crush out the freedom of the rest."‖

In November, 1863, the Lincoln government is described as "the purest despotism now existing, with the exception, perhaps, of some African system in regions

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* Vol. 92, p. 387. † Vol. 92, p. 636. ‡ *Id.*, p. 640.
§ Vol. 93, p. 28. ‖ *Id.*, p. 29.

to which Speke and Grant have failed to penetrate,"* In December we are told that "the Washington Cabinet and its military adherents are conspicuous only for imbecile pretension, and none but the strongest evidence can be received as proof that they have blundered into wisdom or stumbled on success."†

In November, 1864, Mr. Lincoln was said to have "nothing except the honesty of purpose generally ascribed to him to distinguish him from the swarm of politicians and generals that have been engendered by the corruption of the defunct Union."‡ In the same article it is presumed "that Mr. Lincoln would not imagine that either his previous occupation as a rail-splitter, or the fact of his election as President, could of itself qualify him for delivering grave opinions on extensive military combinations."§ And again we are told that "the re-election of Lincoln would mean that the sentiments of the Northern people are fitly represented in him, his ministers, and generals—that, for the sake of producing a hideous caricature of their former partnerships in government, they are ready to sanction more cruelties in the South—more peculation, corruption, and tyranny in the North—and to inspire civilized nations with more horror and disgust for the frenzied acts in which they express devotion to their political Moloch."‖

To say the least, it seems odd, after all this, to learn from "Blackwood," in November, 1866, after the Union was restored and America more powerful than ever, that Abraham Lincoln, though "sometimes doubtful of the result, was never doubtful of his duty," that "in his character there was no malice, no animosity, no *arrière pensée*," that amidst fierce passion "he was calm, equable, patient and merciful," that "this good and merciful man was good and

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* Vol. 94, p. 649. † Vol. 94, p. 752. ‡ Vol. 96, p. 619.
§ *Id.* p. 624. ‖ *Id.*, p. 643.

merciful to the end," and that "the pistol of a fanatic deprived the Southern people of a friend and the Northern people of a man after their own heart, who, through good and ill fortune had fought their fight with a humble, contrite, and an honest spirit, and given them the victories for which they had hungered and thirsted for four miserable years."*

Too late! Too late!

"*Sic semper tyrannis*," shouted Wilkes Booth, as he dropped his smoking pistol on that fateful night. Fanatic! Aye! Say you so? But who taught him these words, Messieurs Editors?

Is this the same Abraham Lincoln for whom "Blackwood" did not feel "the slightest admiration or respect" in November, 1863? Is this the "Cousin Lincoln" with whom England would not care to claim kinship? Is this the "insignificant lawyer," the "country attorney," the "imbecile executive," the "ex-rail-splitter," "dragged from his proper obscurity" by the votes of the emigrated "scum of Europe?"

And when we are told in the "Spectator" that "the Anglo-Saxon race can never 'give its heart its rights' unless the two great branches are brought into harmony, and America can claim a share in the glory of Nelson and Scott, while we take ours in Washington and Lincoln," I am compelled to ask what share can England demand in the fame of Abraham Lincoln, when we are told that "it would have been impossible for him to have emerged, under British institutions, from the mediocrity to which nature had condemned him, and from which pure democracy alone was capable of rescuing him."?

"Punch" is, I believe, presumed by courtesy to be both humorous and liberal in its tone. As an example of both I will quote a few lines from its number of December 10,

* Vol. 100, pp 635, 636.

1864, taken from what it is pleased to call "President Lincoln's Inaugural Speech :"*

"Well, we've done it, gentlemen. Bully for us. Cowhided the copperheads considerable. *Non nobis*, of course, but still I reckon we have had a hand in the glory, some. That reminds me of the Old World story about the Hand of Glory, which I take to have been the limb of a gentleman who had been justified on the gallows, and which the witches turned into a patent moderator lamp, as would lead a burglar safe into any domicile which he might wish to plunder. We ain't burglars, quite t'other, but I fancy that if Uli Grant could get hold of that kind and description of thing to help him into Richmond, he'd not be so un-Christian proud as to refuse the hand of a malefactor. (*Right, right!*) Well, right or left hand, that's no odds, gentlemen. (*Laughter.*) Now, I am sovereign of the sovereign people of this great and united republic for four years next ensuing the date hereof, as I used to say when I was a lawyer. (*You are! Bully for you!*) Yes, gentleman, but you must do something more than bully for me, you must fight for me, if you please, and whether you please or not. As the old joke says,"——

But that is sufficient. The stupidity of the whole is as marked as its malice. Doubtless the mass of English readers have never realized that it was a burlesque, any more than they were able to discover its wit.

Listen! *This* is the conclusion of Abraham Lincoln's address over which English wit would thus make merry.

"Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as

* Vol. 47, p. 237.

was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

America to-day is still willing "to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Why then have I written thus? I answer, that I may aid in bringing about a kindlier feeling between England and America! To the thoughtless I may appear to follow strange paths to such an end. But "stay a little." I have spoken truth, *because* it is truth, for that and that alone, and truth injures no honest cause, nor is it feared by any honest man, nor by any sincere people. I would welcome a hearty, friendly alliance between England and America, but such an alliance can be neither just nor lasting if founded upon dishonesty and fraud; and is heartless flattery less dishonest than undeserved detraction? The clouds can only pass away when these two nations clearly realize and frankly acknowledge the errors of the past.

It is true the attitude of England during our Civil War renders the work of fostering a more kindly feeling between the nations difficult, but to accomplish this end by ignoring the past is to attempt the impossible. England was warned of this again and again by her most faithful friends. On June 30, 1863, John Bright, standing in the House of Commons, in opposing a motion which meant war with America, spoke these words:

"I have not said a word with regard to what may

happen to England if we go into war with the United States. But when the troubles in America are over—be they ended by the restoration of the Union, or by separation—that great and free people, the most instructed in the world, will have a wound in their hearts by your act which a century may not heal; and the posterity of some of those who now hear my voice may look back with amazement, and I will say with lamentation, at the course which was taken by the honorable and learned gentleman, and by such honorable Members as may choose to follow his leading. ['No! No!'] I suppose the honorable gentlemen who cry 'No!' will admit that we sometimes suffer from the errors of our ancestors. There are few persons who will not admit that, if their fathers had been wiser, their children would have been happier."*

Do the honorable gentlemen still cry "No! No!"?

I have placed a fragment from the last sentence of the "Spectator" article upon my title page: "Still, as we have said, the truth will some day leak out, and then——"

Let the honest heart of Great Britain finish the sentence!

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* Speeches of John Bright, Vol. 1, p. 282.

PHILADELPHIA, February 22, 1896.

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