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Liberty or Slavery?

DANIEL O'CONNELL

OR

AMERICAN SLAVERY.

REPLY TO O'CONNELL

BY

HON. S. P. CHASE.

CHRONICLE PRINT,
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INTRODUCTORY.

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The famous letter of Daniel O'Connell on American Slavery, addressed in 1843 to a Committee of the Cincinnati Irish Repeal Association, who had rebuked him for his Anti-Slavery opinions, has recently been reproduced by the Cincinnati *Catholic Telegraph*. "The original document," says the *Telegraph*, "has been concealed for twenty years by a well known Democrat, to whom we are indebted for it. We invite our Irish Catholic brethren to read it attentively; and if any one wishes to see the manuscript, which is beautifully written, and the signature of O'Connell, they can be accommodated at the office of the *Telegraph*."

This bold, manly, and indignant protest of the great Irish Orator against the cruel injustice of American Slavery, and his eloquent reassertion of the principles of the Declaration of Independence, are opportunely reproduced in the present crisis of our affairs. The glowing words of the Liberator will be read with renewed interest by all lovers of human freedom, and not without increased admiration for that magnanimous soul which, in its love of Liberty, overleaped all barriers of nationality, and embraced all tribes and races of mankind.

It is also fitting that the admirable letter to the National Irish Repeal Association, written by the present distinguished Secretary of the Treasury, should be republished as a companion-piece to the great letter of O'Connell. Strange as it may now seem, the Cincinnati Irish Repeal Association refused to O'Connell's letter the common courtesy of reception. More consistent "friends of Liberty, Ireland, and Repeal" in Cincinnati, feeling the injustice of that act, sought to vindicate, so far as possible, before the Irish Liberators, American love of Liberty and exact justice to all men, irrespective of race or color, by returning an appropriate reply to O'Connell's letter. The duty of preparing that reply was entrusted to Governor Chase. How well he discharged that duty, which to him was a "labor of love," is attested by the fact that his words are as fresh and opportune to-day as they were twenty years ago. Faithful to the logical consequences of his principles, he affirmed then what is equally true to-day:

"Differences of religious creed or of national origin are not suffered to divide the ranks of Anti-Slavery men. We prefer to contend with each other, Protestants and Catholics, native-born with foreign-born, in honest zeal for the LIBERTY OF ALL AND THE RIGHTS OF ALL."

LETTER OF DANIEL O'CONNELL

ON

AMERICAN SLAVERY.

The Committee to whom the address from the Cincinnati Irish Repeal Association, on the subject of Negro Slavery in the United States of America, was referred, have agreed to the following report:

To D. T. DISNEY, Esq., Corresponding Secretary, W. H. HUNTER, Esq., Vice President, and the Executive Committee of the Cincinnati Irish Repeal Association.

CORN EXCHANGE ROOMS, DUBLIN, Oct. 11, 1843.

Gentlemen:

We have read, with the deepest affliction, not unmixed with some surprise and much indignation, your detailed and anxious vindication of the most hideous crime that has ever stained humanity—the slavery of men of color in the United States of America. We are lost in utter amazement at the perversion of mind and depravity of heart which your address evinces. How can the generous, the charitable, the humane, the noble emotions of the Irish heart, have become extinct among you? How can your nature be so totally changed as that you should become the apologists and advocates of that execrable system which makes man the property of his fellow-man—destroying the foundation of all moral and social virtues—condemns to ignorance, immorality, and irreligion, millions of our fellow-creatures—renders the slave hopeless of relief, and perpetuates oppression by law; and, in the name of what you call a Constitution!

It was not in Ireland you learned this cruelty. Your mothers were gentle, kind, and humane. Their bosoms overflowed with the honey of human charity. Your sisters are, probably, many of them still among us, and participate in all that is good and benevolent in sentiment and action. How, then, can you be so depraved? How can your souls have become stained with a darkness blacker than the negro's skin? You say you have no pecuniary interest in negro Slavery. Would that you had! for it might be some palliation of your crime! but, alas! you have inflicted upon us the horror of beholding you the volunteer advocates of despotism, in its most frightful state; of Slavery, in its most loathsome and unrelenting form.

We were, unhappily, prepared to expect some fearful exhibition of this description. There has been a testimony borne against the Irish, by birth or descent, in America, by a person fully informed as to the facts, and incapable of the slightest misrepresentation; a noble of nature more than of titled birth; a man gifted with the highest order of talent and the most generous emotions of the heart—the great, the good Lord Morpeth—he who, in the House of Commons, boldly asserted the superior social morality of the poorer classes of the Irish over any other people—he, the best friend of any of the Saxon race that Ireland and the Irish ever knew—he, amid the congregated thousands, at Exeter Hall, in London, mournfully, but firmly, denounced the Irish in America as being among the worst enemies of the negro slaves and other men of color.

It is, therefore, our solemn and sacred duty to warn you, in words already used, and much misunderstood by you—"to come out of her"—not thereby meaning to ask you to come out of America, but out of the councils of the iniquitous, and out of the congregation of the wicked, who consider man a chattel and a property, and liberty an inconvenience. Yes. We tell you to come out of such assemblages; but we did not and do not invite you to return to Ireland. The volunteer defenders of Slavery, surrounded by one thousand crimes, would find neither sympathy nor support among native, uncontaminated Irishmen.

Your advocacy of Slavery is founded upon a gross error. You take for granted that man can be the property of his fellow-man. You speak in terms of indignation of those who would deprive white men of their "property," and thereby render themselves capable of supporting their families in affluence. You forget the other side of the picture. You have neither sorrow nor sympathy for the sufferings of those who are iniquitously compelled to labor for the affluence of others; those who work without wages—who toil without recompense—who spend their lives in procuring for others the splendor and wealth in which they do not participate.

You totally forget the sufferings of the wretched black men, who are deprived of their all without any compensation or redress. If you, yourselves, all of you—or if

any one of you were, without crime or offence committed by you, handed over into perpetual slavery; if you were compelled to work from sunrise to sunset without wages, supplied only with such coarse food and raiment as would keep you in working order; if, when your "owner" fell into debt, you were sold to pay his debts, not your own; if it were made a crime to teach you to read and to write; if you were liable to be separated, in the distribution of assets, from your wives and your children; if you (above all) were to fall into the hands of a brutal master—and you condescended to admit that there are some brutal masters in America—if, among all these circumstances, some friendly spirits of a more generous order were desirous to give liberty to you and your families—with what ineffable disgust would not you laugh to scorn those who should traduce the generous spirits who would relieve you. And you now, pseudo-Irishmen—shame upon you!—have traduced and vilified the Abolitionists of North America!

But, you came forward with a justification, forsooth! You say that the Constitution of America prohibits the abolition of Slavery. Paltry and miserable subterfuge! The Constitution in America is founded upon the Declaration of Independence. That Declaration published to the world its glorious principles; that Charter of your Freedom contained these emphatic words:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and the conclusion of that address is in these words:

"For the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

There is American honor for you! There is a profane allusion to the adorable Creator.

Recollect that the Declaration does not limit the equality of man, or the rights to life and liberty to the white, to the brown, or to the copper-colored races. It includes all races. It excludes none.

We do not deign to argue with you on the terms of the American Constitution, and yet we cannot help asserting that, in that Constitution, the word "Slavery," or "Slave," is not to be found. There are, indeed, the words "persons bound to labor," but it is not said how bound. And a constitutional lawyer or judge, construing the American Constitution with a reference to the Declaration of Independence, which is its basis, would not hesitate to decide that "bound to labor" ought, in a court of justice, to mean, "bound by contract to labor;" and should not be held to imply "forced or compelled to labor," in the absence of all contract, and for the exclusive benefit of others.

However, we repeat that we do not deign to argue this point with you, as we proclaim to the world our conviction that no constitutional law can create or sanction Slavery. Slavery is repugnant to the first principles of society; but it is enough for us to say, as regards Americans, that it is utterly repugnant to that declaration of the equality of all men, and to the inalienable right of all men to life and liberty. To this Declaration the free citizens of the United States have, in the persons of their ancestors, solemnly pledged their "SACRED HONOR."

We shall at once show you how that "sacred honor" is basely violated, and also demonstrate how equally devoid of candor your address is, inasmuch as you rely on the Constitution of the United States as precluding the abolition of Slavery, while you totally omit all mention of one District, which the constitutional law alleged by you does not reach. We mean the District of Columbia.

In the District of Columbia there is no constitutional law to prevent the Congress from totally abolishing Slavery within that District. Your Capitol is there. The Temple of American Freedom is there. The Hall of your Republican Representatives—the Hall of your Republican Senators—the National Palace of your Republican President is there—and Slavery is there, too, in its most revolting form! The slave-trade is there—the most disgusting traffic in human beings is there; human flesh is bought and sold like swine in the pig market—aye, in your Capital—your Washington! Yes. Let Americans be as proud as they please, this black spot is on their escutcheon. Even under the shade of the Temple of their Constitution, the man of color crawls a slave, and the tawny American stalks a tyrant.

The cruelty of the slave principle rests not there—it goes much further. The poor and paltry privilege even of prayer is denied them; and you, even *you*, pseudo-Irishmen! are the advocates and vindicators of such a system. What! would not you, *at least*, insist that their groans should be heard!

It is carried still further. Even the free-born white Americans are not allowed to petition upon any subject including the question of Slavery; or, at least, no such petition can be read aloud or printed. And, although the Congress is entitled to abolish Slavery in Columbia, the door for petition, praying that abolition, is closed without the power of being opened.

We really think that men who came from generous and warm-hearted Ireland should shrink into nonentity rather than become the advocates and defenders of the system of Slavery. But we trust that the voice of indignant Ireland will scatter them, and prevent them from repeating such a crime.

In another point of view, your address is, if possible, more culpable. You state that before the Abolitionists proclaimed their wish to have Slavery abolished, several slaveholding States were preparing for the gradual emancipation of their negroes, and that humane individuals in other States were about to adopt similar measures.

We utterly deny your assertion, and we defy you to show any single instance of preparatory steps taken by any State for the emancipation of negroes before the Abolition demand was raised. You violate truth in that assertion. There were no such preparations. It is a pure fiction, invented by slaveholders out of their unjust animosity to the Abolitionists. It is said that the fear of Abolition has rendered the slaveholders more strict, harsh, and cruel toward their wretched slaves, and that they would be more gentle and humane if they were not afraid of the Abolitionists. We repeat that this is not true, and is merely an attempt to cast blame on those who would coalesce to put an end to Negro Slavery.

It is in the same spirit that the criminal calumniates his prosecutor, and the felon reviles his accuser. It is, therefore, utterly untrue that the slaveholders have made the chains of the negro more heavy through any fear of abolition.

Yet if you tell the truth; if the fact be that the negro is made to suffer for the zeal of the Abolitionists; if he is treated with increased cruelty by reason of the taunt of the friends of abolition, then, indeed, the slaveholders must be a truly Satanic race. Their conduct, according to you, is diabolical. The Abolitionists commit an offence, and the unhappy negroes are punished. The Abolitionists violate the law of property, and the penalty of their crime is imposed upon the negro! Can anything be more repugnant to every idea of justice? Yet this is your statement.

We, on the other hand, utterly deny the truth of your allegations; and where we find you calumniate the slaveholder, we become their advocates against your calumny. You calumniate everybody—slaves, Abolitionists, and slaveholders—framers of Constitutions—makers of laws—everybody! The slaveholders are not favorites of ours, but we will do men justice, and will not permit you to impute an impossible crime to them.

You tell us, with an air of triumph, that public opinion in your country is the great law-giver. If it be so, how much does it enhance the guilt of your conduct, that you seek to turn public opinion against the slave and in favor of the slaveholder, that you laud the master as generous and humane, and disparage, as much as you can, the unhappy slave; instead of influencing, as Irishmen ought to do, the public mind in favor of the oppressed. You carry your exaggerations to a ludicrous pitch, denoting your utter ignorance of the history of the human race.

You say that "the negro is really inferior as a race; that Slavery has stamped its debasing influence upon the Africans; that between him and the white almost a century would be required to elevate the character of the one, and to destroy the antipathies of the other." You add—we use your own words—"The very odor of the negro is almost insufferable to the white; and however much humanity may lament it, we make no rash declaration when we say the two races cannot exist together on equal terms under our Government and our Institutions."

We quote this paragraph at full length, because it is replete with your mischievous errors and guilty mode of thinking.

In the first place, as to the odor of the negroes, we are quite aware that they have not as yet come to use much of the otto of roses or eau de cologne. But we implore of your fastidiousness to recollect that multitudes of the children of white men have negro women for their mothers; and that our British travellers complain in loud and bitter terms of the overpowering stench of stale tobacco spittle as the prevailing "odor" among the native free Americans. It would perhaps be better to check this nasal sensibility on both sides, on the part of the white as well as of blacks. But it is, indeed, deplorable that you should use a ludicrous assertion of that description as one of the inducements to prevent the abolition of Slavery. The negroes would certainly smell at least as sweet when free, as they now do, being slaves.

Your important allegation is, that the negroes are naturally an inferior race. That is a totally gratuitous assertion upon your part. In America you can have no opportunity of seeing the negro educated. On the contrary, in most of your States it is a crime—sacred Heaven!—a crime to educate even a free negro! How, then, can you judge of the negro race, when you see them despised and condemned by educated classes—reviled and looked down upon as inferior? The negro race has, naturally, some of the finest qualities. They are naturally gentle, generous, humane, and very grateful for kindness. They are as brave and as fearless as any other of the race of human beings; but the blessings of education are kept from them, and they are judged of, not as they would be with proper cultivation, but as they are rendered by cruel and debasing oppression. It is as old as the days of Homer, who truly asserts that

the day which sees a man a slave takes away half his worth. Slavery actually brutalizes human beings.

It is about sixty years ago when one of the Shieks, not far south of Fez, in Morocco, who was in the habit of accumulating white slaves, upon being strongly remonstrated with by a European Power, gave for his reply that, by his own experience, he found it quite manifest that white men were of an inferior race, intended by nature for slaves; and he produced his own brutalized white slaves to illustrate the truth of his assertion. And a case of an American, with a historic name—John Adams—is quite familiar. Some twenty-five years ago—not more—John Adams was the sole survivor of an American crew wrecked on the African coast. He was taken into the interior as the slave of an Arab chief. He was only for three years a slave, and the English and American Consuls having been informed of a white man's slavery, claimed him and obtained his liberation. In the short space of three years he had become completely brutalized; he had completely forgotten the English language, without having acquired the native tongue. He spoke a kind of gabble, as unintellectual as the dialects of most of your negro slaves; and many months elapsed before he recovered his former habits and ideas.

It is also a curious fact, as connected with America, that the children of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of other Europeans born in America, were for many years considered as a degraded and inferior class. Indeed it was admitted, as if it was an axiom, that the native-born American was in nothing equal to his European progenitor; and so far from the fact being disputed, many philosophic dissertations were published endeavoring to account for the alleged debasement. The only doubt was about the cause of it. "Nobody doubted," to use your own words, "that the native-born Americans were really an inferior race." Nobody dares to say so now, and nobody thinks it. Let it then be recollected that you have never seen the negro educated. An English traveller through Brazil, some few years ago, mentions having known a negro who was a priest, and who was a learned, pious, and exemplary man in his sacerdotal functions. We have been lately informed of two negroes being educated at the Propaganda and ordained priests—both having distinguished themselves in their scientific and theological course. The French papers say that one of them celebrated mass, and delivered a short but able sermon before Louis Philippe. It is believed they have gone out with the Right Rev. Dr. Baron on the African Mission.

We repeat, therefore, that to judge properly of the negro, you should see him educated and treated with the respect due to a fellow-creature—uninsulted by the filthy aristocracy of the skin, and untarnished to the eye of the white by any associations connected with the state of Slavery.

We next refer to your declaration that the two races, viz.: the black and white, cannot exist on equal terms under your Government and your Institutions. This is an extraordinary assertion to be made at the present day. You allude, indeed, to Antigua and Bermudas. But we will take you to where the experiment has been successfully made upon a large scale—namely, to Jamaica.

There the two races are on a perfect equality in point of law. The law does not recognize the slightest distinction between the races. You have borrowed the far greater part of your address from the cant phraseology which the West Indian slave-owners, and especially those of Jamaica, made use of before emancipation. They used to assert, as you do now, that abolition meant destruction; that to give freedom to the negro would be to pronounce the assassination of the whites; that the negro, as soon as free, would massacre their former owners, and destroy their wives and families. In short, your prophecies of the destructive effects of emancipation are but faint and foolish echoes of the prophetic apprehensions of the British slave-owners. They might, perhaps, have believed their own assertions, because the emancipation of the negroes was then an untried experiment. But you—you are deprived of any excuse for the reassertion of a disproved calumny.

The emancipation has taken place—the compensation given by England was not given to the negroes, who were the only persons that desired compensation. It was given to the so-called "owners." It was an additional wrong—an additional cause of irritation to the negroes; but, gracious Heaven! how nobly did that good and kindly race, the negroes—falsify the calumnious apprehensions of their task-masters! Was there one single murder consequent on the emancipation? Was there one riot—one tumult—even one assault? Was there one single white person injured, either in person or property? Was there any property spoiled or laid waste? The proportion of negroes in Jamaica to white men is as 300 to 60, or 80 per cent. Yet the most perfect tranquility has followed the emancipation. The criminal courts are almost unemployed; nine-tenths of the jails are empty and open; universal tranquility reigns. Although the landed proprietors have made use of the harshest Lindford power to exact the hardest terms by way of rent from the negro, and have also endeavored to extort from him the largest possible quantity of labor for the smallest wages, yet the kindly negro race have not retaliated by one single act of violence or vengeance; the two races exist together, upon equal terms, under the British Government, and under British Institutions.

Or shall you say that the British Government and British Institutions are preferable to yours? The vain and vaporing spirit of mistaken Republicanism will not permit you to avow the British superiority. You are bound, however reluctantly, to admit that superiority, or else to admit the falsity of your own assertions. Nothing can, in truth, be more ludicrous than your declaration in favor of Slavery. It, however, sometimes rises to the very border of blasphemy. Your words are, "God forbid that we should advocate 'human bondage in any shape.'"

Oh! shame upon you! How can you take the name of the All Good Creator thus in vain? What are you doing? Is not the entire of your address an advocacy of human bondage?

Another piece of silliness. You allege that it is the Abolitionists who make the slave restless with his condition, and that they scatter the seeds of discontent. How can you treat us with such contempt as to use assertions of that kind in your address? How can you think that we could be so devoid of intelligence as to believe the negro would not know the miseries of Slavery, which he feels every hour of the four-and-twenty, unless he were told by some Abolitionist that Slavery was a miserable condition?

There is nothing that makes us think so badly of you as your strain of ribaldry in attacking the Abolitionists.

The desire to procure abolition, is, in itself, a virtue and deserves our love for its charitable disposition, as it does respect and veneration for its courage under favorable circumstances. Instead of the ribaldry of your attack upon the Abolitionists, you ought to respect and countenance them. If they err by excessive zeal, they err in a righteous and holy cause. You would do well to check their errors and mitigate their zeal within the bounds of strict propriety. But if you had the genuine feelings of Irishmen, you never would confound their errors with their virtue. In truth, we much fear, or rather we should candidly say, we readily believe that you attribute to them imaginary errors for no other reason than that they really possess one brilliant virtue—namely, the love of human freedom in intense perfection.

Again, we have to remark that you exaggerate exceedingly when you state that there are fifteen millions of the white population in America whose security and happiness are connected with the maintenance of the system of Negro Slavery.

On the contrary, the system of Slavery inflicts nothing but mischief upon the far greater part of the inhabitants of America. The only places in which individual interest is connected with Slavery are the slaveholding States. Now, in those States, almost without an exception, (if, indeed, there be any exception,) the people of color greatly exceed the whites; and thus, even if an injury were to be inflicted on the whites by depriving them of their slaves, the advantages would be most abundantly counterbalanced and compensated for by the infinitely greater number of persons who would thus be restored to the greatest of human blessings—personal liberty. Thus the old Benthamite maxim of "doing the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number" would be amply carried out into effect by the emancipation of the negroes.

You charge the Abolitionists, as with a crime, that they encourage a negro, flying from Kentucky, to steal a horse from an inhabitant of Ohio, in order to aid him, if necessary, in making his escape. We are not, upon full reflection, sufficiently versed in casuistry to decide whether, under such circumstances, the taking of the horse would be an excusable act or not. But, even conceding that it would be sinful, we are of this quite certain, that there is not one of you that addresses us who, if he were under similar circumstances, that is, having no other means of escaping perpetual Slavery, would not make free with your neighbor's horse to effectuate your just and reasonable purpose. And we are also sure of this, that there is not one of you who, if he were compelled to spend the rest of his life as a personal slave, worked, and beaten, and sold, and transferred from hand to hand, and separated, at his master's caprice, from wife and family—consigned to ignorance—working without wages, toiling without reward—without any other stimulant to that toil and labor than the driver's cart-whip—we do say that there is not one of you who would not think that the name of pickpocket, thief, or felon, would not be too courteous a name for the being who kept you in such thralldom.

We cannot avoid repeating our astonishment that you, Irishmen, should be so devoid of every trace of humanity as to become the voluntary and pecuniarily disinterested advocates of human Slavery; and especially, that you should be so in America. But what excites our unconquerable loathing, is to find that in your address you speak of man being the property of man—of one human being the property of another, with as little doubt, hesitation, or repugnance, as if you were speaking of the beasts of the field. It is this that fills us with utter astonishment. It is this that makes us disclaim you as countrymen. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that you breathed your natal air in Ireland—Ireland, the first of all the nations on the earth that abolished the dealing in slaves. The slave-trade of that day was, curious enough, a slave-trade in British youths—Ireland, that never was stained with negro slave-trading—

Ireland, that never committed an offence against the men of color—Ireland, that never fitted out a single vessel for the traffic in blood on the African coast.

It is, to be sure, afflicting and heart-rending to me to think that so many of the Irish in America should be so degenerated as to be among the worst enemies of the people of color. Alas! alas! we have that fact placed beyond a doubt by the indisputable testimony of Lord Morpeth. This is a foul blot that we would fain wipe off the escutcheon of expatriated Irishmen.

Have you enough of the genuine Irishman left among you to ask what it is that we require you to do? It is this:

First: We call upon you in the sacred name of humanity, never again to volunteer on behalf of the oppressor; nor even for any self-interest to vindicate the hideous crime of personal slavery.

Second: We ask you to assist in every way you can in promoting the education of the free men of color, and in discouraging the foolish feeling of selfishness—of that criminal selfishness which makes the white man treat the man of color as a degraded or inferior being.

Third: We ask you to assist in obtaining for the free men of color the full benefit of all the rights and privileges of a free man in whatever State he may inhabit.

Fourth: We ask you to exert yourselves in endeavoring to procure for the man of color, in every case, the benefit of a trial by jury, and especially where a man insisting that he is a free man, is claimed to be a slave.

Fifth: We ask you to exert yourselves in every possible way to induce slaveowners to emancipate as many slaves as possible. The Quakers in America have several societies for this purpose. Why should not the Irish imitate them in that virtue?

Sixth: We ask you to exert yourselves in all the ways you possibly can to put an end to the internal slave-trade of the States. The breeding of slaves for sale is probably the most immoral and debasing practice ever known in the world. It is a crime of the most hideous kind, and if there were no other crime committed by the Americans, this alone would place the advocates, supporters, and practitioners of American Slavery in the lowest grade of criminals.

Seventh: We ask you to use every exertion in your power to procure the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia.

Eighth: We ask you to use your best exertions to compel the Congress to receive and read the petitions of the wretched negroes, and above all, the petitions of their white advocates.

Ninth: We ask you never to cease your efforts until the crime of which Lord Morpeth has accused the Irish in America, of "being the worst enemies of the men of color," shall be atoned for and blotted out and effaced forever.

You will ask how you can do all these things? You have already answered that question yourselves; for you have said that public opinion is the law of America. Contribute, then, each of you in his sphere, to make up that public opinion. Where you have the electoral franchise, give your vote to none but those who will assist you in so holy a struggle.

Under a popular government, the man who has right, and reason, and justice, and charity, and Christianity itself on his side, has great instruments of legislation and legal power. He has the elements about him of the greatest utility; and even if he should not succeed, he can have the heart-soothing consolation of having endeavored to do great and good actions. He can enjoy, even in defeat, the sweet comfort of having endeavored to promote benevolence and charity.

It is no excuse to allege that the Congress is restricted from emancipating the slaves by one general law. Each particular slave State has that power within its own precincts; and there is every reason to be convinced that Maryland and Virginia would have followed the example of New York, and long ago abolished Slavery, but for the diabolical practice of "raising," as you call it, slaves for the Southern market of pestilence and death.

Irishmen, and the sons of Irishmen have, many of them, risen to high distinction and power in America. Why did not Irishmen and the sons of Irishmen write their names in the brightest pages of the chapter of humanity and benevolence in American history?

Irishmen! Our Chairman ventures to think, and we agree with him, that he has claims on the attention of Irishman in every quarter of the globe.

The Scotch and French philosophers have proved by many years of experiment that the Irishman stands first among the races of man in his physical and bodily powers. America and Europe bear testimony to the intellectual capacity of Irishmen. Lord Morpeth has demonstrated in the British Parliament the superior morality of the humbler classes of Irish in all social and family relations. The religious wisdom of the Irish nation is blazoned in glorious and proverbial certainty and splendor.

Irishmen! sons of Irishmen! descendants of the kind of heart and affectionate disposition, think, oh! think only with pity and compassion on your colored fellow-creatures in America. Offer them the hand of kindly help. Soothe their sorrows.

Scathe their oppressor. Join with your countrymen at home in one cry of horror against the oppressor; in one cry of sympathy with the enslaved and oppressed,

"Till prone in the dust slavery shall be hur'd,—
Its name and nature blotted from the world."

We cannot close our observations upon the unseemly, as well as the silly attacks you make upon the advocates of abolition, without reminding you that you have borrowed this turn of thought from the persons who opposed Catholic Emancipation in Ireland, or who were the pretended friends of the Catholics.

Some of you must recollect that it was the custom of such persons to allege that but for the "violence" and "misconduct" of the agitators, and more particularly of our Chairman, the Protestants were about to emancipate the Catholics gradually. It was the constant theme of the newspaper press, and even of the speeches in the House of Parliament, that the violence and misconduct of agitators prevented Emancipation. It was the burden of many pamphlets, and especially of two, which were both written under the title of "Faction Unmasked," by Protestants of great ability. They asserted themselves to be friends of Emancipation in the abstract; but they alleged that it was impossible to grant Emancipation to persons whose leaders misconducted themselves as the agitators did. They gratified their hatred to the Catholics as you gratify your bad feeling toward the negroes, by abuse of the Catholic leaders as virulent as yours is against the Abolitionists. But they deceived nobody. Neither do you deceive anybody. Every human being perceives the futility and folly of your attacks upon the Abolitionists, and understands that those attacks are but the exhibition of rancor and malignity against the tried friends of humanity.

You say that the Abolitionists are fanatics and bigots, and especially entertain a virulent hatred and unchristian zeal against Catholicity and the Irish. We do not mean to deny, nor do we wish to conceal that there are among the Abolitionists many wicked and calumniating enemies of Catholicity and the Irish, especially in that most intolerant class, the Wesleyan Methodists; but the best way to disarm their malice, is not by giving up to them the side of humanity, while you, yourselves, take the side of Slavery. But, on the contrary, by taking a superior station of Christian virtue in the cause of benevolence and charity, and in zeal for the freedom of all mankind.

We wish we could burn into your souls the turpitude attached to the Irish in America by Lord Morpeth's charge. Recollect that it reflects dishonor not only upon you, but upon the land of your birth. There is but one way of effacing such disgrace, and that is by becoming the most kindly toward the colored population, and the most energetic in working out in detail, as well as in general principle, the amelioration of the state of the miserable bondsman.

You tell us, indeed, that many clergymen, and especially the Catholic clergy, are ranged on the side of the slaveholders. We do not believe your accusation.

The Catholic clergy may endure, but they assuredly do not encourage the slave-owners. We have, indeed, heard it said that some Catholic clergymen have slaves of their own; but, it is added, and we are assured positively, that no Irish Catholic clergyman is a slaveowner. At all events, every Catholic knows how distinctly slaveholding, and especially slave-trading, is condemned by the Catholic Church. That most eminent man, his Holiness, the Present Pope, has, by Allocution published throughout the world, condemned all dealing and traffic in slaves. Nothing can be more distinct nor more powerful than the Pope's denunciation of that most abominable crime. Yet it subsists in a more abominable form than his Holiness could possibly describe, in the traffic which still exists in the sale of slaves from one State in America to another.

What, then, are we to think of you, Irish Catholics, who send us an elaborate vindication of Slavery without the slightest censure of that hateful crime—a crime which the Pope has so completely condemned, namely: the diabolical raising of slaves for sale, and selling them to other States.

If you be Catholics, you should devote your time and best exertions to working out the pious intentions of his Holiness. Yet you prefer—oh, sorrow and shame!—to volunteer your vindication of everything that belongs to the guilt of Slavery.

If you be Christians at all, recollect that Slavery is opposed to the first, the highest, and the greatest principles of Christianity, which teach us "to love the great and good God above all things whatsoever; and the next, "to love our fellow-man as ourselves;" which commands us "to do unto others as we would be done by." These sacred principles are inconsistent with the horrors and crimes of Slavery, sacred principles which have already banished domestic bondage from civilized Europe, and which will also, in God's own good time, banish it from America, despite the advocacy of such puny declaimers as you are.

How bitterly have we been afflicted at perceiving by the American newspapers that recently, in the city which you inhabit, an opportunity was given to the Irish to exhibit benevolence and humanity to a colored fellow-creature, and was given in vain! We allude to the case of the girl Lavinia, who was a slave in another State, and brought by her owner into that of Ohio. She by that means became entitled to her

freedom, if she had but one friend to assert it for her. She did find friends—may the great God of heaven bless them! Were they Irish? Alas! alas! not one. You sneer at the sectaries. Behold how they here conquer you in goodness and charity. The owner's name, it seems, was Scanlan; unhappily a thorough Irish name. And he, it appears, has boasted that he took his revenge by the most fiendish cruelty, not upon Lavinia, or her protector, for they were not in his power, but on her unoffending father, mother, and family.

And this is the system which you, Irishmen, through many folio pages of wicked declamation, seek at least to palliate, if not to justify.

Our cheeks burn with shame to think that such a monster as Scanlan could trace his pedigree to Ireland. And yet *you*, Irishmen, stand by in the attitude rather of friends and supporters, than of impugners of the monstrous cruelty. And you prefer to string together pages of cruel and heartless sophistry in defense of the source of his crime, rather than take part against him.

Perhaps it would offend your fastidiousness if such a man was compared to a pick-pocket or a felon. We respect your prejudices and call him no reproachful name. It is, indeed, unnecessary.

We conclude by conjuring you, and all other Irishmen in America, in the name of your father-land—in the name of humanity—in the name of the God of Mercy and Charity; we conjure you, Irishmen and descendants of Irishmen, to abandon for ever all defense of the hideous Negro Slavery system. Let it no more be said that your feelings are made so obtuse by the air of America that you cannot feel, as Catholics and Christians ought to feel, this truth—this plain truth, that one man cannot have any property in another man. There is not one of you who does not recognize that principle in his own person. Yet we perceive—and this agonizes us almost to madness—that you, basing an Irish descent, should, without the instigation of any pecuniary or interested motive, but out of the sheer and single love of wickedness and crime, come forward as the volunteer defenders of the most degrading species of human Slavery. Woe! Woe! Woe!

There is one consolation still amid the pulsations of our hearts. There are, there must be, genuine Irishmen in America, men of sound heads and Irish hearts, who will assist us to wipe off the foul stain that Lord Morpeth's proven charge has inflicted on the Irish character—who will hold out the hand of fellowship, with a heart in that hand, to every honest man of every caste and color—who will sustain the cause of humanity and honor, and scorn the paltry advocates of Slavery—who will show that the Irish heart is in America as benevolent and as replete with charitable emotions as in any other clime on the face of the earth.

We conclude. The spirit of democratic liberty is defiled by the continuance of Negro Slavery in the United States. The United States themselves are degraded below the most uncivilized nations by the atrocious inconsistency of talking of liberty, and practicing tyranny in its worst shape. The Americans attempt to palliate their iniquity by the futile excuse of personal interest; but the Irish, who have not even that futile excuse, and yet justify Slavery, are utterly indefensible.

Once again, and for the last time, we call upon you to come out of the councils of the slaveholders, and at all events to free yourselves from participating in their guilt.

Irishmen, I call upon you to join in crushing Slavery, and in giving liberty to every man of every caste, creed, or color.

Signed by order.

DANIEL O'CONNELL,
Chairman of the Committee.

LETTER OF HON. S. P. CHASE,

IN REPLY TO

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

J. M. Woy, Esq.,

Secretary of the Loyal National Repeal Association:

CINCINNATI, November 30th, 1843.

SIR:—We have the honor of transmitting to your address an authenticated copy of certain resolutions which were unanimously adopted by a very large majority of the friends of Liberty, Ireland and Repeal, held in this city on the 19th of the present month.

You will perceive that one of these resolutions imposes on us the duty of preparing a letter to your Association, expressing the sentiments of the people there assembled. We proceed to the discharge of this duty, penetrated by mingled emotions of pleasure, shame and indignation.

We have great satisfaction in assuring you of the deep sympathy of the meeting which we represent with the Irish people in their noble effort for the restoration of their rights, and of the profound admiration with which we all regard your illustrious leader, who finds time and occasion, in the midst of momentous responsibilities and deep anxieties, to interpose his powerful influence and pour forth his persuasive eloquence in behalf of the wretched victims of oppression in a distant land. We are ashamed that truth obliges us to confess that in this country, boastful of free institutions, in the sixty-eighth year of our national existence, two millions and a half of human beings, endowed by their Creator with inalienable right to liberty, are held as chattel property by some two hundred and fifty thousand citizens of the United States.

With shame and grief do we acknowledge the existence of this foul and dishonorable blot on our national character; but our shame becomes indignation, and our grief is turned into horror, when we see American citizens, whether native or naturalized, vindicating the continuance and extension of slavery in this country by elaborate argument, and with unblushing impudence claiming for this organized crime a place among our national institutions.

We deem this occasion a fit one for stating to you the views held by us and by many of our fellow-citizens of the true constitutional position of our National Government in relation to slavery.

No American at all conversant with the history of this country, doubts that at the period of our revolutionary struggle an intense love of liberty and hatred of oppression possessed the heart of all the leading characters of the nation. The patriots of that day refused to place the vindication of resistance to oppression upon any lower or narrower ground than that of the inherent and inalienable rights of man. They held and boldly proclaimed these truths to be self-evident: "That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Nor was the assertion of these truths confined to this declaration. As early as 1776 the delegates of the several colonies assembled at Philadelphia, bound themselves and their constituents by a solemn covenant, that they would "neither import nor purchase any slave imported, after the first of December in that year, but would wholly discontinue the slave-trade, and neither be concerned in it themselves, nor hire their vessels, nor sell their commodities or manufactures to those who might be concerned in it." And at the close of the Revolution, in an address issued in April, 1783, by the American Congress to the States, it was asserted as a matter of just pride and exultation that the rights for which the contest, just terminated, had been waged "were the rights of human nature."

Other public documents and the private writings of the most distinguished men of that period furnish unequivocal evidence that the existence of negro slavery in America was deeply deplored and its extinction earnestly desired by all good men and patriots. The light, however, which more than half a century of experience and the combined efforts of so many wise and eloquent philanthropists have since shed upon the subject was denied to that age. The safety and expediency of universal emancipation had not been tested by the splendid West Indian experiment. Immediate and general liberation was dreaded as fraught with evils to the master and the slave. All, however, concurred in desiring to put an end to slavery wherever abolition was deemed practicable and safe. The man who should have dared to advocate its further extension would have been universally execrated as an enemy of his species.

The reality and power of these sentiments were signally displayed in the provisions of the ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States northwest of the river Ohio, promulgated in July, 1787. This territory was ceded to the nation by the States of Virginia, New York and Connecticut, all then slaveholding States. No power had been granted in congress by articles of the confederation to legislate for the abolition of slavery within the limits of the States. But in regard to this territory, Congress possessed the same power over the subject that the States themselves possessed within their respective jurisdictions; and in the ordinance providing for its government the existence of slavery was prohibited absolutely and forever. There were slaves in this territory at the time of the adoption of the ordinance, held under the laws of Virginia. Since that time it has been legally impossible to hold any human being as a slave for a single moment within its limits. The grand object of the ordinance, set forth distinctly in the body of that document, "was to extend the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty," and "to fix and establish those principles as the basis of all laws, constitutions and governments forever thereafter to be established in the territory." These principles were deemed incompatible with slavery, and therefore the existence of slavery was strictly inhibited.

A few weeks after the passage of this ordinance, which was adopted with but a single dissenting voice, the Constitution of the United States was promulgated by the convention which framed it. It was supposed that the ordinance had effectually prevented the extension of slavery. It was also supposed that the principles of liberty and equality, to which the people of all the States had so often and so solemnly pledged themselves, and which had already led to the abolition of slavery in several States by the voluntary action of the local legislatures, would continue to influence the public mind, and to produce like results, until slavery should be abolished throughout the land.

The Convention, therefore, did not think fit to confer any express power on the National Congress to abolish slavery in the States by direct legislation. They recognized the fact that slavery existed in some of the States, in several constitutional provisions; but they were careful to exclude all recognition of its rightfulness, and to vest in Congress no power to establish or continue it anywhere. Slavery, therefore, under the Constitution, is strictly a creature of State legislation. No person, under any act of Congress, can be constitutionally reduced to slavery. No person, under any act of Congress, can be constitutionally held as a slave for a single moment anywhere within the range of exclusive national jurisdiction.

Some enlightened jurists in this country go even further, and maintain that the National Constitution, as it now stands, does of its own force absolutely abolish slavery throughout all the States. They reason thus: The Constitution, as originally framed, did indeed recognize by implication, the existence of slavery under State legislation as a matter of fact and perhaps of legal right. But the Constitution was afterward amended in the mode prescribed by itself. Among the amendments thus incorporated into it was one which provided that "no person shall be deprived of his liberty without due process of law." Now every slave is deprived of liberty without any legal process. Slavery, therefore, is repugnant to the Constitution. This reasoning, if we regard only the terms of the instrument, is certainly unanswerable. If we look at the circumstances of the country at the time, however, it does not seem likely that the amendment was designed to have the effect attributed to it.

Be this as it may, we apprehend that no intelligent and disinterested person examining the provisions of the Constitution and the amendments, and comparing them with the facts of history, can withhold his assent from the conclusion that there has been no time since the organization of the existing Government of the United States when slavery could be established or continued by national legislation.

You may ask, then, how comes it to pass that slaves are bought and sold in the markets and driven in chains through the streets of the city of Washington, the very seat of the national Government? How is it that three new slave States have been erected out of the Territory of Louisiana, which was purchased from France, and thereby became subject to exclusive national jurisdiction? How is it that slavery still exists in Florida, which yet remains a Territorial Government, and derives all its powers from acts of Congress, and can pass no law not subject to abrogation, if disapproved of by that body? How is it that ships freighted with human cargoes traverse the seas continually under the protection of the national flag and under the sanction of the national law? How is it that the National Government itself, instead of employing all its mighty energies and exerting all its powerful influence in behalf of liberty and justice, has for many years directed its negotiations abroad and its legislative and administrative action at home chiefly to the advancement of the interests of slaveholders and the perpetuation of slavery?

Truth, alas! compels us to acknowledge the justness of the charges implied in those interrogations: and the blush of shame mantles on our cheeks, and a tide of honest indignation swells our hearts while we admit that the Constitution which the fathers of the Republic ordained to establish justice has been perverted, by a most disingenu-

ous and false construction, to the sanction of hideous wrong, and the Government which they framed for the security of the blessing of liberty has been abased for the perpetuation of the curse of slavery.

But it is not difficult to trace this perverted construction to its source.

Most unhappily the framers of the Constitution, expecting the certain and not distant abolition of slavery by State legislation, determined that representation in the popular branch of the National Legislature should be apportioned among the States, not in proportion to the number of free inhabitants in each, but in proportion to the number of free inhabitants and three fifths of the slaves. The effect of this arrangement has been that five slaves have always been counted as equal to three free persons in the constituency of a representative in Congress. But slaves, of course, never vote. They are treated as property. Their masters only vote. At the outset of the Government, therefore, when the number of Representatives was fixed at one for every thirty thousand inhabitants, a district in a slave State containing less than five hundred families, possessing one hundred slaves each, had the same right of representation that a district in a free State containing five thousand families, averaging six members each, enjoyed. A slaveholder with ten slaves had then, and still has, a political equivalent to that of seven citizens not thus privileged.

We do not suppose that the effect of this provision was understood at the time of the adoption of the Constitution. But it soon became apparent. The slaveholders, having succeeded in obtaining the privilege of having their so-called property represented, soon became sensible of its value. They began to appreciate the political advantages of the concentration of the share of Federal power belonging to their respective States in the hands of masters, instead of having it distributed equally among the male adults of the whole population.

When the representatives of the slaveholders took their seats in Congress, they found themselves united by a common paramount interest. The representatives of the non-slaveholders, on the contrary, having no such common bond of union, were divided among themselves on many questions. Profiting by these divisions, the slave State representation early acquired the ascendancy in the national councils. To retain this ascendancy, it became necessary to discourage all schemes of emancipation by State authority. This explains the reason why only two States have passed acts of abolition since the organization of the present National Government, whereas, before that period, six States (a district of one of which has since been erected into a separate State,) had abolished Slavery within their limits, and Congress had prohibited its existence within the northwestern territory, out of which the four states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois have since been erected.

But it was not enough to repress the disposition in favor of abolition in the States. It was necessary to make the General Government itself the patron of the detestable institution.

The first step toward this end was to induce Congress to pass an act continuing in force the laws of Virginia and Maryland, within the district ceded by those States for the seat of the National Government. This act embraced all the provisions of the State slave code, and of course at once engrafted the system of Slavery upon the National Legislature. It was a flagrant violation of the implied contract at the formation of the Government, that Slavery should never exist under the legislation of Congress. It was also a plain transgression of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, which not only did not confer on Congress any power to establish or continue Slavery by law, but expressly declared that no person should be deprived of liberty without due legal process.

A more signal proof of this growing ascendancy of the slaveholding interest, and of the perversion of the National Administration to the purposes of the slaveholder, was exhibited a few years afterward in the purchase of Louisiana from France. Upon the acquisition of that territory, the Congress, instead of emulating the example of the Congress of 1787, and the consecrating that vast region to impartial liberty; instead of hastening to redeem the pledge which the nation had given to the world by the adoption of the ordinance that Slavery should never be extended beyond its existing State limits—did not scruple to provide for the continuance of Slavery therein by legislative enactment in shameless violation of good faith and constitutional obligation. Several slave States have since been created out of this territory, and the representatives of slaves from these States, chosen by masters, have taken their seats in Congress by the side of the representatives of non-slaveholders from the free States.

The precedent of acquiring territory for the purpose of extending the limits of Slavery was thus established. It was not surprising, therefore, that it should be followed up when occasion required by the purchase of Florida from Spain, and by a fresh outrage on the Constitution by the continuance and extension of Slavery in that territory by legislative provision.

These successive violations of the Constitution, resulting in a prodigious extension of the limits, and in an enormous accession to the power of Slavery, attracted little attention from politicians, who consulted their interests in rivaling each other in

devotion to the slave power. A few philanthropists and statesmen may have mourned over the progress of an evil which they dared not openly and manfully oppose.

At length, however, the public mind was excited by the claim of Missouri, which was part of the district acquired from France, to be admitted into the Union as a slaveholding State. This claim was resisted. The advocates of the restriction and the friends of the extension of Slavery divided the country. The struggle was severe. In the result, however, victory declared itself on the side of the slaveholders, and Missouri was admitted as a slave State. Since the termination of this contest, until very recently, there has been no organized opposition to slavery. The political parties of the country have submitted to the sway of the slave power, and the taint of pro-slavery has fastened itself upon every department of the National Administration.

Thus we see that the original error of providing for the partial representation of slaves, which amounts to the same thing as conferring peculiar political power on masters, has led to encroachment after encroachment, and aggression after aggression, until the true construction of the Constitution has been subverted. It is now boldly claimed that the Constitution guarantees property in men, and that Slavery is a national institution.

We have seen our national Executive, in conformity with this false construction, pressing upon foreign Governments claims of indemnity for the loss of persons alleged to be slaves, who were constitutionally, as well as of natural right, free the moment they were aloft on the high seas in an American ship. We have seen the National Legislature employing the sanctions of law for the protection and extension of Slavery, while it has insolently denied a hearing to the remonstrances of the friends of Liberty. We have seen—oh, shame! our national Judiciary solemnly deciding that a slaveholder may, in a free State, seize any person claimed by him to be his fugitive slave, and drag him into a slave State, without process and without trial, subject only to legal responsibility should the person thus kidnapped ultimately succeed in establishing his right to freedom.

These and similar outrages, perpetrated in the abused name of the Constitution, have at length aroused the attention of the people. They inquire at length whether the Constitution of the country was in reality designed—not to establish justice and secure liberty—but to establish despotism and secure immunity to oppression? They scrutinize the power of Congress to see if indeed there be among them an authority to create or continue the condition of Slavery? They investigate the records of history to ascertain what were the injunctions laid upon their posterity by the acts and the precepts of the Fathers of the country.

We who address you, and our fellow-citizens whom we represent, have been astonished by the results of these inquiries. We find that the construction of the Constitution which has been imposed upon the people of the country, is morally speaking a base forgery. We find that all power to create or continue Slavery has been carefully withheld from the National Legislature. We find that our fathers have left on record their solemn censure of the iniquitous system, and their sacred pledge that it should not be perpetuated or extended. We find also and we feel in our bitter experience that free labor is dishonored, and its wages rendered insecure throughout the whole land by a system which exacts labor without wages, and degrades the laborer to the level of the beast. We are taught also that our own rights and liberties are endangered by the spirit of despotism—endangered by slaveholding, which has so fearfully manifested itself in the denial of the right of petition and of trial by jury, and in the desperate attempts to suppress investigation by mob violence, by ecclesiastical servilism, by legislative enactments and by party ostracism.

We have, therefore, “come out from among” the patrons, the advocates, the apologists of Slavery. We have resolved to vote for no man, and to act with no party not fully committed and pledged against this enormous evil and wrong. We avow an eternal hostility against despotism and oppression in every form, whether manifested in crushing the black man, or in depressing and impoverishing the white man.

From the inmost recesses of our hearts we thank you and the Irish people for your sympathy with us in our great struggle. You have our sympathy in yours. You demand the repeal of a statute which makes Ireland the political vassal of England. We demand the abrogation of laws which make millions the chattel property of thousands. You demand the repeal of the Union statute, because it was carried by fraud and has been perpetuated by force. We demand the abrogation of our national man-chattelizing legislation, because it is repugnant alike to the Constitution of our country and to the code of Heaven. You seek to accomplish your great object by peaceful and legitimate means. We, like you, appeal to the people, and put our trust in Him who holds the hearts of all men in His hands. Your triumph, we believe, is secure and near at hand; ours may be deferred to a somewhat more distant date, but it will come!

We are aware that the energetic and uncompromising hostility of the Liberator to every form of oppression has drawn upon him the bitter hate, and subjected him to the calumnious attacks of the partisans of Slavery in the country. At a public meet-

ing held in New Orleans some three years since, he was denounced as "a political renegade entitled to the execration of all sober, upright, and enlightened American citizens, and to be regarded with no feeling but abhorrence." About the same time he was stigmatized by a writer in the State of Mississippi as "that detestable agitator, Daniel O'Connell," and as "that unprincipled Irish incendiary." More recently the Irish Repeal Association of Baltimore denounced the speech delivered by the liberator on the 10th of May last as "a base calumny against the humanity and the purest sense of human obligation that are the characteristics of the Southern people." Even now, unless it has been removed since the summer of 1840, there hangs on the wall of a slave-dealer's office, in the District of Columbia, a filthy caricature representing Abolitionists and blacks together, among whom a conspicuous position is given to Daniel O'Connell, as a fit subject for the obscene witticisms of scoundrel traffickers in human flesh.

These things were, however, to be expected from the bigoted devotees of Slavery in the slave States; but it required the evidences of our senses to convince us that the apologists for the "peculiar institution," who have assumed the leadership of the Irish Repeal Association in this city, would venture upon any open denunciation of the illustrious champion of Irish liberty, or dare to draw an invidious distinction between the Irish people and their liberator. But the resolution of the meeting held in July last, which asserted that the declarations of Mr. O'Connell were "slanderous of the American people," and that it was the duty of the meeting "to repel the calumny and hurl back the charge with scorn;" the letter prepared and addressed in behalf of the Cincinnati Society to the National Association, and the recent conduct of the Association here in refusing to the scathing and overwhelming reply of your committee the common courtesy of reception, on the pretense that the constitution of the Society prohibited all reference to questions of a sectarian or political character, (a pretense demonstrated to be frivolous by previous action on the subject of abolition, and by the passage of a resolution on the same evening "to repel the coarse and unjust language of the great Irish leader.")—these things have satisfied us that these men, relying on the cruel and wicked prejudice against persons of color, which, though constantly abating, still too generally characterizes the American people, are ready to proceed as far in their defamation of the Liberator, as they have heretofore gone in their scurrilous abuse of the friends of Freedom at home.

But can these men imagine that true-hearted Irishmen will long endure their shameful conduct toward a man enthroned in every honest Irish heart as the truest and the noblest friend of his country? Can they imagine that the sons of Ireland who have sought in this Western world a refuge from oppression for themselves, will long consent to be used as the instruments for oppressing others? If they do, we think they deceive themselves.

Not many weeks ago, at a national convention of the Friends of Liberty, assembled at Buffalo, in the State of New York, an Irish laborer, distinguished by his warm heart and clear understanding, declared that the first vote he ever gave in his life was for Catholic Emancipation in Ireland, and the next was for Liberty in America; and he never meant to give a different vote so long as God should spare his life. There are other Irishmen like him, and the number, we trust, will rapidly increase.

What do these men mean by asserting that "the people of Ohio have never had any connection with Slavery in any form?" They know that the votes of representatives of Ohio sustain Slavery at the seat of the National Government and in the Territory of Florida. They know that if the unconstitutional laws of the General Government which sanction Slavery were repealed, and its influence and patronage arrayed on the side of Liberty, Slavery could hardly long exist. They know, too, that if the people of Ohio would elect to Congress the right kind of men, this object could almost certainly be accomplished.

These men say that fifteen millions of whites owe it to Freedom and the world to maintain and perpetuate republican institutions—by which term they somewhat facetiously designate American Slavery. Now, of these fifteen millions, at least thirteen millions are positively injured by the existence of the system. Of the rest of the whites, the greater number probably think themselves interested in sustaining it, though even among slaveholders, there are not a few who detest the system and desire its overthrow. The happiness of two and a half millions of enslaved and a half million of free colored people is beneath the consideration of these champions of "republican institutions" and revilers of O'Connell.

These men charge the anti-slavery men with being unfriendly to the cause of repeal and bitter enemies of Roman Catholics.

Both charges are false. Among the anti-slavery men are very many ardent friends of repeal. Some of them, too, are members of the Catholic Church.

Differences of religious creed or of national origin are not suffered to divide our ranks. We prefer to continue with each other, Protestants and Catholics, native born with foreign born, in honest zeal for the liberty of all and the rights of all.

They charge us also with enmity to our country and to our National Constitution. We may justly retort the charge. They—they are the enemies of the country who stain its honor, degrade its character, and waste its resources in fostering Slavery, our greatest curse. They—they—shame upon them!—are the enemies of our National Constitution, who have by violence and false construction blotted out all its guarantees of personal freedom and individual right, and have held it up to the world as a compact for the perpetuation of crime and the extension of despotism.

But it is useless to expose the inconsistent sophisms or foolish calumny of these men. It has already been done in a manner they will never forget, by the Liberator himself.

Again, in behalf of the oppressed of the land, in behalf of all who are struggling to restore them their rights, in behalf of the friends of freedom everywhere, we thank you for your sympathy.

Our hearts throb with anxiety as we await the issue of the pending trials, though we cannot doubt what the result may be. Would that they might be abandoned. Would that England might cover herself with glory by a sublime act of justice to Ireland!

We rejoice to learn that the friends of freedom in England are disposed to make common cause with the Repealers. It is an auspicious omen. May it be fulfilled! And may God send the people of Ireland and their noble champion a safe deliverance.

We remain, with the highest regard,

Your friends and the friends of Liberty,

S. P. CHASE,
JOHN TOBIN,
JOHN B. KRAUTH,
P. McCABE,
G. BAILEY, JR.,

Committee of the friends of Liberty, Ireland, and Repeal, in Cincinnati.



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