



★ No. 4265.505









THE

2  
PROPOSED SLAVE EMPIRE:

ITS

ANTECEDENTS, CONSTITUTION,  
AND POLICY.

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“One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute.”—*President Lincoln's Inaugural Message.*

“A great party [the Republican] was organized for the purpose of obtaining the administration of the Government, with the avowed object of using its power for the total exclusion of the Slave States from all participation of the benefits of the public domain, acquired by all the States in common, whether by conquest or purchase; of surrounding them entirely by States in which slavery should be prohibited; of thus rendering the property in slaves so insecure as to be entirely worthless.”—*President Davis' Inaugural Message.*

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BY CHARLES S. MIALL.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE accompanying papers appeared in successive numbers of the *Nonconformist* newspaper. They are published in a separate form in response to the wishes of others, and in the hope that they may help, in however slight a degree, to deepen the growing apprehension in this country at the possible consolidation of a great and distinct Slave Power on the American continent. The writer has endeavoured to grapple with those arguments by which the prevalent sympathy with the Southern Confederation is justified or excused. It is the more necessary that the antecedents, constitution, and policy, of the Southern States should be well examined, as this aspect of the struggle in America has been studiously ignored by some of the most influential organs of the press in this country. The official repudiation of slavery by the Federal Government, and the definite proposal of an emancipation scheme in President Lincoln's Message, add force to this consideration. The writer disclaims any pretension to originality of argument. His aim has been to bring within small and convenient compass facts and conclusions that are scattered over a wide surface, and to indicate in brief the peculiar peril to liberty and humanity that would ensue from the constitution and recognition, for the first time in history, of a Commonwealth based upon the ostentatious violation of natural rights. If the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, and of serfdom in Russia, are likely to be regarded by posterity as the crowning achievements of the nineteenth century, the attempted formation of a nation with slavery for its "corner-stone" will undoubtedly constitute its conspicuous infamy.

LONDON, CHRISTMAS, 1862.

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# THE PROPOSED SLAVE EMPIRE.

## THE NEW POLITICAL GOSPEL.

The one idea which history exhibits as evermore developing itself into greater distinctness, is the idea of humanity, the noble endeavour to throw down all barriers erected between men by prejudice and one-sided views, and by setting aside the distinctions of religion, country, and colour, to treat the whole human race as one brotherhood, having one great object—the pure development of our spiritual nature.—*Humboldt's Cosmos.*

The ideas entertained at the formation of the old Constitution were, that the enslavement of the African race was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, politically. Our new Government is founded on exactly opposite ideas: its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon THE GREAT TRUTH, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery—subordination to the superior race—IS HIS NATURAL AND MORAL CONDITION. *This our Government is the first in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.* It is upon this that our social fabric is firmly planted; and I cannot permit myself to doubt the ultimate success of the full recognition throughout the civilised and enlightened world. . . . This stone, which was rejected by the first builders, "is become the chief stone" in our edifice.—*Mr. A. H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Southern Confederation.*

IN these two extracts are described, with clearness and authority, two theories of social and political life diametrically opposed. If the one be true, the other must be false. If the civilised world holds with Baron Humboldt's theory of progress, then is the avowed attempt to set up a nation based upon its subversion a crime against civilisation. If the German philosopher's "idea" be in harmony with the spirit of Christianity, that of Mr. Stephens is opposed to it. There is no medium between the two—no point of contact—no possibility of compromise. The Vice-President of the Southern Confederation boldly and honestly demands and expects "the full recognition throughout the civilised and enlightened world" of this "great truth," the discovery of which has been vouchsafed to the American slave-owners of the nineteenth century. The civilised world ought surely to respond to this audacious challenge.

Englishmen have been so absorbed in the details, passing phases and collateral issues of this important struggle—so dazed with the military success of a Power whose peculiar organisation almost ensured success—that they have well-nigh lost sight of the vital issues involved. It would be wrong to doubt their abhorrence of slavery, for the history of the last half-century testifies

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to it. But that a nation which has consecrated the principle that all men are brethren—which has, for half-a-century at least, been in the van of peoples that have striven to give practical effect to Humboldt's "idea"—which has abolished slavery throughout its own dominions, paid twenty millions that the oppressed might be set free, and witnessed the rapid progress in enlightenment, civilisation, and comfort of the free negroes of the West Indies—should now trample under foot its most glorious traditions by giving its sympathies to a Power avowedly based upon the dogma "that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his [the negro's] natural and moral condition;"—is the most anomalous and melancholy phenomenon of the age. How is this strange lapse of moral sentiment to be accounted for? We suppose it must be because the attention of Englishmen has been fixed upon those considerations that affect their own industry, because the Confederates have shown a superior organisation to their enemies, because the Federals have thus far displayed incompetence to conduct a great war, intestine divisions, an overbearing spirit, and an irresolute, contradictory purpose; but chiefly because the real questions at stake have been studiously concealed by many of our most influential journals, which detest democracy far more than slavery. It would really seem as though, in relation to this great American contest, England were voluntarily abdicating her position as the great champion of humanity and freedom. It is otherwise throughout Europe. In France, in Germany, and in Italy, the foremost intellects and all men of liberal opinions see, what we do not, that this is a conflict between civilisation, however imperfectly developed, and barbarism undisguised, and acknowledged in the words of Garibaldi:—"Human rights are before constitutional rights. Humanity must come first; commercial interests, individual prosperity, afterwards."\*

The South has undoubtedly proved successful. Her soldiers have exhibited better fighting qualities, her generals more genius, her population greater union, than the North. If these are *sufficient* grounds for our approval of their cause, then have we no reason to complain that, in the name of "liberty" and "independence," the slaveowners of the Confederate States are building up a nation upon principles opposed to humanity, progress, and Christianity. Can it be that England has gone through centuries of conflict to conquer her own liberties, and at last, after she has gained the victory, and has come to be recognised as the asylum of freedom for all the world, that she sets up as the idol of the hour, that "incarnation of heathen hardheartedness and lust"

\* The general tendency of the civilised world to regard "involuntary servitude" as incompatible with the spirit of the age, is illustrated by the recent abolition of serfdom in Russia, of slavery itself in the colonies of Denmark and Holland, and by the recognition of the emancipation principle even in Cuba.



(as Professor Goldwin Smith has aptly described it) which goes by the name of the Southern Confederation? In accordance with the present tendencies of public sentiment, we ought to re-furnish our Temple of British Worthies—drag down the statues of our Howards, Wilberforces, Clarksons, and Sturges, and replace them with the effigies of successful violators of natural rights and Christian teachings. Let us pronounce Humboldt a sentimental dreamer, and pay all honour to Messrs. Jefferson Davis and Stephens, the champions of the new theory of morals and government!

It must be admitted that Mr. Stephens' plain statement utterly demolishes the fond delusions of British sympathisers with the South, that the Confederates are fighting for liberty, pure and simple, are likely to be obliged to mitigate or abolish slavery, or will be at last converted by the world's opinion. A political edifice, wholly based upon slavery, must necessarily be an oligarchy. Its very safety is bound up with the suppression of free speech, and the degradation of the intermediate "mean whites." That oligarchy in America is now provided with a formidable, well-disciplined army, officered by an aristocracy trained to habits of command, and wielded by generals of great experience and consummate skill. Is it likely that a military Power thus developed will readily tear away the foundations which underlie it, and, in the moment of conscious strength, repudiate the theory boldly proclaimed in its utmost weakness? Why has not the North been successful? Partly because of the great development in her citizens of qualities— independence, self-assertion, civic and trading habits—which, in the normal condition of society, are essential to civilisation and progress. War, it is now seen, suited the genius of the South; and in her white vagabonds, always more ready with the gun than the spade, and her "border ruffians," \* well versed in the use of the bowie-knife and revolver, were the materials for a splendid army. But we must still venture to prefer qualities which subdue the wilderness to those which conquer men. As the world's opinion, the Hon. L. W. Spratt, of South Carolina, one of the apostles of the new Gospel, boasts:—"They [the European nations] will submit to any terms of intercourse with the Slave Republic in consideration of its markets and its products." We are sorry to believe that Mr. Spratt is not far wrong.

The principle deliberately avowed by Mr. Stephens—and we cannot doubt he spoke with due authority †—"separates the

\* "In Kansas it was the common practice of the slave oligarchy to take free men and tie them to trees, and demand of them to recant their principles—to cut off finger after finger till the hands were fingerless, and then riddle them to death with bullets."—*Speech of Mr. Lane in Congress.*

† The declaration of Mr. Stephens is only an echo of opinions openly and frequently avowed by Southern writers and newspaper editors during the last ten years.

Southern Confederacy," says Professor Cairnes,\* "from all previous and from all existing, examples of communities tolerating slavery, which renders it a new fact in history, and constitutes it unequivocally the one Slave Power of the world." Is Europe prepared to receive this Power into the brotherhood of nations, and to sanction by "full recognition" an infidel and subversive theory of government based upon a lie, and detrimental alike to the white and black race—a theory which no sovereign, statesman, or commonwealth has, heretofore, in the experience of mankind, dared to propound, much less put in practice? Have we nothing but denunciations, daily repeated like our prayers, for a free and great nation that has been dared to the death-struggle with this unholy principle? and are we right to reserve all our sympathy and encouragement for the enemies of civilisation, who embody selfishness as a great theory of government, and meanwhile jeer at us as caring only for markets and merchandise?

### WILL THE CONFEDERATES ABOLISH SLAVERY?

This, then, is the result of the history of slavery. It began as a tolerated, it has ended as an aggressive, institution; and if it now threatens to dissolve the Union, it is not because it has anything to fear for that which it possesses already, but because it has received a check to its hopes of future acquisition. —*Times*.

Thus wrote the leading journal in January, 1861, at the first blush of the American secession, and thus then thought the British public. The lapse of nearly two years has certainly not diminished the power of the slave aristocracy. Has the succession of remarkable events which have since followed furnished any reason for supposing that the Slave Power is prepared to reverse its traditional policy, or that, as soon as Federal pressure is withdrawn, it will be ready to relax, if not remove, the bondage of the negro? This subject is too momentous to be mixed up with aught else. It is quite possible to admit that the civil war is inflicting more injury than several generations can repair, that its prolongation is placing in peril the free institutions of the North and lowering the standard of political morality, and that Mr. Jefferson Davis has, as Mr. Gladstone says, "made the South a nation," without affecting the question whether the establishment of a new State, with the unique aims and organisation of the seceders from the Union, is a matter for congratulation, and whether England should be in haste to recognise it.

It is quietly assumed by the advocates of Southern independence that the division of the Union into two distinct nations

\* *The Revolution in America*; a lecture by John Elliott Cairnes, A.M., Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy in Queen's College, Galway. (Price threepence.) Dublin: Hodges, Smith, and Co. Perhaps the most masterly exposition, in a small compass, of the real merits of the American struggle that has been published.



would be the first step towards the extinction of slavery. We are told that when once the South has become master of its own destinies it will, for its own interest, adopt measures for abating the evils of slavery, and that the continual pressure of the civilised world must eventually bring about the desired reform. Those who urge the plea completely ignore the circumstances under which the civil war arose, and the peculiar organisation of the Slave States. The South seceded because, as the *Times* was ready enough to admit in 1861, it was thwarted in its avowed object of indefinitely extending slavery. Such extension was not a matter of choice, but of dire necessity. Southerners themselves openly confessed it. "There is not a slaveholder," said Judge Warner, of Georgia, and in saying this he only expressed the general sentiment, "in this house or out of it, but who knows perfectly well that whenever slavery is confined within certain specified limits its future existence is doomed; it is only a question of time as to its final destruction. You may take any single slaveholding county in the Southern States, in which the great staples of cotton and sugar are cultivated to any extent, and confine the present slave population within the limits of that county. Such is the rapid natural increase of the slaves, and the rapid exhaustion of the soil in the cultivation of those crops (which add so much to the commercial wealth of the country), that in a few years it would be impossible to support them within the limits of such county. Both master and slave would be starved out; and what would be the practical effect in any one county, the same result would happen to all the slaveholding States. *Slavery cannot be confined within certain limits without producing the destruction of both master and slave*; it requires fresh lands, plenty of wood and water, not only for the comfort and happiness of the slave, but for the benefit of the owner."

The conclusions arising out of this damaging confession have been worked out with unerring logic in the treatise of Professor Cairnes. He shows that no community in the previous history of mankind, though tolerating slavery, has ever been organised precisely on this basis. The Southern States have flourished mainly by the production of cotton, sugar and tobacco, for which white labour is not suited, or at least required. A restricted body of large proprietors, and an unlimited supply of rude labour, are alone needed. The white population, except for military purposes, is an incumbrance rather than a help. Such a system is fatal to progress. The abundance of slave labour supersedes the necessity for the use of skilled labour or machinery. The soil is fertile and worked till it is exhausted. There are already vast districts which have relapsed into wilderness. Hence that need for "fresh lands" of which Judge Warner speaks, and the pressing demand for the perpetual extension of the area of slavery. The constitution of society in the South is moulded by the conditions of its social life.

“It resolves itself into three classes—the slaves, on whom devolves all the regular industry; the slave-holders, who reap all its fruits; and an idle lawless rabble, who live dispersed over vast plains in a condition little removed from absolute barbarism.” “Southern independence,” stripped of all illusions, means the right of a spendthrift oligarchy, *comprising a thirtieth part of the population,\** to keep the remainder in compulsory poverty and ignorance, to exhaust the soil for the sake of immediate profit, and then to help itself *ad libitum* to virgin territories, in the South and West, that the normal condition of master and slave may be perpetuated. Slavery, therefore, is not an accidental condition, but the “foundation” of the Southern system.

Have there ever been, or are there now, any indications that the South is ashamed or tired of slavery? Has it not, on the contrary, been fighting for the institution with increasing virulence for several generations? For the last quarter of a century the entire energies of the Southern leaders have been absorbed in extending it, making it the dominant power of the Union, and nursing into a passion what was previously but a practice defended on the score of convenience. It is now no longer an evil to be endured, but a gigantic system to be defended, consecrated, and extended. We quote again Mr. Stephens:—“Negro slavery is but in its infancy. . . . We ought to increase and expand our institutions. All nations when they cease to grow begin to die. We should then endeavour to expand and grow. Central America, Mexico, are all open to us.” “I am,” said the Hon. A. G. Brown, “a pro-slavery man. I believe that slavery is of divine origin; that God decreed it from the foundation of the world.” “An abolitionist,” says the *Southern Literary Messenger*, in a recent article, “is a man who does not love slavery for its own sake as a divine institution; who does not worship it as a corner-stone of civil liberty; who does not adore it as the only possible social condition on which a permanent Republican Government can be created; and who does not, in his inmost soul, desire to see it extended and perpetuated over the whole earth as a means of human reformation second only in dignity, importance, and sacredness, to the Christian religion.” This language may be set down to fanaticism, but is it not precisely the tone lately adopted by the Reverend proprietor of Mr. Sella Martin, his sister and children,† of *De Bow's Review*, and other Southern organs?

\* The number of slaveowners was estimated at the last Census at about 350,000. Of these, 1,733 persons held no less than 350,000 slaves.

† The Rev. Sella Martin is an eloquent young coloured minister settled at Boston, who six years ago escaped from slavery. He was owned by the Rev. John Dorson, a clergyman at Columbus, Georgia, “old, rich, and greatly respected.” While Mr. Martin was in this country a year ago some warm friends subscribed about 500*l.* to enable him to redeem his sister and her two children from slavery—the former (a mulatto) the unmarried wife of Mr. Dorson's son, since dead; the latter his son's children. The Rev. John



Do not the clergy of the South pretend to find a warrant for slavery in the pages of Holy Writ? It is *only* by such arguments that the system can be logically defended, for if it be not good in itself why strive to extend it?

The acts of the leaders of this unique slave-holding nation correspond with their new theory. There has not been the slightest sign of any disposition to relax the baleful domestic institution. All the indications have been in the opposite direction. "In Southern eyes negroes cannot have the rights of freemen."\* It will be remembered that after the late battles in front of Washington some waggons were sent to the field at Centreville under a flag of truce to fetch the dead and wounded. The Confederates seized the negro drivers, but sent the dead bodies—thus violating the laws of war rather than acknowledge that the "contraband" had any rights.† Nor can we forget Jefferson Davis' proclamation that all negroes found fighting against the South would be sent back to slavery.‡ Are such men likely to be conscience-stricken by diplomatic notes from a Power that is at the same time eagerly contending for their slave-raised cotton?

But self-interest, it is pleaded, will oblige the South, willingly or unwillingly, to abolish slavery. Why has not that motive hitherto prevailed? It can hardly be said that the "domestic institution" has been a prosperous speculation. Indebtedness is the normal condition of the American slaveholder, and it is

Dorson, with little hesitation, sold his son's wife and children for 2,000 dols. He also took the opportunity of writing to Mr. Martin in June last, reminding him that he had not paid what he owed to the master from whom he had run away, and expressing reluctance at parting with Caroline (Mr. Martin's sister), from the fear "that God would hold him responsible for assisting to plunge her into moral and social ruin," by allowing her to go to Boston, "the den of social monsters and abolition infidels." The "almighty dollar," however, carried the day! This is a true, recent, and appalling illustration of the moral obliquity caused by slavery, and throws a more lurid light on its actual working than all the statements of Southern writers.

\* The *Richmond Despatch* of October 24th says:—"Two carloads of negroes arrived in this city yesterday, by the Central railroad, direct from Harper's Ferry. Included in the number were men, women, and children. They are the property of citizens of Virginia, living in the vicinity of the Ferry, and are part of those found with the Yankees after their capitulation to the force of General Jackson. Their masters propose to offer them for sale in Richmond, not deeming them desirable servants after having associated with the Yankees."

† The Southern States of America are the only country in the world where the mulattoes follow the condition of their mothers—the object being, of course, to keep the two races perfectly distinct. The slightest taint of African blood is there held to be a bar to freedom.

‡ The Governor of South Carolina, in a recent edict, declares that wages shall not be paid to slaves, and that the practice of allowing them to hire their time must be stopped. "There must," he significantly adds, "be a distinction between the races as marked as their colours, and it must be distinctly and universally understood that the white is the governing race, without an exception, and without regard to disparity of intellect, merit, or acquirements."

notorious that before the outbreak of war a great part of the plantations were mortgaged to Northern capitalists. Besides, in this persistent cry for unlimited expansion we learn the failure of slavery to promote the interests of those who are bound up with it. But there are other questions than that of profit involved. "It is not," says Professor Cairnes, "simply as a productive instrument that slavery is valued by its supporters. It is far rather for its social and political results, as the means of upholding a form of society in which slaveholders are the sole depositories of social prestige and political power, as the corner-stone of an edifice of which they are the masters, that their system is prized. Abolish slavery and you introduce a new order of things and the ascendancy of the men who now rule in the South would be at an end."

We cannot, therefore, with many adherents of the Liberal party, throw up our caps at the prospect of the triumph of "the most odious form of unjust dominion which ever existed"—as the Southern cause is well described by Mr. J. Stuart Mill, in a recent number of the *Westminster Review*. It may be, as Mr. Gladstone suggests, that it is for the interest of the negro race that they should have to do with their own masters alone; though, with the fact before us, that fugitive slaves to the Free States were rarely of late years restored, it is sophistical to say that the whole power of the Union formally backed up the slaveholder. But the main question is, whether the theory that negroes are no better than live stock is to have room for indefinite expansion. "Should these conspirators," as Mr. Mill observes, "succeed in making good their independence, and possessing themselves of a part of the territories, being those which are in immediate contact with Mexico, nothing is to be expected but the spread of the institution by conquest (unless prevented by some European power) over that vast country, and, ultimately, over all Spanish America, and if circumstances permit, the conquest and annexation of the West Indies; while so vast an extension of the field for the employment of slaves would raise up a demand for more, which would, in all probability lead to that re-opening of the African slave trade, the legitimacy and necessity of which have long been publicly asserted by many organs of the South."

If these views have any weight, they do not suggest a very speedy nor hearty recognition of the Southern Confederation by free England. The present conflict is frightful almost beyond precedent; but it may be better for the ultimate welfare of the American continent that it should be fought out by the parties concerned, than that foreign intervention, or the premature recognition of the South, should obtain present peace by entailing chronic hostilities in the future. If the Czar, instead of decreeing the emancipation of the serfs, had decided that serfdom was



of Divine institution, and the corner-stone of the Russian empire, would Europe be in haste to endorse the atrocious dogma? But Russian serfdom is freedom itself compared with American slavery.

## THE SOUTH AND MR. LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION.

It was open to the few thousands of slaveholders who originated the secession, and constitute *de facto* the Confederate "nation," to have met President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation by freeing their own negroes, or by the promise of some ameliorative measures that would have satisfied the opinion of Europe. If they had hinted at gradual emancipation, or even at the restriction of slavery within its present limits, there would have been a great body of Northern opinion to meet them half-way, and only too great eagerness on this side the Atlantic to welcome their good intentions. That would have been received as evidence that, by separation, the Confederates desired rather their own independence, than to tighten the bondage of several millions of their fellow-men, and extend it over regions yet free from the curse. But there has been no idea of the kind.\* That easy means of checkmating the North is not to be thought of. Why overthrow a "Divine" institution?

If these millions of negroes are so "cheerful and happy now;" if they are perfectly satisfied to believe that the Almighty has made a mistake in giving them faculties, feelings, and souls, and that they are doomed by Divine decree for ever to be live stock, without the rights of life, of family, of anything that humanity holds dear—then have their owners nothing to fear from the Federal proclamation. But the Southern papers conjure up the most dreadful pictures as the result of the decree of "Lincoln, the fiend." The slave "when unloosed is a savage," say the Richmond papers. Who has made him so, and would keep him so to all eternity? We do not approve of Mr. Lincoln's plan for effecting abolition. But the mode of its reception by the Confederates, confirms the strongest allegations of abolitionists, and shows that the proclamation is not likely to be a mere *brutum fulmen*. It has been met by slaveholders in the spirit of slaveholders who commenced a slaveholders' war, and we cannot see how people with the love of freedom beating in their veins can, in this crisis, cherish any sympathy with the South—by which is always to be understood *one-thirtieth* part of the population—beyond the pity that must be felt for the wrong-doer when retribution is overtaking him. Not by tardy justice to the

\* Though the above was written in October last, and Mr. Lincoln's emancipation scheme has since been announced in his Message to Congress, there are no signs as yet that the Confederates intend to demolish the "corner-stone" of their organisation.

slaves, but by threats of the most savage measures of retaliation on the North, has the South responded to the Lincoln proclamation. Its provisions are pronounced to be "an outrage on the rights of private property"—that "property" being men, women, and children. Those who aid and abet them in obtaining their rights as human beings, are to be "kept in hard labour until the termination of the war," and "Federal white officers training or commanding negroes on military enterprises against the Confederate States, or inciting slaves to rebellion, or pretending to free them under Lincoln's proclamation, shall, if captured, suffer death."

The slave oligarchy is sternly resolved, then, to stand or fall with its wicked institution. There is no faltering here—only dire apprehension and imprecations of vengeance. If the slaves endeavour to obtain freedom under the Northern proclamation, the *Richmond Inquirer* reminds them that "insurrection is their swift destruction," and recalls the incidents of a former rising, when the insurgent negroes "were hunted like wild beasts, as they were, and were at first killed wherever found." "Give him [the negro] his liberty," says the *Richmond Whig*, "and he will abuse it. He must be kept where he is, and as he is, if he is to be made useful. He must be kept down, otherwise he will be a rebellious and dangerous subject." This is, as we have already shewn, the genuine, invariable, Southern creed—never-ceasing denial of human rights to nearly four millions of God's creatures. We have it here in black and white from one of the principal Confederate organs. The reprisals recommended, and the sentiments avowed as a matter of course, are worthy of the great Slave Power, "whose advent certain classes in this country, out of their exceeding love of liberty, are welcoming with jubilant ecstasy into the civilised and Christian world."\*

The Confederate threats of vengeance and retaliation were of course intended to prevent the proclamation from being carried out after the first of January. At present, it might seem, Mr. Lincoln's decree will have a restricted practical effect. But the panic of the South can scarcely be misplaced. Though the emancipation edict does not recognise the abolition of slavery as a principle, it inflicts a death-blow on the "domestic institution," so far as Northern opportunity avails. In the Border States it has met with less opposition than might have been expected. "The Border Slave State Unionists," says the correspondent of the *Daily News*, "though as a whole they doubt the wisdom of this measure, give the Government their hearty and unconditional support. The loyal Marylander or Kentuckian accepts it as one of the conditions of the war. Some of them even go further, and hail it as the only complete and efficient remedy."

\* Professor Goldwin Smith.



In these States the proclamation will at once loosen the slavery system and accelerate the flight of fugitive negroes, which has already been proceeding on a large scale wherever the Federal armies have appeared.\* And it is remarkable that in these extensive districts we hear of no deeds of violence on the part of the fugitives, but only of their anxiety to escape. Though Missouri and Kansas now contain some thousands of free negroes, almost every account shows their peaceable tendencies, and their anxiety only to enjoy their freedom without thought of vengeance.

Nor is there any good reason for supposing, spite of alarmist predictions to the contrary, that the proclamation will be followed by the horrors of a servile insurrection even in the genuine Slave States. Where are the signs of the Aceldama which is the *only* thought now suggested in our leading papers, in connexion with these millions of meek human beings? In the interior, of course, there is little expectation that the slaves will hear of the deliverance of their race promised by "Massa Lin-cum." It is only on the outskirts of the Gulf States, where the North has planted its foot, that the message can reach the negro. And at all these places—Port Royal, South Carolina, and the Southern stream of the Mississippi in particular—the free negroes are already to be numbered by thousands. "General Neal Dow, who lately commanded the Federal garrison at Fort St. Philip below New Orleans, and had some five hundred slaves within his lines, reports that for 70 miles between here and New Orleans slavery is practically extinguished. In some cases the masters hire their servants. Several masters have come here and asked permission to hire their servants, who are at the forts, to go and help them get in their crops. Of course I consent, and the servants go very willingly." He predicts as the result of the President's proclamation that the slaves in that quarter "will flock to our standard *en masse*." General Phelps, also, who commands on the Mississippi above New Orleans, speaks of the advent of fugitives within the Federal lines in large numbers, chiefly of negroes from Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, who had been sent South, "and were generally religious persons." Captain Davis reports in a similar strain of the negroes arrived in New Orleans from the Border States, and contrasts their intelligence with that of the resident Blacks. And here, by the way, we may remark, is valuable proof that the intelligence and religion of the negro are developed in proportion as he approaches the North. It is in the Gulf States that true Cimmerian darkness prevails, and where the genuine type of "the wild beast" described by the Richmond papers is to be found. There

\* It is estimated that over 200,000 slaves have escaped in Maryland, Kentucky, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Missouri, since the war began.

is nothing, at all events, in the above information, that suggests the idea of negroes "wading up to the knees in the blood of the whites," nor are such sanguinary excesses probable, unless the South drives its slaves to despair. Ever since the issue of the Proclamation, we have had weekly assurance that the Confederates are fighting chiefly to preserve Slavery.

## THE SOUTHERN CONFEDERATION AND ITS CONSTITUTION.

What do Englishmen really know of the great Slave Power that is knocking at the door of European Cabinets to claim admission to the brotherhood of nations? Next to nothing, we imagine. They have seen one side of the picture and are content. They admire the military capabilities, the discipline, the desperate courage, the hardy spirit of the Seceders—see that their leaders are men of genius and resource, their people ready to make sacrifices—and forthwith jump to the conclusion that the South has earned for itself the right to become an independent nation. But before we can safely decide in the case it is necessary to examine the organisation of this new Power. We may thus be helped to a distinct impression as to the likelihood of the South ever settling into a free nation.

The free population of the eleven seceded States is 5,581,649, a number unquestionably large enough *per se* to be entitled to independence.\* The peculiarity and gravity of the case is, that these five and a half million of men demand the right of keeping in perpetual bondage another three and a half million of men. No such claim as this has been made upon the civilised world since the world began. It is clear, too, that these Southern whites would care little for independence without that right, for they seceded from the American Union expressly on the ground that slavery was in danger. The South is fighting for the right of making its own laws and for securing its independent freedom. But it is also fighting for the unrestricted power of suspending all law and all freedom in the case of more than one-third of the entire population. The arguments urged by the Confederates are logically unassailable. To deny freedom to one-third of a nation

\* This is the actual white population of the seceded States, where, of course, the 3,520,116 "chattels" go for nothing. We observe that in his published letter to Mr. Boon, Mr. Mason has the effrontery to claim "twelve millions" as belonging to the Southern Confederation. This large number is attained by including not only four millions of slaves, but the entire population of Kentucky, Western Virginia, and Missouri, none of which States have yet seceded from the Union, or are in entire possession of the South. The *New York Tribune* of November 29th says "that nearly one-third of the population, and more than a third of the area claimed by the Confederacy, are to day under Union control, most of it won by hard fighting within the past year."



would be monstrous and indefensible. But when it is contended that that third is an inferior race, incapable of being free, and that the negro "must be kept down, otherwise he will be a rebellious and dangerous subject," the theory of the Southern slave-owners is found to be consistent with their practice. Is the civilised world prepared to endorse that theory?

This is not going back to an age of barbarism. It is a more unique and portentous social phenomenon than the wickedest age has evolved. Even the darkest period of the world's history has produced nothing that will compare with it for abnegation of all the principles and ties that bind society together. Oh ye Christians of England! when you are disposed to be fascinated by the glare of Confederate valour, think what that sympathy inevitably involves! Did the most barbarous nation of antiquity ever hit upon the device of slave-breeding—ever make the body and soul of man so purely a commercial speculation as that it became necessary to shut out all light from the poor slave, and keep him in the condition of a well-fed ox? It has been reserved for a professedly Christian Power, legally to prostitute God's holiest social ordinance to the most infamous of ends. Suppose one of our counties to be set apart for the breeding of men and women, to be sold away at any time of life to our colonies to gratify the lust or cupidity of settlers there. Is not the very idea almost too revolting to be hinted at? Yet of such infamy is Virginia the scene all the year round. Nay, slave-breeding is an essential part of the system of slavery; and, according to the one-sided views Christian Englishmen have been momentarily betrayed into accepting by concealed partisans of slavery, the fact that this slave-breeding State has been visited as it were by the scourge of Heaven, and that many thousands of her negroes have been rescued from pollution and the fangs of evil-minded and bloody men, is to be moaned over as a calamity.

Mr. Stephens spoke with literal truth when he described slavery as the "corner-stone" of the Southern Confederation. The constitution it has adopted is expressly designed to give a monopoly of power to the slave-holders, and every article of the pact constituting this new nation accepts as an axiom that the slave is "property." That principle is inwrought in the constitution. In theory it is democratic. Every white man has a vote. The suffrage involves no property qualification, but it confers upon the slave-holders three votes for every five slaves he possesses. The result of this provision is that the 350,000 slave-holders of the Confederate States will possess more than two million votes in addition to their own. And when it is borne in mind that an overwhelming proportion of the free men of the South are dependent upon this slave-aristocracy, it must be admitted that in this case the democratic theory is a figment,

and that the South is practically an all-powerful oligarchy of slave-owners.

It is superfluous to say that there is no "abolition sentimentalism" about this unique constitution. Article I, section 9, provides as follows:—

"No bill of attainder, *ex post facto* law, or law DENYING OR IMPAIRING THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY IN SLAVES, SHALL BE PASSED."

We would invite the attention of those who entertain the idea that the South is merely putting up with slavery as an evil to be endured, and eventually got rid of, to this fundamental postulate. Not a thought or a hint here of gradual emancipation! It is all precisely in accordance with the sentiments expressed by every Southern authority. To make assurance doubly sure, other articles provide for the free "transit and sojourn of citizens" with their slaves and other property in the several States of the Confederation, and for the prompt delivery of all fugitive slaves to their owners. So that these people have, with one or two other alterations—prolonging the Presidency to six years, and making the tenure of office by *employés* dependent on good behaviour—nearly copied the constitution they repudiated, because they were beaten at the poll, only they have taken care that unadulterated slavery shall be, *as it never was before*, emblazoned on its front. We ask again whether it is not downright delusion to suppose that the very cardinal feature of the separate organisation of the South will ever be surrendered to external pressure. If so, then when this Confederation, composed mainly of slaveholders, slave-breeders, slave-catchers, slave-auctioneers, overseers of slaves, and "mean" whites to whom labour is a degradation, and whose highest ambition is to possess "niggers," comes to other nations and asks for recognition—surely it is not unreasonable that the civilised world in the name of humanity should hesitate to comply, or stringently insist upon conditions that will bring the inhuman system to a certain and not distant end!

## THE BORDER STATES.

Properly to understand the great contest which is raging across the Atlantic, it is necessary to have accurate information relative to those extensive regions, known by the name of the Border

\* "In the cotton states," says the Rev. W. Taylor, of California, in a recent pamphlet ("Causes and probable results of the civil war in America,") "about 47 per cent. of the population are slaves, about 51 per cent. non-slaveowners, leaving but 4 per cent. who own the slaves and most of the real estate, and rule the whole concern. These non-slaveholders have but little more responsibility for slavery than the slaves themselves. As for public sentiment in the South, there is none, but such as will receive the endorsement of the pro-slavery lords.



States, which separate North and South, and are mainly the scene of hostilities. If, as is generally believed in England, the restoration of the Union be "chimerical"—though the Federals refuse to admit the impossibility—then the practical object of the war is the possession of these States. We think it will be found that as slavery is the moral pivot on which the conflict turns, the Border States question solves the political problem involved. The following is a list of these States, with their population:—

	Freemen.	Slaves.	Total.
Delaware - - - - -	110,220	1,798	112,218
Kentucky - - - - -	930,223	225,490	1,155,713
Maryland and District of Columbia-	671,741	87,188	758,929
Missouri - - - - -	1,058,352	114,965	1,173,317
Virginia - - - - -	1,105,196	490,887	1,596,083
Total - - - - -	3,875,932	920,328	4,796,260

With the exception of Maryland and Delaware, the whole of these States are claimed by the South; and it is only by including them, as we have already pointed out, that Mr. Mason, their Envoy, is able to make good his assertion that "the present population of the Confederate States comprises about twelve millions of people." On what does this claim rest? Not upon the fact that these States have elected to join the South—for Virginia alone has so voted. Even in this case, it is to be observed that Virginia at first voted down secession, and was only induced to revoke that decision when the Montgomery Convention declared against the re-opening of the African slave trade, in order to secure to the "gentlemen" of Virginia the monopoly in the breeding of slaves for the Southern market. It may be remembered also that Western Virginia, which now contains scarcely any slaves, has erected itself into a separate State, and joined its fortunes with the North.

It suits the present purposes of the Southern leaders to magnify the doctrine of State rights. Why, then, have they invaded Kentucky, which has declared its neutrality, or laid claim to Missouri, which elected to remain in the Union? Of course it may be replied that the course the South has taken is justified by example—the Federal Government having ignored State rights in the case of all the States which voted for secession. This may be justified by military considerations, but its policy shows that the South can readily set aside State rights when it suits its purpose, and that such high-sounding pleas are a mere pretence. The citizens of Kentucky and Missouri are not likely to put much faith in Southern theories of right which, in their case, are openly and flagrantly violated. At all events, we find the Southern Envoy to England claiming dominion over States that have in a regular and constitutional way refused to secede, and are not now, in point of fact, in possession of the Confederates. They demand these States simply *because* they are Slave States. They would have all the slavery to themselves. We commend this fact to

the consideration of the advocates of the South. It is a collateral proof, if such were needed, of the real aims of this newly-organised Slave Power.

When uninformed Englishmen talk about the right of the South to "independence," they mean a very different thing from the Confederate leaders. They have a vague idea that it will be the stepping-stone to the abolition of slavery which, we have shown, the South scouts as impossible and pernicious. They think it hard that the Seceded States should not be allowed to go free. The slaveocracy mean that all States in which there is a slave element should be obliged to make common cause with them. And for that, even more than their own independence, they are now fighting. They want a great Slave Power, as their own writers state, which will be able to hold its own against the ever-expanding Free States. If they were formally to propose that the war shall be terminated by the recognition, as a separate nation, of the States only which have *actually seceded*, the civilised world would know what they mean. Let there be no delusion in this matter. The South is *doubly* the aggressor. It first, by a deep-laid and flagrant conspiracy, broke up the Union to set up for itself; and now, because it cannot hope to stand alone, claims, and is trying to conquer, States which have constitutionally refused to join it.

It is this central idea—the consolidation and extension of slavery for their own safety as well as profit—which has animated the Confederates from beginning to end, and urges them to grasp at the Border States. Would the numerous advocates of the South in this country advise that the North should, notwithstanding its abstract right, surrender these States for the sake of peace? If not, then should they be a little more tolerant of Northern persistence. They are bound to examine the subject in its practical bearings—to work the problem out. What would that surrender involve? The table we have given above supplies the answer. Even including Virginia, which, from its very peculiar trade—that of slave-breeder-in-chief for the South—naturally possesses a larger number of human live-stock than any other State, we find that the slaves in the Border States are only 920,328, or one-fifth of the population; while in the seceded States (Virginia excepted) they are 3,029,229, or two-fifths. This disparity is easily accounted for—the Southern States are better fitted for negro labour than those of a more northerly latitude; there are few runaways in the South; but, chiefly, because wherever free and slave labour come into contact, the latter invariably gives way. In accordance with economical, or as we prefer to say, Providential laws, slavery—especially American slavery, which is altogether a *new* type of servitude—contains within itself the seeds of dissolution. As Judge Warner, of Georgia, says, in the extract from his speech



already quoted—"There is not a slaveholder but who knows perfectly well, that whenever slavery is confined within certain limits, its future existence is doomed."

The North, whatever its shortcomings, honestly proposed to destroy slavery by restricting its area, and has risked the dissolution of the American Union for this object. The South seceded on this special point, because its paramount object has been to sustain the "domestic institution"—as it only can be sustained—by an indefinite expansion of slave territory. This is nothing less than a direct aggression on civilization. And Mr. Bentinck, the member for Kings Lynn, forsooth! talks of it as a struggle for "liberty!" But it is by no means the whole of the case. The South would fain secure to itself the Border States, because it thus hopes forcibly to arrest the working of that Providential law by which free labour is steadily superseding slave labour. It is notorious that, in another generation, if the war had not broken out, Maryland, Missouri, and perhaps Kentucky, would have gradually got rid of the "domestic institution," and become the abodes of only free men. If, then, the South succeeds in its monstrous scheme of usurpation, the beneficent action of natural laws tending to extinguish slavery in the Border States would be obstructed, if not entirely arrested. Why then should Englishmen, who really detest slavery in their hearts, give their sympathy to a Slave Power that would not only perpetuate the infamy but revive it where it is dying a natural death?

But the possession of the Border States involves other questions besides that of slavery. Let them be handed over to the South, and the result would be to leave to the North a mere strip of country between the vast areas of the Confederacy in the South and Canada in the North, and ultimately reduce her to the position of a second-class Power, even on her own continent. Can it then be said that the Federals are so very unreasonable, not merely in refusing to legalise secession, but in declining to accept a frontier which would nearly separate the Eastern and Western States, and make the South geographically, as well as in extent of territory, the preponderating Power of America? Can we be surprised that they should fight to the death against so momentous a revolution?

Putting aside, then, the accidents and passing phases of this mighty struggle, we find that the North is practically fighting for free labour as against slave labour. It upholds now, as it did in the Presidential election of 1860, the principle that 1,363,370 square miles of "Territories" belonging to the United States, and as yet but thinly settled, shall be free from the pollution of slavery. In refusing to surrender the Border States to the unconstitutional demand of men who were but yesterday citizens of the same commonwealth, it is asserting State rights, and the principle of free labour and free settlement.

Since the war began, considerable progress, both in principle and practice, has been made in the direction of emancipation particularly in the Border States. All slaves have been set free in the District of Columbia, slavery has been forbidden in the Territories, and the Federal Government have concluded a slave-trade treaty with England. In the Border States the war has been to a great extent, in its results, a war of liberation. One-half the slaves of Maryland are said to have escaped, thousands of fugitive negroes in Virginia are free, and a still larger number have burst their fetters in Missouri. The friends of the Confederates here are fond of throwing in the teeth of the Federals that they do not desire to abolish slavery. It may be so; but if slavery *be* abolished by their agency, will not the whole human family have reason to rejoice? According to the testimony of their enemies, the "domestic institution" perishes off the soil on which the Northern troops plant their foot. "Wherever the Union armies have advanced," says the *Richmond Despatch*, "the negroes have been swept off as clear as the Eastern locusts sweep a field of grain. Not one green or black thing is left in the line of the Yankee march, nor in the whole country for many miles around. The Piedmont, the Upper Valley, the [York] Peninsula, the country watered by the Rappahannock and the Potomac, have been stripped of their negro population." Nevertheless, if the Confederates succeed, the whole of these vast regions will be re-peopled with the slave-breeder and his live stock, and the internal slave-trade will flourish anew.

## THE CONFEDERATES AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

The Confederates have, by a special article of their constitution, prohibited the slave trade, and their champions in this country have made much merit of this supposed concession to humanity. The provisions relating both to the foreign and the internal slave-trade are as follows:—

Art. I., Sect. 9. The importation of negroes of the African race from any foreign country other than the slaveholding States or territories of the United States of America, is hereby forbidden, and Congress is required to pass such laws as shall effectually prevent the same.

Congress shall also have power to prohibit the introduction of slaves from any State not a member of, or territory belonging to, this Confederacy.

It might appear that by this fundamental article the foreign slave-trade is, for all future time, prohibited by the South. But such a conclusion would be altogether premature. All laws must be in accordance with public opinion, or they will, at some time or other, be repealed or evaded. We have the best proof that the Southerners have no objection on principle to re-open the African slave trade, and that in the adoption of the above fundamental article, they were influenced by the desire to buy the support of the slave-breeding aristocracy of Virginia, which was



withheld till the new Confederation had prohibited the re-opening of the African traffic. In its past history, the South has never shown any repugnance to the infamous traffic. For twenty years after the Declaration of Independence, the slave-trade was kept open by the Federal Government at the earnest request of the slaveholders ; and at the end of that time was declared to be piracy. But this law remained a dead letter, and was never executed upon a single offender. Captain Gordon was the first American slave-trader ever punished, and he was hanged after the secession of the South. The right of search, which the Federals have now conceded, or rather volunteered, was strenuously withheld up to 1861, and cargoes of African negroes, down to a short period of the outbreak of civil war, were occasionally landed in the South, under the protection of the local authorities.

Only three or four years ago, there was a general agitation in the Southern States for reviving the African slave-trade, in which Mr. Yancey and others of the Confederate leaders took a very prominent part in the interests of "free trade." The facts of the case have been recently so thoroughly recalled to remembrance by the *Daily News*, as scarcely to need further reference. The resumption of the detestable trade was advocated in some of the leading Southern newspapers, and by college professors and members of Congress, not only on commercial grounds, but as a moral and religious movement. The African Colonisation Society was formed for the purpose of bringing negroes from the West Coast and subjecting them to the influences of slavery, with a view to their evangelisation and subsequent re-exportation ; and the newspapers proved to their own entire satisfaction the great benefit that would accrue to the Africans by being transferred from the bonds of "their former savage pagan masters" to those of Christian slaveholders in America. One quotation will suffice to put the matter beyond controversy :—"The South," said Mr. Lee, Professor of Agricultural Chemistry in the University of Georgia, "has now nearly seven hundred thousand square miles of unimproved land, and mines of vast extent and inestimable value, which require human labour alone to render them exceedingly productive. . . . Fully to meet the mineral requirements of the South will demand the labour of a million men in the next twenty years." In view of which facts the Professor regards it as "providential that there should be so much unemployed power, in human muscles, in Western Africa"—muscular power "which may be had at from ten to fifteen dollars as it exists in each person ;" and then, warming with his subject, he exclaims, "I trace the growing demand for negro muscles, bones, and brains to the good providence of God." Even President Davis, then a senator for Mississippi, though he objected at the time to the re-opening of the slave-trade by that particular State, took care to base his opposition on special grounds, and "not upon any general

theory ;" adding, "It is not supposed to be applicable to Texas, to New Mexico, or to any future acquisitions to be made south of the Rio Grande." Unless, then, an entire revolution has taken place in Southern opinion, it would be absurd to suppose that the American Slave Power can have any *moral* objection to revive the African slave-trade.

If such be the views of the South, why should it refrain from renewing, at some future time, the odious traffic? To do this, the Confederate Congress need not formally repeal the above fundamental law. But if public opinion be the same under a separate Commonwealth as it was two or three years ago, that law will become a dead letter. Experience has shown, with a superfluity of evidence, that neither government enactments nor international treaties will suffice to put an end to this profitable trade. To this very day, though we have purchased in hard coin the co-operation of Spain to put it down, her treaty engagements are openly violated in the case of Cuba, and no one can call her to account. The re-opening of the African slave-trade by the Confederates becomes, then, a question of policy and interest. They may be deterred by the additional difficulty thrown in the way by the active co-operation for the future of Federal cruisers with our African squadron. But the real point is this:—If the new Slave Power be allowed to have undisputed possession of the vast territory to the west of the Mississippi as far as the frontier of Mexico, and including Texas—which is as large as France and England combined—and it was mainly to secure this indefinite expansion that the Slave States seceded—"the labour of a million men in the next twenty years" will be, as Professor Lee says, absolutely required. The alternative will be, the restriction of slavery, which, on the showing of Southern writers, would be its gradual extinction, or its indefinite extension westward, with an unlimited supply of "human muscles." Remembering the entire history and portentous growth of this Slave Confederacy, can there be any doubt which of these alternatives would be embraced?

There is, indeed, a third alternative, which would be almost equally disastrous to the interests of humanity. An abundant supply of negroes the South must have, if it is to maintain the slavery system. Admitting that the compact made with Virginia will be observed, and the external slave-trade kept down in perpetuity, the absolute need for servile labour must be satisfied within the limits of the Confederation itself. If, then, we do not have a revival of the African traffic with all its horrors, we shall have a revival of the internal slave-trade with its revolting accompaniments. To either the one or the other, Englishmen—say rather the civilised world—must have an invincible loathing. As the demand for negroes increased, slave-breeding would not be confined to Virginia or the Border States, but would become a



“profession” wherever found to be profitable, and the exhausting action of slave labour had impoverished the soil. The occupation of new territory will require more slaves—the increase of slaves will require more territory. How, then, except by the agency of such a convulsion as that now rocking America from one end to the other, can we reasonably hope that the gigantic evil will be abated? We have seen in little more than a generation, while credulous Englishmen have been patiently waiting the extinction of slavery, the servile class in America increase *at least four-fold*. We have seen it transformed from an institution merely tolerated, to one defended from the pages of Holy Writ, exalted as a great moral force, and guarded as a gigantic vested interest. Leaving out of view, then, the foreign slave-trade, we find this newly-created Slave Power making the most ample provision in its constitution *adopted only eighteen months ago* for the protection of the inter-state slave-trade, the right of transit and sojourn throughout the South of citizens with their slaves, and passing a special enactment for the surrender of fugitive negroes. And, further, in order that *all* the Slave States should be forced into the Confederacy, Congress is invested with powers to prevent the slaves from any State not a member of the commonwealth from being brought within its limits. Not only, then, is slavery the “corner-stone” of the Southern Confederation, but everything possible has been done even before it has become a recognised “nation,” to provide for the augmentation of the supply of servile labour by internal breeding and trading, that it may realise its ambition to become a great Slave Power.

### VIRGINIA—THE BLIGHT OF SLAVERY.

The abolition of domestic slavery is the greatest object of desire in those colonies where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state.—*Virginian Convention, 1774.*

Here are no well-cultivated farms; 500 acres barely support a small family of the better class of whites. . . . Slave-breeding supplies (or has supplied) the purses of the upper classes, while their farms, deteriorating from year to year, have barely yielded them the commonest “hog and hominy” required for the home diet of the section. All books, all music, all wines, all luxuries of every sort, have been the product of a trade in souls—too frequently of a trade in the offspring of the trader.—*Letter from Fredericksburg in the New York Times, Nov. 21, 1862.*

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” The British people seem hardly to realise the fact that the growth of their manufacturing system has been the means of expanding American slavery into the greatest social phenomenon of the age. That slavery, as developed in the Southern States, is inimical to progress, civilisation, morality, and religion—that it exhausts the soil, paralyses the energies, and debauches the souls of men,—is a position which may not only be sustained by argument, but

proved by experience. It may help to give greater definiteness to the reader's impressions if we endeavour impartially to describe the actual working of that institution in one particular State. We take Virginia as an example, because it is the oldest, one of the largest, and the most fertile of the Slave States; because slavery is seen there in its mildest form; and because the events of the war have brought the "Old Dominion," and its capital, Richmond, most prominently before the world. Virginia, besides, is the only one of the Border States which has thrown in its lot with the Southern Confederation.

In the same year that the Pilgrim Fathers stepped ashore at Massachusetts Bay, (1619) the first importation of negro slaves in North America took place. Some twenty black men, brought from Africa direct, were landed in James River from a Dutch ship, and were bought by a planter of the colony of Virginia. A regular slave-trade gradually sprung up until, at the time of the Revolution, Virginia contained within her borders no less than 270,000 negroes "held to servitude." They were employed mainly in the cultivation of one staple, tobacco, which was increased to so large an extent as to outrun the demands of the world, and so exhausted the soil that large tracts of land soon became sterile. The descendants of the cavaliers and "gentlemen," who were the first settlers in Virginia, became the proprietors of large plantations, formed a powerful and educated aristocracy of much the same stamp as the old Irish landlords—lavish, dissipated, indolent, and often non-resident. Side by side with a yearly increasing number of slaves, there grew up, or settled, in Virginia, a white population—the weakest, most ignorant, and poorest in the American Commonwealth. At the reconstruction of society after the Declaration of Independence, Virginia was among the last of the States to revise its antiquated constitution and to surrender the State-Church principle and the law of primogeniture, and was only induced to accept these reforms by the eloquence and influence of its great statesmen, Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Patrick Henry, who regarded them as the sole means of averting ruin from the proprietors of the soil. The disastrous influence of slavery upon the welfare of Virginia had already become so manifest that emancipation was openly advocated by a formidable phalanx in the State Legislature; and even before the War of Independence was concluded, Jefferson proposed that all negroes born after a certain time should be free. The plan was postponed to a more convenient season, rather than rejected. As appears from a resolution adopted unanimously by the Virginian Convention, slavery was then regarded as an evil to be got rid of as soon as circumstances would permit.

Meanwhile a large number of the old gentry, ruined by family pride, extravagance, and indolence, passed away, and their neglected estates, fell into the hands of a new but energetic body of pro-



prietors who cultivated tobacco only in rotation with other crops, and applied capital and science in agricultural pursuits. Virginia seemed to be on the high road to prosperity. There was a growing influx of white labour, and a fair prospect that in the lapse of time forced labour would cease, and that the State would become as exclusively free soil as the States immediately north of it. Slavery once more blighted these improving prospects. King Cotton had begun to assert his sway, and the successive annexation of Alabama, Florida, and Texas, to the Union provided a boundless expanse of virgin soil for its cultivation. The value of slaves steadily rose, and the planters of Virginia found it more immediately profitable to breed slaves for sale in the South than, by the tedious processes of agriculture, to improve the value of their estates. Landed property in the State diminished in worth, and went out of cultivation, because the "gentlemen" of Virginia chose to concentrate their efforts upon producing the largest possible crop of human flesh to send to the new Southern cotton-fields. Richmond grew into the slave-mart of the United States, and it is estimated that from 1840 to 1850 no less than 100,000 head of human live-stock, valued at fifty millions of dollars, were sent South, and that up to the outbreak of war this atrocious export trade was going on at the rate of 15,000 slaves per annum.\*

The moral effects of this change were soon visible. The emancipationists died out, and the advocacy of gradual abolition became not only unpopular but dangerous. That which in 1776 had been spoken of with shame by Virginian statesmen was nearly a century later proclaimed to be a beneficent ordination of Providence. In 1854 we find the *Richmond Examiner* proclaiming—"It is all an hallucination to suppose that we are ever going to get rid of African slavery, or that it will ever be desirable to do so. . . . The negro is here, and here for ever; is our property, and ours for ever; is never to be emancipated; is to be kept hard at work, and in rigid subjection all his days." In September, 1855, the *Richmond Enquirer* also described "the existence of slavery as a permanent institution," as being "the true and great question of the day." The reader will hardly have forgotten the fanatical addresses of Governor Wise, the panic that ran through all Virginia when John Brown attempted to seize Harper's Ferry, and the subsequent persecution and expulsion of every one in the State suspected of abolition.

Economically and socially, also, Virginia has suffered disastrously by the revival of the internal slave-trade. All other interests have become subordinate to that of breeding slaves. At the Revolution she had nearly twice the population of Pennsylvania, her neighbour; in 1860, the respective numbers were—Virginia, 1,047,411; Pennsylvania, 2,849,266! Her farms are

\* Professor Cairnes in a letter to the *Daily News*.

not relatively one-third the value of those in the adjoining territory; her unimproved land is three times that of Pennsylvania; her external commerce and internal communication will not bear any comparison with those of her neighbour. While in all the Free States every one is educated, there were lately in Virginia 126,000 young people who received no education except what could be imparted by their benighted parents. The poor whites are, as a rule, ignorant, degraded, and demoralised—despised even by the blacks. Mr. Olmsted says he saw in Virginia “more excessively poor than anywhere else.” To talk of liberty and independence in connexion with them is simply ludicrous.\* With abundance of mineral wealth, and coal-fields the most extensive in the world, a limitless supply of water-power, a rich soil and most genial climate, Virginia, said the *Richmond Enquirer*, in 1852, “from being first in point of wealth and material power, has come down to the fifth in the former and the fourth in the latter. New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Ohio, stand above her in wealth, and all but Massachusetts in population and political power.” It is almost pitiable to see this sinking community clinging with such desperation to the institution which has wrought their ruin, as to face all the calamities of civil war rather than become a free-labour State. But, as we know, the general sense of the population was over-borne by a selfish oligarchy. We have only to multiply Virginia by ten, and we have substantially a picture of the condition to which the Confederate States will be reduced, if they are unable to wrest from the North the right to indefinite expansion westward.

The sole flourishing institution of the Virginians is that of

\* The following is an extract of a letter written from Virginia barely six weeks ago:—“I have often wondered how the white trash live. They do not work, unless the planting of a little corn, the grazing of a horse, or mule, and cow, and the raising of a few hogs and poultry—who run nearly wild—may be called “work.” Still they live, and they raise many tow-headed children, who perpetuate the unwholesome stock. I have often, I say, wondered how they live. I have ascertained. These poor whites—ignored by the aristocracy and despised by the blacks—exist on whisky. In this wise:—Scratching together a few dollars (eight or ten was sufficient in time of peace) they purchase a barrel or two of cheap whisky. The negroes—always fond of liquor, and never honestly getting any, excepting during “the holidays”—steal from their masters corn, wheat, and chickens. These things they “trade” with the poor whites for drink. They will give two or three bushels of corn or wheat, a hog, half-a-dozen chickens, for a pint of poor liquor; and in this way the degraded white men that infest this country exist.” The same state of things exists more or less in all the cotton states, but of course does not apply to the large towns. We have here a real test of the value of the “independence” claimed with so much unction for the poor whites *who constitute an overwhelming majority of the Southern population*, excluding the slaves. The Confederates have established a social and political system, in which the poor whites have no proper place. The boon asked in their name is, in point of fact, perpetual exclusion from a boundless territory, where they are not wanted, and the continued supercession of their industry by forced labour!



slavery. Slave-breeding, like cattle-breeding in other States, is a lucrative occupation. The negroes, who outnumber those of any Southern State, are, as rule, well fed, not overworked, and mildly treated—as are live stock in general when being reared for the market. But they are rigorously denied all instruction, and are forbidden by law to meet together for worship, or for the purpose of mutual improvement. Though they are encouraged to “profess religion”—which is in their practice a compound of fanaticism and superstition—their standard of morals is very degraded, their habits swinish and offensive. They live in a sensual Paradise, and have but small reverence for the marriage-tie. Their owners, though not in general cruel or harsh, may cowhide, hunt them with bloodhounds, or kill them at their pleasure, and are amenable not to law, but only to public opinion for such treatment. Every day of the week, except Sunday, families of negroes—men and women, boys and girls—are placed upon the auctioneers’ blocks in Richmond,\* their points canvassed like cattle, and sold singly as “lots” to the highest bidders, with the probability that in a few days members of the same family will be separated by hundreds of miles, and never again see each other’s faces. Nay, worse! Of that group of sable Africans now standing aloft before the keen gaze of hardened slave-merchants and planters, it may chance that one will form a member of a gang in Alabama doomed to endless cotton-growing beneath the lash; a second may find something like a home as a body servant in a Southern family; a third may come to be hunted with bloodhounds as a fugitive; a fourth, like the sister of Sella Martin, may be bought to gratify the brutal lust of the son of some Georgian clergyman, who will afterwards sell his own flesh and blood! To perpetuate these infamies in the sacred names of “liberty” and “independence,” the South demands to be acknowledged as a “nation.” It is, perhaps, the crowning feature of this crime against humanity that a great number—if not the majority—of these traffickers in human flesh are members

\* **THE NEGRO MARKET AT RICHMOND.**—The negro market has shown considerable activity the present week, and prices have ranged well. At the sale rooms of Messrs. Pulliam and Co., yesterday, a family of eight, consisting of the mother and seven children, boys and girls, one in the mother’s arms, sold for five thousand one hundred dollars, and a second family of the same lot, consisting of a mother and four children, boys and girls, brought two thousand eight hundred and eighty dollars. At the auction rooms of Hector Davis, Esq., there was a large sale of single likely negro men and women, some of the latter with children. The following is the range of prices;—Likely boy, 15 years old, 1,480 dols.; common woman and girl, 1,015 dols.; likely girl, 16 years old, 1,290 dols.; woman, girl, and boy, 1,860 dols.; negro woman, 780 dols.; woman and boy, 1,200 dols.; likely girl, mulatto, 1,320 dols.; likely mulatto boy, 10 years old, 1,300 dols.; woman and two children, likely, 1,900 dols.; likely farm hand (man), 1,010 dols.; woman, cook, washer, and ironer, 600 dols. The attendance of buyers was quite large.—*Richmond Examiner, November 22, 1862.*

of Christian churches, and have of late years—together with their clergy—come to defend their infernal occupation from Scripture. Thus, even in Virginia, where it is to be seen in its mildest forms, slavery may be emphatically described in the words of the Hon. Charles Sumner—as “barbarous in origin; barbarous in law; barbarous in all its pretensions; barbarous in the instruments it employs; barbarous in consequences; barbarous in spirit; barbarous wherever it shows itself; while it breeds barbarians and develops everywhere alike in the individual, and in the society to which he belongs, the essential elements of barbarians.”\*

Nearly a century ago Jefferson uttered a warning voice, and his prophecy is now being strangely fulfilled. In reference to the people of his own State he said, in 1787:—“They will forget themselves *but in the sole faculty of making money*, and will never think of omitting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war will remain on us long—will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive, or *expire in a convulsion*.” Many a Virginian must now feel that the predicted day of retribution, though long delayed, has at length come, and confess the bitter truth that Providence does, sooner or later, call to account those who make merchandise of men’s bodies and souls.

## THE NEGROES OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

“Give a dog a bad name and hang him.” The picture drawn by Carlyle of Quashee squatting on his provision ground, idling all the day, and satisfied with his pumpkin, is the favourite illustration of negro habits by those who regard slavery as the natural and happiest condition of the African race, and by those, also, who are content to wink at slavery for the sake of its advantages. The negro (they say) is inherently apathetic, indolent, improvident, incapable of using his mind, of exercising judgment or forethought. He is like a child and needs a master, and if left to his native tendencies will not work at all. If these allegations, as applied to the slaves of America, were universally true, they would not prove that the coloured race there are incapable of acting as free men. They would only show the debasing influence of long-continued slavery,—that degradation as an inferior race, denial of all rights, the suppression of all motives for industry and self-reliance, have produced there natural and inevitable results. The same theory was, indeed, applied to the Celts, after centuries of oppression by the Anglo-Saxon, but is no longer heard of now that the Irish are free

\* Speech at Boston, October, 1862.

from these depressing influences. It is equally applicable to the Neapolitans, or any race that has for generations been down-trodden by despotism. To the plea of the American slaveowners there is the conclusive reply—"You deny the negro the fruits of his industry, *you* employ him as a mere machine, *you* shut out from him all knowledge, *you* refuse to allow him to exercise self-reliance in anything. If he be no better than an animal, *you* have never allowed him to be anything else." One might as reasonably accuse a man, whose eyes have been put out, of being unable to see, as admit the justice of the American slaveholders' plea for refusing to emancipate, or ameliorate the condition of, their slaves.\*

We have already seen what the negro is able to become when free. The British West Indies are a standing testimony to the blessed results of emancipation. Governor Darling, of Jamaica, states, in reference to the free negroes, that "an independent, respectable, and, I believe, trustworthy, middle-class is rapidly forming" in that island. "How comes it," we then remarked, "that among the people who are libelled as 'squatters' on the land of others, there are 60,000 families all housed in their own cottages; that they possess not less than 5,000 small sugar-mills for manufacturing their own produce; that the accumulated property of the negroes of Jamaica, since emancipation, amounts to 2,358,000*l.*; and that three-fifths of all the cultivated land in that island is the *bona fide* property of the coloured people, bought and paid for by their own industry? Is it a mark of indolence and improvidence that the negroes of Jamaica have nearly 50,000*l.* in the savings' banks? and of their apathy, that they support their own religious institutions at an expenditure of many thousands of pounds, besides contributing to the aid of foreign missions?"

But we need not go to the West Indies, nor even to the Northern American States and Canada, where clergymen, lawyers, manufacturers, &c., of the coloured race are to be found, for proofs of the falsehood of the plea that the negro is, under all circumstances, incapable, indolent, and shiftless, and to give the lie to Mr. Stephens' "truth," that slavery—subordination to the superior race—is his [the negro's] natural and moral condition." Abundant evidence that it is a libel may be found in the Slave States themselves. No candid person would deny that, as a general rule, slaves are childish and sensual, work listlessly, and require continued superintendence. But is not that the result of forced labour all the world over? Supply but the motives for industry, and the negroes will work with diligence and perseverance. We see this in the tobacco factories of Richmond, where they are hired out and allowed to keep all their earnings beyond a certain amount.

\* *Nonconformist*, January 15th, 1862.



The result is that they are able to obtain from five to twenty dollars a month. In the lumber trade of the Great Dismal Swamp slaves are hired out by the year, and are credited with all they earn over and above the sum paid to their master, and the cost of their clothing and provisions. They are comparatively free men. "These chattels," says Mr. Olmsted (in "Our Slave States"), "were more upright and straightforward in their manner and conversation than any field-hand plantation-negroes I saw at the South; two or three of their employers with whom I conversed spoke well of them as compared with other slaves, and made no complaints of rascality or laziness." It is the same on the sugar plantations of Louisiana, where the slaves work with greater cheerfulness at "the grinding season," when eighteen hours of labour is the average, than at any other period. Why? Because "they are then better paid; they have better and more varied food and stimulants than usual, but especially they have a degree of freedom and social pleasure, and a variety of occupation which brings a recreation of the mind, and to a certain degree gives them strength for, and pleasure in, their labour." And Mr. Olmsted lays it down as a rule, resulting from a wide personal observation in the Slave States, that slaves show themselves most worthy of trust, when their masters are considerate and liberal towards them—that in proportion as incentives are offered to the negro is the value of his industry—that the slave of the agricultural districts of North Carolina, where he is in a condition of semi-freedom, is twice as valuable as the slave on the plantations of South Carolina, with the driver standing over him whip in hand. This result is, indeed, so uniform, that in Cuba, where every slave has the opportunity of working out his own freedom, "emancipations are constantly going on, and the free people of colour are *becoming enlightened, cultivated, and wealthy*." And it is to be observed that, in Cuba, a very large proportion of the slaves have been, within the last generation, brought direct from Africa. That such an ameliorative practice does not prevail in America, where every slave has been born on the soil, is owing to the action of law and opinion which decide that slavery is the "natural" condition of the African race; or as the *Richmond Examiner* puts it:—"It is a thing that we cannot do without, that is righteous, profitable, and permanent, and that belongs to Southern society as inherently, intrinsically, and durably as the white race itself."

Nor need we cite the free negroes of Jamaica or Pennsylvania to show that the African race, even when education is denied, are capable of intelligence and civilisation. Under even the disadvantages of slavery itself we find evidence of the fact.

There was no need to pretend (said a Texan slaveowner to Mr. Olmsted) that the negro was incapable of being greatly improved. No man improved faster under favourable circumstances. The difference between town-bred

and plantation-bred slaves, in point of general intelligence, was always very striking. He had been in business intercourse for many years with a gentleman whose bookkeeping and correspondence had been almost altogether carried on by a slave, and it was admirably done; his manner of expression was terse, pointed, and appropriate, and his business abilities every way admirable. His owner could not possibly have obtained more valuable services from a white clerk.

The same writer gives another case in point:—

A gentleman whom I visited at Montgomery had a carpenter, who was remarkable for his mathematical capacities. Without having had any instruction, he was able to give very close and accurate estimates for the quantity of all descriptions of lumber to be used in building a large and handsome dwelling, of the time to be employed upon it, and of its cost. He was an excellent workman, and when not occupied with work directly for his master, obtained employment of others—making engagements and taking contracts for jobs, without being required to consult his master. He had been purchased for two thousand dollars, and his ordinary wages were two dollars a day. He earned considerable money besides, for himself, by over-work at his trade.

Mr. Olmsted also gives full details of the mechanism of a large and well-managed rice plantation he visited in Georgia, where he found slave blacksmiths, carpenters, &c., whose workmanship exhibited as much ingenuity and skill as that of the ordinary mechanics of New England; a slave steward whose responsibilities were greater than those of the white overseer; and slave-engineers who attend to the steam-engine, and earn wages sufficient to keep them in comparative luxury.

These, it may be said, are extreme or selected cases, and not fair specimens of American slaves in general. If so, at least they suffice to disprove Mr. Stephens' theory. But they are far from being isolated proofs of the intelligence and industrial capacity of the negro. Everywhere throughout the Southern States there are numbers of negroes employed in skilled trades, or occupying positions of some responsibility, who, when they have a chance of earning wages, exhibit unusual industry, and oftentimes great aptness and intelligence. But there has lately come before the world an extreme case which conclusively proves the safety and policy of giving freedom to the negro. When, on the appearance of a Federal armament, the South Carolinas were obliged to abandon the Sea Islands, they left behind them nearly 10,000 plantation slaves of unmixed African descent, a large proportion of whom were aged, infirm, and children. They were about the most degraded of their race. The able-bodied amongst them, about 4,000, were set to work on low wages, under the auspices of the Generals, and under Northern superintendence, first to gather in the standing cotton—more than a million of pounds of which were picked, made up, and sold in New York for the benefit of the national treasury. Subsequently, 14,000 acres of cotton, corn, and other provisions were planted by these negroes under great difficulties, and in the midst of a raging war,

but with surprising success. Mr. J. M. M'Kim, who spent some weeks among them, and visited all the principal islands, reports that "these live-long chattel slaves dehumanised in law, and degraded, in fact, to the extent of human power, when suddenly transformed into free labourers, go to work, and continue to work, peaceably, happily, and industriously;" these free labour negroes are sober, susceptible of control, and, though the plantations are worked by purely voluntary agency and inadequately superintended, decorous in their behaviour, and tidy in their appearance. "On the first day of the week they all go to church, or rather to Sunday-school, which is generally held in the church. During the week the children, to the number of 2,500, are taught, but on Sunday people of all ages assemble, and the superintendents and others act in the capacity of teachers." A similar work has been going on around New Orleans, at Fortress Monroe, and in the parts of North Carolina occupied by the Federal forces, and all the emancipated negroes are being instructed by bands of teachers from Massachusetts and other States, who have nobly given themselves to the task. Such is the interesting enterprise carried on in the Southern States by those whom English journalists, and poets who have sung of "the good time coming," denounce as "exterminators," and as eager to stir up servile insurrection and massacre in the South.

As in the West Indies before 1838, so in the Southern States of America at the present time, these continual assertions as to the irreclaimable depravity of the coloured race are simply selfish, impudent, and hard-hearted excuses for refusing emancipation. That they should be reiterated by English journals is a disgrace to our national reputation. It needs but that the slave-owners of America should be willing and just, to make emancipation perfectly safe, and beneficial alike to white and black. The difficulties exist not in the condition of the negro, but in the will of his master.



















































B. P. L. Binney.  
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