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ENGLAND AND AMERICA:

*Complete*

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED BY

GOLDWIN SMITH,

BEFORE THE BOSTON FRATERNITY, DURING HIS RECENT VISIT  
TO THE UNITED STATES.

Reprinted from the "Atlantic Monthly."

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION

ADDRESSED, BY THE AUTHOR, TO THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNION AND EMANCIPATION SOCIETY,  
MANCHESTER.

MANCHESTER :  
A. IRELAND AND CO., PALL MALL COURT.

1865.



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UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA

OXFORD, *January* 16, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR,

The lecture delivered before the Boston Fraternity, and published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, which you propose to reprint, and which I shall be most happy to see circulated under your auspices, is obviously the work of one who does not regard America as a foreign nation, alien to our political concerns, but as the great colony of England, accidentally and temporarily estranged from the mother country by the acts of George III., Mr. Grenville, and Lord North—acts against which Chatham protested and in which the English people had no share. This view, and the sentiments which correspond to it, may be erroneous, but they involve no want of loyalty or affection to our own country.

There are two lines of policy which may be pursued towards the great Anglo-Saxon community on the other side of the Atlantic. One is to treat it as a natural enemy, and do all in our power to break it up and destroy its greatness. The other is to treat it as our natural friend, to show on every proper occasion and in every way consistent with our honour



(that honour without which there can be no worthy friendship on either side), that we are sensible of the tie of blood which unites us to it, and to divest American greatness of danger to us by making it our own. The present current of events seems to show that the line of policy last mentioned, though rejected by great diplomatists, is likely to prove the more practicable as well as the more genial of the two. In fact, their geographical position, the great channels of commerce, such as the Mississippi and other navigable rivers, which traverse their territory, and mutual interests too manifest to be disregarded, added to their common race and language, can scarcely fail to reunite the inhabitants of Northern America, in the long run, into one confederation, even though a temporary disruption should take place. No State has been more loyal to the Federal Government during this rebellion, or shown its loyalty in a more effective way, than California; and the separation of the West from the East, so confidently predicted here, seems to observers on the spot improbable in the highest degree.

The two portions of the Anglo-Saxon race have now been brought pretty close to the verge of a fratricidal war—for a fratricidal war it would be, in the literal sense, not perhaps to our aristocracy, but to that very numerous class of our people which has kinsmen on the other side of the Atlantic. Our French rivals, I see, are beginning to reckon upon this war as



certain to ensue, and to exult in the prospect of it. And French imperialists well may exult; for it would be the greatest blow that the cause of human freedom could possibly receive.

The influences which impel us towards this disaster on both sides are too powerful: but on both sides they are alien not only to the interests, but to the deepest feelings of the great body of the people, and such as true patriots, actuated not by love or hatred of any class or order, but by desire of the general welfare, ought to struggle, and may yet successfully struggle, to control.

On our side there is the antipathy of our aristocracy and hierarchy, the feudal and Roman elements of our polity, to the free institutions of New England—an antipathy so natural, so inevitable, that it ought to move no resentment, unless it breaks out into injurious acts, and sacrifices the public welfare to the interests of a particular order. The slaveowning aristocracy, oppressors of a helpless race, torturers of women, authors of a slave code which sets Christian sanctity as well as justice at defiance, would scarcely have received the sympathy of St. Louis, Bayard, or the Black Prince, much less that of the good bishops of the Middle Ages. The pedigrees of a great many of them are not more historic than those of overseers or sharp Yankee traders. Still they are an aristocracy of a certain kind; at all events the government which they are struggling

to overthrow is a government of the people. Besides this class antagonism, there is the danger arising from the unpatriotic cupidity of some of our commercial men, fitters out of privateers for the South, and blockade runners, for whose gains, the nation, though it has no share in them, may pay in tears and blood.

Every Anglo-American has at the bottom of his heart something of a filial feeling towards Old England. But the Irish, in America, are, with too much reason, our mortal enemies; and as they vote together with clanish compactness, they are able to exercise a very disproportionate influence on the councils of the State and the conduct of public men. The slaveowners hated us with equal malignity, though we are now exhorted to take them to our bosom; and the Democratic party, of which they were the chiefs, and the Irish the rank and file, during its long domination, succeeded in creating a factitious Anglophobia, in which almost all politicians and public writers, more or less, shared or pretended to share, and which, though its cause being withdrawn, it will probably soon subside, has not yet ceased to poison the judgment of the American people.

Profligate journalists on both sides have laboured to inflame the mutual animosity; and if the result should be a war, perhaps the world will begin to moralize upon the irresponsible agencies which can bring such calamities on nations. Foremost in virulence on our side, and perhaps unparalleled in disregard

of truth, has been the wealthiest of English journals, and the one which most affects the air of a great public instructor, above the feelings of ordinary partizanship and the passions of the people. The mischief done by the leading articles has been equalled, or even exceeded, by that done by the letters of ill chosen—or perhaps too well chosen—correspondents, who, being men incapable of observing and recording a great revolution, have filled their letters with slanderous gossip, collected sometimes in the most discreditable manner, to gratify the lowest prejudices of their English readers.

The principal point of dangerous contact is Canada; the colonists of which, or a large part of them, have been stimulated by our Tory press and by the military demonstrations made by the government on their frontier, into an attitude of irritating hostility to their neighbours: whence the gathering of Southern refugees and emissaries in that territory, the Raids, and the notice now given by the American government of its intention to place an armed flotilla on the lakes. The Americans have no wish to annex Canada, the addition of which to their vast territories would only increase the difficulty of securing a compact nationality, the grand object of their present wishes: but they of course appreciate it as a battle-field, and they are exasperated at seeing it made a den of bandits and buccaneers. Nassau is also a great source of ill feeling; for though blockade running may be lawful, it is bitter to see a distant power

sheltering on your very coast, beneath the guns of an outlying fortress, the vessels which sustain and prolong a civil war. When all this is over, the reason of the English nation will perhaps begin to reflect on the value of distant dependencies, which cost us a good deal, yield us nothing, and entangle us in quarrels.

The effects of war to the Americans will be the ruin of their finances, which the inexperience of their financiers has already brought into a most critical condition ; and which can be restored only by the revival of their trade, the opening up of their internal communications, and the influx of emigrants to convert, by their labour, the dormant resources of the country—agricultural and mineral—into actual and taxable wealth. As a consequence of financial ruin, and of the prolongation of military government, the constitution will assuredly be brought into serious peril. Canada might be partly overrun : but the Canadians would be thereby made the deadly enemies of the United States, and the ready instruments of foreign aggression for a century to come.

As to this country, our literary incendiaries are beginning themselves to see the gravity of the position into which they have brought us. Our commerce would be swept from the sea, as that of the Americans has already been. The American navy now numbers about five hundred vessels, of which a large proportion, built in the first instance against the blockade-



runners, are equally adapted for preying on peaceful trade. The scene of war would be Canada, three thousand miles from our resources, almost inaccessible during five months in the year, and commanded by great lakes on which the Americans can in a very short time put an overwhelming force; while the Canadians are destitute of any effective armament, and would be compelled to throw themselves entirely on our hands. It is a common notion in this country that we could bombard the great cities on the American seaboard: but seamen say and anyone who has seen the approaches to New York and Boston will readily believe, that this notion is quite unfounded. A blockade of so extensive a coast, with its ports full of vessels of war, must be allowed to be utterly hopeless.

The Canadians have already been warned of their fate by the withdrawal of the troops, which were totally inadequate to guard the whole frontier, into the fortresses of the Lower Province; an intimation that, in the event of a war, the Upper Province is to be abandoned to the invader.

Such would be the immediate effects to all parties of a war between England and America. But the immediate effects would be as nothing compared with its ultimate effects in marring the glorious future of the Anglo-Saxon race, and imperilling the principles of which the members of that race are now almost the sole depositories in the world. Against the currents which are drawing us towards this abyss, the pen

of a private writer is as a straw against the rapids of Niagara; but much may be done by combined action, and not a little has been done—and it is to be hoped may still be done—by the association of which you are the head.

I am, my dear sir,

Very faithfully yours,

GOLDWIN SMITH

*The President of the Manchester Union and  
Emancipation Society, Manchester.*

## ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

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I CAME to America to see and hear, not to lecture. But when I was invited by the Boston "Fraternity" to lecture in their course, and permitted to take the relations between England and America as my subject, I did not feel at liberty to decline the invitation. England is my country. To America, though an alien by birth, I am, as an English Liberal, no alien in heart. I deeply share the desire of all my political friends in England and of the leaders of my party to banish ill-feeling and promote good-will between the two kindred nations. My heart would be cold if that desire were not increased by the welcome which I have met with here. More than once, when called upon to speak (a task little suited to my habits and powers), I have tried to make it understood that the feelings of England as a nation towards you in your great struggle had not been truly represented by a portion of our press. Some of my present hearers may, perhaps, have seen very imperfect reports of those speeches. I hope to say what I have to say with a little more clearness now.

There was between England and America the memory of ancient quarrels, which your national pride did not suffer to sleep, and which sometimes galled a haughty nation little patient of defeat. In more recent times there had been a number of disputes, the more angry because they were between brethren. There had been disputes about boundaries, in which England believed herself to have been overreached by your negotiators, or, what was still more irritating, to have been overborne because her main power was not here. There had been disputes about the right of search, in which we had to taste the bitterness, now not unknown



to you, of those whose sincerity in a good cause is doubted, when, in fact, they are perfectly sincere. You had alarmed and exasperated us by your Ostend manifesto, and your scheme for the annexation of Cuba. In these discussions some of your statesmen had shown towards us the spirit which Slavery does not fail to engender in the domestic tyrant; while, perhaps, some of our statesmen had been too ready to presume bad intentions and anticipate wrong. In our war with Russia your sympathies had been, as we supposed, strongly on the Russian side; and we—even those among us who least approved the war—had been scandalized at seeing the American Republic in the arms of a despotism which had just crushed Hungary, and which stood avowed as the arch-enemy of liberty in Europe. In the course of that war an English envoy committed a fault by being privy to recruiting in your territories. The fault was acknowledged;\* but the matter was pressed by your government in a temper which we thought showed a desire to humiliate, and a want of that readiness to accept satisfaction, when frankly tendered, which renders the reparation of an unintentional offence easy and painless between men of honour. These wounds had been inflamed by the unfriendly criticism of English writers, who visited a new country without the spirit of philosophic inquiry, and who, in collecting materials for the amusement of their countrymen, sometimes showed themselves a little wanting in regard for the laws of hospitality, as well as in penetration and in largeness of view.

Yet beneath this outward estrangement there lay in the heart of England at least a deeper feeling, an appeal to which was never

\* On referring to the Blue Book I find that my memory has somewhat deceived me here. Our government did not formally acknowledge that its envoy had committed a fault; and it is doubtful whether, legally speaking, he had committed one, the question turning on the relations between municipal and international law. But Lord Clarendon wrote a despatch (July 16, 1855), frankly expressing regret if anything had been done amiss, and giving full assurance for the future, which was transmitted by Mr. Buchanan to the American government "with much satisfaction," and which ought to have terminated the affair. The controversy was renewed by Mr. Marcy (September 5, 1855) in the most offensive tone, and with an object which it is impossible to mistake.—G. S.

unwelcome, even in quarters where the love of American institutions least prevailed. I will venture to repeat some words from a lecture addressed a short time before this war to the University of Oxford, which at that time had amongst its students an English prince. "The loss of the American colonies," said the lecturer, speaking of your first revolution, "was perhaps in itself a gain to both countries. It was a gain, as it emancipated commerce and gave free course to those reciprocal streams of wealth which a restrictive policy had forbidden to flow. It was a gain, as it put an end to an obsolete tutelage, which tended to prevent America from learning betimes to walk alone, while it gave England the puerile and somewhat dangerous pleasure of reigning over those whom she did not and could not govern, but whom she was tempted to harass and insult. A source of military strength colonies can scarcely be. You prevent them from forming proper military establishments of their own, and you drag them into your quarrels at the price of undertaking their defence. The inauguration of free-trade was in fact the renunciation of the only solid object for which our ancestors clung to an invidious and perilous supremacy, and exposed the heart of England by scattering her fleet and armies over the globe. It was not the loss of the colonies, but the quarrel, that was one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest disaster that ever befell the English race. Who would not give up Blenheim and Waterloo if only the two Englands could have parted from each other in kindness and in peace; if our statesmen could have had the wisdom to say to the Americans, generously and at the right season, 'You are Englishmen, like ourselves; be, for your own happiness and for our honour, like ourselves, a nation?' But English statesmen, with all their greatness, have seldom known how to anticipate necessity; too often the sentence of history on their policy has been that it was wise, just, and generous, but too late. Too often have they waited for the teaching of disaster. Time will heal this, like other wounds. In signing away his own empire, George III. did not sign away the empire of English liberty, of English law, of English literature, of English religion, of English blood, or of the English tongue. But though the wound will heal—and that it may heal ought to be the earnest desire of

the whole English name—history can never cancel the fatal page which robs England of half the glory and half the happiness of being the mother of a great nation.” Such, I say, was the language addressed to Oxford in the full confidence that it would be well received.

And now all these clouds seemed to have fairly passed away. Your reception of the Prince of Wales, the heir and representative of George III., was a perfect pledge of reconciliation. It showed that beneath a surface of estrangement there still remained the strong tie of blood. Englishmen who loved the New England as well as the Old were for the moment happy in the belief that the two were one again. And, believe me, joy at this complete renewal of our amity was very deeply and widely felt in England. It spread far even among the classes which have shown the greatest want of sympathy for you in the present war.

England has diplomatic connections—she has sometimes diplomatic intrigues—with the great powers of Europe. For a real alliance she must look here. Strong as is the element of aristocracy in her government, there is that in her, nevertheless, which makes her cordial understandings with military despotisms little better than smothered hate. With you she may have a league of the heart. We are united by blood. We are united by a common allegiance to the cause of freedom. You may think that English freedom falls far short of yours. You will allow that it goes beyond any yet attained by the great European nations, and that to those nations it has been and still is a light of hope. I see it treated with contempt here. It is not treated with contempt by Garibaldi. It is not treated with contempt by the exiles from French despotism, who are proud to learn the English tongue, and who find in our land, as they think, the great asylum of the free. Let England and America quarrel, let your weight be cast into the scale against us, when we struggle with the great conspiracy of absolutist powers around us, and the hope of freedom in Europe would be almost quenched. Hampden and Washington in arms against each other! What could the powers of evil desire more? When Americans talk lightly of a war with England, one desires to ask them what they believe the effects of such a war would be on



their own country. How many more American wives do they wish to make widows? How many more American children do they wish to make orphans? Do they deem it wise to put a still greater strain on the already groaning timbers of the constitution? Do they think that the suspension of trade and emigration, with the price of labour rising and the harvests of Illinois excluded from their market, would help you to cope with the financial difficulties which fill with anxiety every reflecting mind? Do they think that four more years of war government would render easy the tremendous work of re-construction? But the interests of the great community of nations are above the private interests of America or of England. If war were to break out between us what would become of Italy, abandoned without help to her Austrian enemy and her sinister protector? What would become of the last hopes of liberty in France? What would become of the world?

English liberties, imperfect as they may be,—and as an English Liberal of course thinks they are,—are the source from which your liberties have flowed, though the river may be more abundant than the spring. Being in America, I am in England,—not only because American hospitality makes me feel that I am still in my own country, but because our institutions are fundamentally the same. The great foundations of constitutional government, legislative assemblies, parliamentary representation, personal liberty, self-taxation, the freedom of the press, allegiance to the law as a power above individual will,—all these were established, not without memorable efforts and memorable sufferings, in the land from which the fathers of your republic came. You are living under the Great Charter, the Petition of Right, the Habeas Corpus Act, the Libel Act. Perhaps you have not even yet taken from us all that, if a kindly feeling continues between us, you may find it desirable to take. England by her eight centuries of constitutional progress has done a great work for you, and the two nations may yet have a great work to do together for themselves and for the world. A student of history, knowing how the race has struggled and stumbled onwards through the ages until now, cannot believe in the finality and perfection of any set of institutions, not even of yours. This vast electioneering apparatus, with

its strange machinery and discordant sounds, in the midst of which I find myself,—it may be, and I firmly believe it is, better for its purpose than anything that has gone before it; but is it the crowning effort of mankind? If our creed—the Liberal creed—be true, American institutions are a great step in advance of the Old World; but they are not a miraculous leap into a political millennium. They are a momentous portion of that continual onward effort of humanity which it is the highest duty of history to trace; but they are not its final consummation. Model republic! How many of these models has the course of ages seen broken and flung disdainfully aside! You have been able to do great things for the world because your forefathers did great things for you. The generation will come which in its turn will inherit the fruits of your efforts, add to them a little of its own, and in the plenitude of its self-esteem repay you with ingratitude. The time will come when the memory of the model republicans of the United States, as well as that of the narrow parliamentary reformers of England, will appeal to history, not in vain, to rescue it from the injustice of posterity, and extend to it the charities of the past.

New-comers among the nations, you desire, like the rest, to have a history. You seek it in Indian annals, you seek it in Northern sagas. You fondly surround an old windmill with the pomp of Scandinavian antiquity, in your anxiety to fill up the void of your unpeopled past. But you have a real and glorious history, if you will not reject it,—monuments genuine and majestic, if you will acknowledge them as your own. Yours are the palaces of the Plantagenets,—the cathedrals which enshrined our old religion,—the illustrious hall in which the long line of our great judges reared, by their decisions, the fabric of our law,—the gray colleges in which our intellect and science found their earliest home,—the graves where our heroes and sages and poets sleep. It would as ill become you to cultivate narrow national memories in regard to the past as it would to cultivate narrow national prejudices at present. You have come out, as from other relics of barbarism which still oppress Europe, so from the barbarism of jealous nationality. You are heirs to all the wealths of the Old World, and must owe gratitude for a part of your heritage to Germany, France, and Spain, as well

as to England. Still, it is from England that you are sprung ; from her you brought the power of self-government which was the talisman of colonization and the pledge of your empire here. She it was, that, having advanced by centuries of effort to the front of the Old World, became worthy to give birth to the New. From England you are sprung ; and it is because you are Englishmen that English freedom, not French or Spanish despotism, is the law of this continent. From England you are sprung ; and if the choice were given you among all the nations of the world, which would you rather choose for a mother ?

England bore you, and bore you not without a mother's pangs. For the real hour of your birth was the English Revolution of the seventeenth century, at once the saddest and the noblest period of English history,—the noblest, whether we look to the greatness of the principles at stake, or to the grandeur of the actors who fill the scene. This is not the official version of your origin. The official version makes you the children of the revolutionary spirit which was abroad in the eighteenth century and culminated in the French Revolution. But this robs you of a century and a half of antiquity, and of more than a century and a half of greatness. Since 1783 you have had a marvellous growth of population and of wealth,—things not to be spoken of, as cynics have spoken of them, without thankfulness, since the added myriads have been happy, and the wealth has flowed not to a few, but to all. But before 1783 you had founded, under the name of an English colony, a community emancipated from feudalism ; you had abolished here and doomed to general abolition hereditary aristocracy, and that which is the essential basis of hereditary aristocracy, primogeniture in the inheritance of land. You had established, though under the semblance of dependence on the English crown, a virtual sovereignty of the people. You had created the system of common schools, in which the sovereignty of the people has its only safe foundation. You had proclaimed, after some misgivings and backslidings, the doctrine of liberty of conscience, and released the Church from her long bondage to the State. All this you had achieved while you still were, and gloried in being, a colony of England. You have done great things, since your quarrel with



George III., for the world as well as for yourselves. But for the world, perhaps, you had done greater things before.

In England the Revolution of the seventeenth century failed. It failed, at least, as an attempt to establish social equality and liberty of conscience. The feudal past, with a feudal Europe to support it, sat too heavy on us to be cast off. By a convulsive effort we broke loose, for a moment, from the hereditary aristocracy and the hierarchy. For a moment we placed a popular chief in power, though Cromwell was obliged by circumstances, as well as impelled by his own ambition, to make himself a king. But when Cromwell died before his hour, all was over for many a day with the party of religious freedom and of the people. The nation had gone a little way out of the feudal and hierarchical Egypt; but the horrors of the unknown Wilderness, and the memory of the flesh-pots, overpowered the hope of the Promised Land; and the people returned to the rule of Pharaoh and his priests amidst the bonfires of the Restoration. Something had been gained. Kings became more careful how they cut the subject's purse; bishops, how they clipped the subject's ears. Instead of being carried over by Laud to Rome, we remained Protestants after a sort, though without liberty of conscience. Our parliament, such as it was, with a narrow franchise and rotten boroughs, retained its rights; and in time we secured the independence of the judges and the integrity of an aristocratic law. But the great attempt had miscarried. English society had made a supreme effort to escape from feudalism and the hierarchy into social justice and religious freedom, and that effort had failed.

Failed in England, but succeeded here. The yoke which in the mother country we had not strength to throw off, in the colony we escaped; and here, beyond the reach of the Restoration, Milton's vision proved true, and a free community was founded, though in a humble and unsuspected form, which depended on the life of no single chief, and lived on when Cromwell died. Milton, when the night of the Restoration closed on the brief and stormy day of his party, bated no jot of hope. He was strong in that strength of conviction which assures spirits like his of the future, however dark the present may appear. But, could he have beheld it, the morning,



moving westward in the track of the Puritan emigrants, had passed from his hemisphere only to shine again in this with no fitful ray, but with a steady brightness which will one day re-illumine the feudal darkness of the Old World.

The Revolution failed in England. Yet in England the party of Cromwell and Milton still lives. It still lives; and in this great crisis of your fortunes, its heart turns to you. On your success ours depends. Now, as in the seventeenth century, the thread of our fate is twined with the thread of yours. An English Liberal comes here, not only to watch the unfolding of your destiny, but to read his own.

Even in the Revolution of 1776 Liberal England was on your side. Chatham was your spokesman, as well as Patrick Henry. We, too, reckon Washington among our heroes. Perhaps there may have been an excuse even for the king. The relation of dependence which you as well as he professed to hold sacred, and which he was bound to maintain, had long become obsolete. It was time to break the cord which held the child to its mother; and probably there were some on your side, from the first, or nearly from the first, resolved to break it,—men instinct with the revolutionary spirit, and bent on a Republic. All parties were in a false position; and they could find no way out of it better than civil war. Good-will, not hatred, is the law of the world; and seldom can history—even the history of the conqueror—look back on the results of war without regret. England, scarcely guilty of the offence of her monarch, drank the cup of shame and disaster to the dregs. That war ruined the French finances, which till then might have been retrieved, past the hope of redemption, and precipitated the Revolution which hurled France through anarchy into despotism, and sent Lafayette to a foreign dungeon, and his master to the block. You came out victorious; but, from the violence of the rupture, you took a political bias not perhaps entirely for good; and the necessity of the war blended you, under equivocal conditions, with other colonies of a wholly different origin and character which then “held persons to service,” and are now your half-dethroned tyrant, the Slave Power. This Revolution will lead to a revision of many things—perhaps to a partial revision of your

history. Meantime, let me repeat, England counts Washington among her heroes.

And now as to the conduct of England towards you in this civil war. It is of want of sympathy, if of anything, on our part, not of want of interest, that you have a right to complain. Never, within my memory, have the hearts of Englishmen been so deeply moved by any foreign struggle as by this civil war,—not even, if I recollect aright, by the great European earthquake of 1848. I doubt whether they were more moved by the Indian mutiny or by our war with Russia. It seemed that history had brought round again the great crisis of the 'Thirty Years' War, when all England throbbed with the mortal struggle waged between the powers of Liberty and Slavery on their German battle-field; for expectation can scarcely have been more intense when Gustavus and Tilly were approaching each other at Leipsic than it was when Meade and Lee were approaching each other at Gettysburg. Severed from us by the Atlantic, while other nations are at our door, you are still nearer to us than all the world beside.

It is of want of sympathy, not of want of interest, that you have to complain. And the sympathy which has been withheld is not that of the whole nation, but that of certain classes, chiefly of the class against whose political interest you are fighting, and to whom your victory brings eventual defeat. The real origin of your nation is the key to the present relations between you and the different parties in England. This is the old battle waged again on a new field. We will not talk too much of Puritans and Cavaliers. The soldiers of the Union are not Puritans, neither are the planters Cavaliers. But the present civil war is a vast episode in the same irrepressible conflict between Aristocracy and Democracy; and the heirs of the Cavalier in England sympathise with your enemies, the heirs of the Puritan with you.

The feeling of our aristocracy, as of all aristocracies, is against you. It does not follow, nor do I believe, that as a body they would desire or urge their government to do you a wrong, whatever spirit may be shown by a few of the less honourable or more violent members of their order. With all their class-sentiments, they are Englishmen, trained to walk in the paths of English

policy and justice. But that their feelings should be against you is not strange. You are fighting, not for the restoration of the Union, not for the emancipation of the negro, but for Democracy against Aristocracy; and this fact is thoroughly understood by both parties throughout the Old World. As the champions of Democracy, you may claim, and you receive, the sympathy of the Democratic party in England and in Europe; that of the Aristocratic party you cannot claim. You must bear it calmly, if the aristocracies mourn over your victories and triumph over your defeats. Do the friends of Democracy conceal their joy when a despotism or an oligarchy bites the dust?

The members of our aristocracy bear you no personal hatred. An American going among them even now meets with nothing but personal courtesy and kindness. Under ordinary circumstances they are not indifferent to your good-will, nor unconscious of the tie of blood. But to ask them entirely to forget their order would be too much. In the success of a commonwealth founded on social and political equality all aristocracies must read their doom. Not by arms, but by example, you are a standing menace to the existence of political privilege. And the thread of that existence is frail. Feudal antiquity holds life by a precarious tenure amidst the revolutionary tendencies of this modern world. It has gone hard with the aristocracies throughout Europe of late years, though the French Emperor, as the head of the Reaction, may create a mock nobility round his upstart throne. The Roman aristocracy was an aristocracy of arms and law. The feudal aristocracy of the Middle Ages was an aristocracy of arms and in some measure of law; it served the cause of political progress in its hour and after its kind; it confronted tyrannical kings when the people were as yet too weak to confront them; it conquered at Runnymede, as well as at Hastings. But the aristocracies of modern Europe are the aristocracies neither of arms nor of law. They are aristocracies of social and political privilege alone. They owe, and are half-conscious that they owe, their present existence only to factitious weaknesses of human nature, and to the antiquated terrors of communities long kept in leading-strings and afraid to walk alone. If there were nothing but reason to dispel them, these fears might



long retain their sway over European society. But the example of a great commonwealth flourishing here without a privileged class, and of a popular sovereignty combining order with progress, tends, however remotely, to break the spell. Therefore, as a class, the English nobility cannot desire the success of your Republic. Some of the order there are who have hearts above their coronets as there are some kings who have hearts above their crowns, and who in this great crisis of humanity forget that they are noblemen, and remember that they are men. But the order, as a whole, has been against you, and has swayed in the same direction all who were closely connected with it or dependent on it. It could not fail to be against you, if it was for itself. Be charitable to the instinct of self-preservation. It is strong, sometimes violent, in us all.

In truth, it is rather against the Liberals of England than against you that the feeling of our aristocracy is directed. Liberal leaders have made your name odious by pointing to your institutions as the condemnation of our own. They did this too indiscriminately perhaps, while in one respect your institutions were far below our own, inasmuch as you were a slaveholding nation. "Look," they were always saying, "at the Model Republic,— behold its unbroken prosperity, the harmony of its people under the system of universal suffrage, the lightness of its taxation,— behold, above all, its immunity from war!" All this is now turned upon us as a taunt; but the taunt implies rather a sense of escape on the part of those who utter it than malignity: and the answer to it is victory.

What has been said of our territorial aristocracy may be said of our commercial aristocracy, which is fast blending with the territorial into a government of wealth. This again is nothing new. History can point to more cases than one in which the sympathies of rich men have been regulated by their riches. The Money Power has been cold to your cause throughout Europe,— perhaps even here. In all countries great capitalists are apt to desire that the labourer should be docile and contented, that popular education should not be carried dangerously high, and that the right relations between capital and labour should be

maintained. The bold doctrines of the slaveowner as to "free labour and free schools" may not be accepted in their full strength; yet they touch a secret chord. But we have friends of the better cause among our English capitalists as well as among our English peers. The names of Mr. Baring and Mr. Thomas Bayley Potter are not unknown here. The course taken by such men at this crisis is an earnest of the essential unity of interest which underlies all class divisions,—which, in our onward progress towards the attainment of a real community, will survive all class distinctions, and terminate the conflict between capital and labour, not by making the labourer the slave of the capitalist, nor the capitalist the slave of the labourer, but by establishing between them mutual good-will, founded on intelligence and justice.

And let the upper classes of England have their due. The Lancashire operatives have been upon the other side; yet not the less have they received ready and generous help in their distress from all ranks and orders in the land.

It would be most unworthy of a student of history to preach vulgar hatred of an historic aristocracy. The aristocracy of England has been great in its hour, probably beneficent, perhaps indispensable to the progress of our nation, and so to the foundation of yours. Do you wish for your revenge upon it? The road to that revenge is sure. Succeed in your great experiment. Show by your example, by your moderation and self-control through this war and after its close, that it is possible for communities, duly educated, to govern themselves without the control of an hereditary order. The progress of opinion in England will in time do the rest. War, forced by you upon the English nation, would only strengthen the worst part of the English aristocracy in the worst way, by bringing our people in collision with a democracy, and by giving the ascendancy, as all wars not carried on for a distinct moral object do, to military passions over political aspirations. Our war with the French republic threw back our internal reforms, which till then had been advancing, for a whole generation. Even the pockets of our landowners would not suffer, but gain, by the war; for their rents would be raised by the exclusion of your corn, and the price of labour would be lowered by the stoppage of emigration. The suffering would fall, as usual, on the people.

The gradual effect of your example may enable European society finally to emerge from feudalism, in a peaceful way, without violent revolutions. Every one who has studied history must regard violent revolutions with abhorrence. A European Liberal ought to be less inclined to them than ever, when he has seen America, and received from the sight, as I think he may, a complete assurance of the future.

I have spoken of our commercial aristocracy generally. Liverpool demands a word by itself. It is the stronghold of the Southern party in England: from it hostile acts have proceeded, while from other quarters there have proceeded only hostile words. There are in Liverpool men who do honour to the name of British merchant; but the city as a whole is not the one among all our commercial cities in which moral chivalry is most likely to be found. In Manchester, cotton-spinning though it be, there is much that is great,—a love of art, displayed in public exhibitions,—a keen interest in great political and social questions,—literature,—even religious thought,—something of that high aspiring spirit which made commerce noble in the old English merchant, in the Venetian and the Florentine. In Liverpool trade reigns supreme, and its behests, whatever they may be, are pretty sure to be eagerly obeyed. And the source of this is to be found, perhaps, partly in the fact that Liverpool is an old centre of the slavery interest in England, one of the cities which have been built with the blood of the slave. As the great cotton port, it is closely connected with the planters by trade,—perhaps also by many personal ties and associations. It is not so much an English city as an offset and outpost of the South, and a counterpart to the offsets and outposts of the South in some of your great commercial cities here. No doubt, the shame of Liverpool *Alabamas* falls on England. England must own that she has produced merchants who disgrace their calling, contaminated by intercourse with the slaveowner, regardless of the honour and interest of their country, ready to plunge two kindred nations into a desolating war, if they can only secure the profits of their own trade. England must own that she has produced such men; but does this disgrace attach to her alone?

The clergy of the State Church, like the aristocracy, have



probably been as a body against you in this struggle. In their case too, not hatred of America, but the love of their own institution, is the cause. If you are a standing menace to aristocracies, you are equally a standing menace to State Churches. A State Church rests upon the assumption that religion would fall, if it were not supported by the State. On this ground it is that the European nations endure the startling anomalies of their State Churches, the interference of irreligious politicians in religion, the worldliness of ambitious ecclesiastics, the denial of liberty of conscience, the denial of truth. Therefore it is that they will see the canker of doubt slowly eating into faith beneath the outward uniformity of a political church, rather than risk a change which, as they are taught to believe, would bring faith to a sudden end. But the success of the voluntary system here is overthrowing this assumption. Shall I believe that Christianity deprived of state support must fall, when I see it without state support not only standing, but advancing with the settler into the remotest West? Will the laity of Europe long remain under their illusion in face of this great fact? Already the State Churches of Europe are placed in imminent peril by the controversies which, since religious life has reawakened among us, rend them from within, and by their manifest inability to satisfy the craving of society for new assurance of its faith. I cannot much blame the High Church bishop who goes to Lord Palmerston to ask for intervention in company with Lord Clanricarde and Mr. Spence. You express surprise that the son of Wilberforce is not with you; but Wilberforce was not, like his son, a bishop of the State Church. Never in the whole course of history has the old order of things yielded without a murmur to the new. You share the fate of all innovators: your innovations are not received with favour by the powers which they threaten ultimately to sweep away.

To come from our aristocracy and landed gentry to our middle class. We subdivide the middle class into upper and lower. The upper middle class, comprising the wealthier tradesmen, forms a sort of minor aristocracy in itself, with a good deal of aristocratic feeling towards those beneath it. It is not well educated, for it will not go to the common schools, and it has few good private



schools of its own; consequently, it does not think deeply on political questions. It is at present very wealthy; and wealth, as you know, does not always produce high moral sentiment. It is not above a desire to be on the genteel side. It is not free from the worship of aristocracy. That worship is rooted in the lower part of our common nature. Its fibres extend beyond the soil of England, beyond the soil of Europe. America has been much belied, if she is entirely free from this evil—if there are not here also men careful of class distinctions, of a place in fashionable society, of factitious rank which parodies the aristocracy of the Old World. There is in the Anglo-Saxon character a strange mixture of independence and servility. In that long course of concessions by which your politicians strove—happily for the world and for yourselves they strove in vain—to conciliate the slave-owning aristocracy of the South, did not something of social servility mingle with political fear?

In the lower middle class religious Nonconformity prevails; and the free churches of our Nonconformists are united by a strong bond of sympathy with the churches under the voluntary system here. They are perfectly staunch on the subject of Slavery, and so far as this war has been a struggle against that institution, it may, I think, be confidently said that the hearts of this great section of our people have been upon your side. Our Nonconformist ministers came forward, as you are aware, in large numbers, to join with the ministers of Protestant churches on the continent in an Anti-Slavery address to your government and people.

And as to the middle classes generally, upper or lower, I see no reason to think that they are wanting in goodwill to this country, much less that they desire that any calamity should befall it. The journals which I take to be the chief organs of the upper middle class, if they have not been friendly, have been hostile not so much to the American people as to the war. And in justice to all classes of Englishmen, it must be remembered that hatred of the war is not hatred of the American people. No one hated the war at its commencement more heartily than I did. I hated it more heartily than ever after Bull Run, when, by the accounts which reached England, the character of this nation seemed to have completely

broken down. I believed as fully as anyone, that the task which you had undertaken was hopeless, and that you were rushing on your ruin. I dreaded the effect on your constitution, fearing, as others did, that civil war would bring you to anarchy, and anarchy to military despotism. All historical precedents conspired to lead me to this belief. I did not know—for there was no example to teach me—the power of a really united people, the adamant strength of institutions which were truly free. Watching the course of events with an open mind, and a deep interest, such as men at a distance can seldom be brought to feel, in the fortunes of this country, I soon revised my opinion. Yet, many times I desponded, and wished with all my heart that you would save the Border States, if you could, and let the rest go. Numbers of Englishmen—Englishmen of all classes and parties—who thought as I did at the outset, remain rooted in this opinion. They still sincerely believe that this is a hopeless war, which can lead to nothing but waste of blood, subversion of your laws and liberties, and the destruction of your own prosperity and that of the nations whose interests are bound up with yours. This belief they maintain with as little of ill-feeling towards you as men can have towards those who obstinately disregard their advice. And, after all, though you may have found the wisest as well as the bravest counsellors in your own hearts, he need not be your enemy who somewhat timidly counsels you against civil war. Civil war is a terrible thing—terrible in the passions which it kindles as well as in the blood which it sheds—terrible in its present effects, and terrible in those which it leaves behind. It can be justified only by the complete victory of the good cause. And Englishmen, at the commencement of this civil war, if they were wrong in thinking the victory of the good cause hopeless, were not wrong in thinking it remote. They were not wrong in thinking it far more remote than you did. Years of struggle, of fear, of agony, of desolated homes, have passed since your statesmen declared that a few months would bring the rebellion to an end. In justice to our people, put the question to yourselves,—if at the outset the veil which hid the future could have been withdrawn, and the conflict which really awaited you, with all its vicissitudes, its disasters, its

dangers, its sacrifices, could have been revealed to your view, would you have gone into the war ?\* To us, looking with anxious, but less impassioned eyes, the veil was half withdrawn, and we shrank back from the prospect which was revealed. It was well for the world, perhaps, that you were blind ; but it was pardonable in us to see.

We now come to the working men of England, the main body of our people, whose sympathy you would not the less prize, and whom you would not the less shrink from assailing without a cause, because at present the greater part of them are without political power—at least of a direct kind. I will not speak of the opinions of our peasantry, for they have none. Their thoughts are never turned to a political question. They never read a newspaper. They are absorbed in the struggle for daily bread, of which they have barely enough for themselves and their children. Their condition, in spite of all the benevolent effort that is abroad among us, is the great blot of our social system. Perhaps, if the relation between the two countries remains kindly, the door of hope may be opened to them here ; and hands now folded helplessly in English poor-houses may joyfully reap the harvests of Iowa and Wisconsin. Assuredly, they bear you no ill-will. If they could comprehend the meaning of this struggle, their hearts as well as their interests would be upon your side. But it is not in them, it is in the working men of our cities, that the intelligence of the class resides. And the sympathy of the working men of our cities, from the moment when the great issue between free labour and slavery was fairly set before them, has been shown in no doubtful form. They have followed your wavering fortunes with eyes almost as keen and hearts almost as anxious as your own. They have thronged the meetings held by the Union and Emancipation Societies of London and Manchester to protest before the nation in favour of your cause. Early in the contest they filled to overflowing Exeter Hall, the largest place of meeting in London. I was present at another immense meeting of them, held by their

\* The American audience, to whom these words were addressed, responded with a loud and unanimous *Yes!*—G. S.



trades unions in London, where they were addressed by Mr. Bright; and had you witnessed the intelligence and enthusiasm with which they followed the exposition of your case by their great orator you would have known that you were not without sympathy in England—not without sympathy such as those who look rather to the worth of a friend than to his rank may most dearly prize. Again I was present at a great meeting called in the Free Trade Hall, at Manchester, to protest against the attacks upon your commerce, and saw the same enthusiasm displayed by the working men of the North. But Mr. Ward Beecher must have brought back with him abundant assurance of the feelings of our working men. Our opponents have tried to rival us in these demonstrations. They have tried with great resources of personal influence and wealth. But, in spite of their personal influence, and the distress caused by the cotton famine, they have on the whole signally failed. Their consolation has been to call the friends of the Federal cause obscurities and nobodies. And true it is that the friends of the Federal cause are obscurities and nobodies. They are the untitled and undistinguished mass of the English people.

The leaders of our working men, the popular chiefs of the day, the men who represent the feelings and interests of the masses, and whose names are received with ringing cheers wherever the masses are assembled, are Cobden and Bright. And Cobden and Bright have not left you in doubt of the fact that they and all they represent are on your side.

I need not say—for you have shown that you know it well—that, as regards the working men of our cotton factories, this sympathy was an offering to your cause as costly as it was sincere. Your civil war paralyzed their industry, brought ruin into their houses, deprived them and their families not only of bread, but, so far as their vision extended, of the hope of bread. Yet they have not wavered in their allegiance to the right. Your slave-owning aristocracy had made up their minds that chivalry was confined to aristocracies, and that over the vulgar souls of the common people cotton must be king. The working man of Manchester, though he lives not like a Southern gentleman by the sweat of another's brow, but like a plebeian by the sweat of his own, has shown that

chivalry is not confined to aristocracies, and that even over vulgar souls cotton is not always king. I heard one of your statesmen the other day, after speaking indignantly of those who had fitted out the *Alabama*, pray God to bless the working men of England. Our nation, like yours, it not a single body animated by the same political sentiments, but a mixed mass of contending interests and parties. Beware how you fire into that mass, or your shot may strike a friend.

When England in the mass is spoken of as your enemy on this occasion, the London *Times* is taken for the voice of the country. The *Times* was in former days a great popular organ. It led vehemently and even violently the struggle for parliamentary reform. In that way it made its fortune; and having made its fortune, it takes part with the rich. Its proprietor in those days was a man with many faults, but he was a man of the people. Aristocratic society disliked and excluded him; he lived at war with it to the end. Affronted by the Whigs, he became in a certain sense a Tory; but he united his Toryism with Chartism, and was sent to parliament for Nottingham by Tories and Chartists combined. The opposition of his journal to our new Poor-law evinced though in a perverse way, his feeling for the people. But his heir, the present proprietor, was born in the purple. He is a wealthy landed gentleman. He sits in parliament for a constituency of landlords. He is thought to have been marked out for a peerage. It is accusing him of no crime to suppose that, so far as he controls the *Times*, it takes the bias of his class, and that its voice, if it speaks his sentiments, is not that of the English people, but of a rich Conservative squire.

The editor is distinct from the proprietor, but his connections are perhaps still more aristocratic. A good deal has been said among us of late about his position. Before his time our journalism was not only anonymous, but impersonal. The journalist wore the mask not only to those whom he criticised, but to all the world. The present editor of the *Times* wears the mask to the objects of his criticism, but drops it, as has been remarked in parliament, in "the gilded saloons" of rank and power. Not content to remain in the privacy which protected the independence

of his predecessors, he has come forth in his own person to receive the homage of the great world. That homage has been paid in no stinted measure, and, as the British public has been apprised in rather a startling manner, with a somewhat intoxicating effect. The lords of the money power, the thrones and dominions of usury, have shown themselves as assiduous as ministers and peers; and these potentates happen, like the aristocracy, to be unfriendly to your cause. (Caressed by peers and millionaires, the editor of the *Times* could hardly fail to express the feelings of peers and millionaires towards a republic in distress.) We may be permitted to think that he has rather overacted his part. English peers, after all, are English gentlemen; and no English gentleman would deliberately sanction the torrent of calumny and insult which the *Times* has poured upon this nation. There are penalties for common offenders; there are none for those who scatter firebrands among nations. (But the *Times* will not come off unscathed. It must veer with victory. And its readers will be not only prejudiced, but idiotic, if it does not in the process leave the last remnant of its authority behind.)

Two things will suffice to mark the real political position of the *Times*. You saw that a personal controversy was going on the other day between its editor and Mr. Cobden. That controversy arose out of a speech made by Mr. Bright, obliquely impugning the aristocratic law of inheritance, which is fast accumulating the land of England in a few hands, and disinheriting the English people of the English soil. For this offence Mr. Bright was assailed by the *Times* with calumnies so outrageous that Mr. Cobden could not help springing forward to vindicate his friend. The institution which the *Times* so fiercely defended on this occasion against a look which threatened it with alteration is vital and sacred in the eyes of the aristocracy, but is not vital or sacred in the eyes of the whole English nation. Again, the *Times* hates Garibaldi; and its hatred, generally half smothered, broke out in a loud cry of exultation when the hero fell, as it hoped for ever, at Aspromonte. But the English people idolise Garibaldi, and receive him with a burst of enthusiasm unexampled in fervour. The English people love Garibaldi, and Garibaldi's name is equally dear to all American



hearts. Is not this—let me ask in passing—a proof that there is a bond of sympathy, after all, between the English people and you, and that, if as a nation we are divided from you, it is not by a radical estrangement, but by some cloud of error which will in time pass away?

The wealth of the *Times*, the high position which it has held since the period when it was the great Liberal journal, the clever writing and the early intelligence which its money and its secret connections with public men enable it to command, give it a circulation and an influence beyond the class whose interests it represents. But it has been thrust from a large part of its dominion by the cheap London and local press. It is exceeded in circulation more than twofold by the London *Telegraph*, a journal which, though it has been against the war, has, I think, by no means shown in its leading articles the same spirit of hostility to the American people. The London *Star*, which is strongly Federal, is also a journal of wide circulation. The *Daily News* is a high-priced paper, circulating among the same class as the *Times*; its circulation is comparatively small, but it is on the increase, and the journal, I have reason to believe, is prosperous. The *Manchester Examiner and Times*, again—a great local paper of the North of England—nearly equals the London *Times* in circulation, and is favourable to your cause. I live under the dominion of the London *Times*, and I will not deny that it is a great power of evil. It will be a great power of evil indeed if it succeeds in producing a fatal estrangement between two kindred nations. But no one who knows England—especially the northern part of England, in which Liberalism prevails—would imagine the voice of the *Times* to be that of the English people.

Of the part taken by the writers of England it would be rash to speak in general terms. Stuart Mill and Cairns have supported your cause as heartily as Cobden and Bright. I am not aware that any political or economical writer of equal eminence has taken the other side. The leading reviews and periodicals have exhibited, as might have been expected, very various shades of opinion; but, with the exception of the known organs of violent Toryism, they have certainly not breathed hatred of this nation. In those which



specially represent our rising intellect, the intellect which will probably govern us ten years hence, I should say the preponderance of the writing had been on the Federal side. In the University of Oxford the sympathies of the High Church clergy and of the young Tory gentry are with the South ; but there is a good deal of Northern sentiment among the young fellows of our more liberal colleges, and generally in the more active minds. At the University Debating Club, when the question between the North and the South was debated, the vote, though I believe in a thin house, was in favour of the North. Four professors are members of the Union and Emancipation Society. And if intellect generally has been somewhat coldly critical, I am not sure that it has departed from its true function. I am conscious myself that I may be somewhat under the dominion of my feelings, that I may be even something of a fanatic in this matter. There may be evil as well as good in the cause which, as the good preponderates, claims and receives the allegiance of my heart. In that case, intellect, in pointing out the evil, only does its duty.

One English writer has certainly raised his voice against you with characteristic vehemence and rudeness. As an historical painter and a humourist Carlyle has scarcely an equal : a new intellectual region seemed to open to me when I read his " French Revolution." But his philosophy, in its essential principle, is false. He teaches that the mass of mankind are fools—that the hero alone is wise—that the hero, therefore, is the destined master of his fellow-men, and that their only salvation lies in blind submission to his rule—and this without distinction of time or circumstance, in the most advanced as well as in the most primitive ages of the world. The hero-despot can do no wrong. He is a king, with scarcely even a God above him ; and if the moral law happens to come into collision with his actions, so much the worse for the moral law. On this theory, a commonwealth such as yours ought not to exist ; and you must not be surprised if, in a fit of spleen, the great cynic grasps his club and knocks your cause on the head, as he thinks, with a single blow. Here is the end of an unsound, though brilliant theory—a theory which had always latent in it the worship of force and fraud, and which has now displayed its

tendency at once in the portentous defence of the robber-policy of Frederick the Great and in the portentous defence of the Slave Power. An opposite theory of human society is, in fact, finding its confirmation in these events—that which tells us that we all have need of each other, and that the goal towards which society actually moves is not an heroic despotism, but a real community, in which each member shall contribute his gifts and faculties to the common store, and the common government shall become the work of all. For, if the victory in this struggle has been won, it has been won, not by a man, but by the nation; and that it has been won not by a man, but by the nation, is your glory and the pledge of your salvation. We have called for a Cromwell, and he has not come; he has not come, partly because Cromwells are scarce, partly, perhaps, because the personal Cromwell belonged to a different age, and the Cromwell of this age is an intelligent, resolute, and united people.

I might mention other eccentricities of opinion quite distinct from the general temper of the English nation, such as that of the ultra-scientific school, which thinks it unscientific philanthropy to ascribe the attributes of humanity to the negro—a school some of the more rampant absurdities of which had, just before I left England, called down the rebuke of real science in the person of Mr. Huxley. And I might note, if the time would allow, many fluctuations and oscillations which have taken place among our organs of opinion as the struggle went on. But I must say on the whole, both with reference to our different classes and with reference to our literature, that, considering the complexity of the case, the distance from which our people viewed it, and the changes which it has undergone since the war broke out, I do not think there is much room for disappointment as to the sympathies of our people. Parties have been divided on this question much as they are on great questions among ourselves, and much as they were in the time of Charles I., when this long strife began. The England of Charles and Laud has been against you; the England of Hampden, Milton, and Cromwell has in the main been on your side.

I say there has not been much ground for disappointment; I do not say there has been none. England at present is not in her

noblest mood. She is labouring under a reaction which extends over France and great part of Europe, and which furnishes the key at this moment to the state of European affairs. This movement, like all great movements, reactionary or progressive, is complex in its nature. In the political sphere it presents itself as the lassitude and despondency which, as usual, have ensued after great political efforts, such as were made by the continental nations in the abortive revolutions of 1848, and by England in a less degree in the struggle for Parliamentary Reform. In the religious sphere it presents itself in an analogous shape; there lassitude and despondency have succeeded to the efforts of the religious intellect to escape from the decaying creeds of the old State Churches and push forward to a more enduring faith; and the priest as well as the despot has for a moment resumed his sway—though not his uncontested sway—over our weariness and our fears. The moral sentiment, after high tension, has undergone a corresponding relaxation. All liberal measures are for the time at a discount. The Bill for the Abolition of Church Rates, once carried in the House of Commons by large majorities, is now lost. The nominal leaders of the Liberal party themselves have let their principles fall into abeyance, and almost coalesced with their Tory opponents. The Whig nobles who carried the Reform Bill have owned once more the bias of their order, and become determined, though covert, enemies of Reform. The ancient altars are sought again for the sake of peace by fainting spirits and perplexed minds; and again, as after our Reformation, as after our great Revolution, we see a number of conversions to the Church of Rome. On the other hand, strange physical superstitions, such as mesmerism and spirit-rapping, have crept, like astrology under the Roman empire, into the void left by religious faith. Wealth has been pouring into England, and luxury with wealth. Our public journals proclaim, as you may perhaps have seen, that the society of our capital is unusually corrupt. The comic as well as the serious signs of the reaction appear everywhere. A tone of affected cynicism pervades a portion of our high intellect; and a pretended passion for prize-fighting shows that men of culture are weary of civilisation, and wish to go back to barbarism for a while. The present head of



the government in England is not only the confederate, but the counterpart, of the head of the French empire; and the rule of each denotes the temporary ascendancy of the same class of motives in their respective nations. An English Liberal is tempted to despond when he compares the public life of England in the time of Pym and Hampden with our public life now. But there is greatness still in the heart of the English nation.

And you, too, have you not known in the course of your history a slack-tide of faith, a less aspiring hour? Have not you, too, known a temporary ascendancy of material over spiritual interests, a lowering of the moral tone, a readiness, for the sake of ease and peace and secure enjoyment, to compromise with evil? Have not you, too, felt the tyranny of wealth, putting the higher motives for a moment under its feet? What else has brought these calamities upon you? What else bowed your necks to the yoke which you are now breaking at so great a cost? Often and long in the life of every nation, though the tide is still advancing, the wave recedes. Often and long the fears of man overcome his hopes; but in the end the hopes of man overcome his fears. Your regeneration, when it is achieved, will set forward the regeneration of the European nations. It is the function which all nations, which all men, in their wavering progress towards perfection, perform in turn for each other.

This temporary lowering of the moral tone in English society has extended to the question of Slavery. It has deadened our feelings on that subject, though I hope without shaking our principles. You ask whether England can have been sincere in her enmity to Slavery, when she refuses sympathy to you in your struggle with the Slave Power. Talleyrand, cynic as he was, knew that she was sincere, though he said that not a man in France thought so but himself. She redeemed her own slaves with a great price. She sacrificed her West Indian interest. She counts that achievement higher than her victories. She spends annually much money and many lives, and risks much enmity in her crusade against the slave trade. When your Southern statesmen have tried to tamper with her, they have found her true. If they had bid us choose between a concession to their designs and war, all aristocratic as

we are, we should have chosen war. Every Englishman who takes the Southern side is compelled by public opinion to preface his advocacy with a disclaimer of all sympathy with Slavery. The agent of the slaveowners in England, Mr. Spence, pleads their cause to the English people on the ground of gradual emancipation. Once the *Times* ventured to speak in defence of Slavery, and the attempt was never made again. The principle, I say, holds firm among the mass of the people; but on this, as on other moral questions, we are not in our noblest mood.

In justice to my country, however, let me remind you that you did not—perhaps you could not—set the issue between Freedom and Slavery plainly before us at the outset; you did not—perhaps you could not—set it plainly before yourselves. With the progress of the struggle your convictions have been strengthened, and the fetters of legal restriction have been smitten off by the hammer of war. But your rulers began with disclaimers of Anti-Slavery designs. You cannot be surprised if our people took your rulers at their word, or if, notwithstanding your change—a change which they imagined to be wrought merely by expediency—they retained their first impression as to the object of the war, an impression which the advocates of the South used every art to perpetuate in their minds. That the opponents of Slavery in England should desire the restoration of the Union with Slavery, and with Slavery strengthened, as they expected it would be, by new concessions, was what you could not reasonably expect. And remember—I say it not with any desire to trench on American politics or to pass judgment on American parties—that the restoration of the Union with Slavery is what a large section of your people, and one of the candidates for your Presidency, are in fact ready to embrace now.

Had you been able to say plainly at the outset that you were fighting against Slavery, the English people would scarcely have given ear to the cunning fiction of Mr. Spence. It would scarcely have been brought to believe that this great contest was only about a Tariff. It would have seen that the Southern planter, if he was a Free-Trader, was a Free-Trader not from enlightenment, but because from the degradation of labour in his dominions he had no manufactures to support; and that he was in fact a protectionist



of his only home production which feared competition—the home-bred slave. I have heard the Tariff Theory called the most successful lie in history. Very successful it certainly was, and its influence in misleading England ought not to be overlooked. It was propounded with great skill, and it came out just at the right time, before people had formed their opinions, and when they were glad to have a theory presented to their minds. But its success would have been short-lived, had it not received what seemed authoritative confirmation from the language of statesmen here.

I might mention many other things which have influenced opinion in the wrong way : the admiration felt by our people, and, to your honour, equally felt by you, for the valour and self-devotion which have been shown by the Southerners, and which, when they have submitted to the law, will entitle them to be the fellow-citizens of freemen ; a careless, but not ungenerous, sympathy for that which, by men ignorant of the tremendous strength of a Slave Power, was taken to be the weaker side ; the doubt really, and, considering the conflict of opinion here, not unpardonably, entertained as to the question of State Sovereignty and the right of Secession. All these motives, though they operate against your cause, are different from hatred of you. But there are two points to which in justice to my country I must especially call attention.

The first is this—that you have not yourselves been of one mind in this matter, nor has the voice of your own people been unanimous. No English speaker or journal has denounced the war or reviled the conduct of your Government more bitterly than a portion of American politicians and a section of the American press. The worst things said in England of your statesmen, of your generals, of your armies, of your contractors, of your social state and character as a people, have been but the echo of things which have been said here. If the New York correspondents of some English journals have been virulent and calumnious, their virulence and their calumnies have been drawn, to a great extent, from the American circles in which they have lived. No slanders poured by English ignorance or malevolence on American society have been so foul as those which came from a renegade American writing in one of our Tory journals under the name of “Manhattan,”

No lamentations over the subversion of the Constitution and the destruction of personal liberty have been louder than those of your own Opposition. The chief enemies of your honour have been those of your own household. The crime of a great mass of our people against you has, in fact, consisted in believing statements about America made by men whom they knew to be Americans, and did not know to be disloyal to the cause of their country. I have seen your soldiers described in an extract from one of your own journals as gaol-birds, vagabonds, and foreigners. I have seen your President accused of wishing to provoke riots in New York, that he might have a pretence for exercising military power. I have seen him accused of sending to the front, to be thinned, a regiment which was likely to vote against him. I have seen him accused of decoying his political opponents into forging soldiers' votes, in order to discredit them. What could the *Times* itself say more?

The second point is this. Some of your journals did their best to prevent our people from desiring your success by declaring that your success would be followed by aggression on us. The drum, like strong wine, is apt to get into weak heads, especially when they are unaccustomed to the sound. An Englishman coming among you is soon assured that you do not wish to attack Canada. Apart from considerations of morality and honour, he finds every man of sense here aware that extent of territory is your danger, if you wish to be one nation; and further, that freedom of development, and not procrustean centralization, is the best thing for the New as well as for the Old World. But the mass of our people have not been among you, nor do they know that the hot words sedulously repeated to them\* by our Southern press are not authentic expressions of your designs. They are doubly mistaken—mistaken both in thinking that you wish to seize Canada, and in thinking that a division of the Union into two hostile nations, which would compel you to keep a standing army, would render you less dangerous to your neighbours. But your own demagogues are the authors of the error, and the Monroe doctrine and the Ostend manifesto are still ringing in our ears. I am an adherent of the Monroe doctrine if it means, as it did on the lips of Canning,

that the reactionary influence of the old European governments is not to be allowed to mar the hopes of man in the New World; but if it means violence every one must be against it who respects the rights of nations. When you contrast the feelings of England towards you with those of other nations, Italy for example, you must remember that Italy has no Canada. I hope Canada will soon cease to be a cause of mistrust between us. The political dominion of England over it, since it has had a free constitution of its own, has dwindled to a mere thread. It is as ripe to be a nation as these colonies were on the eve of the American revolution. As a dependency it is of no solid value to England, since she has ceased to engross the colonial trade. It distracts her forces, and prevents her from acting with her full weight in the affairs of her own quarter of the world. It belongs in every sense to America, not to Europe; and its peculiar institutions—its extended suffrage, its freedom from the hereditary principle, its voluntary system in religion, its common schools—are opposed to those of England, and identical with those of the neighbouring states. All this the English nation is beginning to feel; and it has tried in the case of the Ionian Islands the policy of moderation, and found that it raises, instead of lowering, our solid reputation and our real power. The confederation which is now in course of formation between the North American colonies tends manifestly to a further change; it tends to a further change all the more manifestly because such a tendency is anxiously disclaimed. Yes, Canada will soon cease to trouble and divide us. But while it is England's it is England's; and to threaten her with an attack on it is to threaten a proud nation with outrage and an assault upon its honour.

Finally, if our people have misconstrued your acts, let me conjure you to make due allowance for our ignorance—an ignorance which, in many cases, is as dark as night, but which the progress of events here begins gloriously to dispel. We are not such a nation of travellers as you are, and scarcely one Englishman has seen America for a hundred Americans that have seen England. "Why, does not Beauregard fly to the assistance of Lee?" said a highly educated Englishman to an American in England. "Because,"

was the reply, "the distance is as great as it is from Rome to Paris." If those three thousand miles of ocean that lie between us could be removed for a few days, and the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race could look each other in the face, and speak their minds to each other, there would be an end, I believe, of all these fears. When an Englishman and an American meet, in this country or in England, they are friends, notwithstanding all that has passed; why not the two nations?

I have not presumed, and shall not presume, to touch on any question that has arisen or may arise between the executive government of my country and the executive government of yours. In England, English Liberals have not failed to plead for justice to you, and, as we thought, at the same time, for the maintenance of English honour. But I will venture to make, in conclusion, one or two brief remarks as to the general temper in which these questions should be viewed.

In the first place, when great and terrible issues hang upon our acts, perhaps upon our words, let us control our fancies and distinguish realities from fictions. There hangs over every great struggle, and especially over every civil war, a hot and hazy atmosphere of excited feeling which is too apt to distort all objects to the view. In the French Revolution men were suspected of being objects of suspicion, and sent to the guillotine for that offence. The same feverish and delirious fancies prevailed as to the conduct of other nations. All the most natural effects of a violent revolution—the depreciation of the assignats, the disturbance of trade, the consequent scarcity of food—were ascribed by frantic rhetoricians to the guineas of Pitt, whose very limited amount of secret-service money was quite inadequate to the performance of such wonders. When a foreign nation has given offence it is turned by popular imagination into a fiend, and its fiendish influence is traced with appalling clearness in every natural accident that occurs. I have heard England accused of having built the Chicago Wigwam,\*

\* English readers may perhaps require to be informed that the Chicago Wigwam was the great booth at Chicago in which the opponents of Mr. Lincoln met to frame their "platform," and to chose their candidate for the Presidency.



with the building of which she had as much to do as with the building of the Great Pyramid. I have heard it insinuated that her policy was governed by her share in the Confederate Cotton Loan. The Confederate Cotton Loan is, I believe, four millions and a half. There is an English nobleman whose estates are reputed to be worth a larger sum. "She is very great," says a French writer, "that odious England." Odious she may be, but she is great—too great to be bribed to baseness by a paltry fee.

In the second place, let us distinguish hostile acts, of which an account must of course be demanded, from mere words, which great nations, secure in their greatness, may afford to let pass. Your President knows the virtue of silence; but silence is so little the system on either side of the water that in the general flux of rhetoric some rash things are sure to be said. One of our statesmen, while strolling in the provinces, carelessly throws out the expression that Jeff. Davis has made the South a nation; another says that you are fighting for empire and the South for independence. Our Prime Minister is sometimes offensive in his personal bearing towards you—as, to our bitter cost, he has often been towards other nations. On the other hand, your statesmen have said hard things of England; and one of your ambassadors to a great continental state published, not in his private but in his official capacity, language which made the Northern party in England for a moment hang their heads with shame. A virulence, discreditable to England, has at times broken forth in our House of Commons, as a virulence not creditable to this country has at times broken forth in your Congress. But what has the House of Commons done? Threatening motions were announced in favour of recognition—in defence of the Confederate rams. They were all set aside by the good sense of the house and of the nation. It ended in a solemn farce—in the question being put very formally to the government whether it intended to recognise the Confederate States, to which the government replied that it did not.

And when the actions of our government are in question, fair allowance must be made for the bad state of international law. The very term itself is, in fact, as matters at present stand, a dangerous fiction. There can be no law, in a real sense, where there

is no lawgiver, no tribunal, no power of giving legal effect to a sentence—but where the party on whose side the law is held to be must after all be left to do himself right with the strong hand. And one consequence is that governments are induced to rest in narrow technicalities, and to be ruled by formal precedents, when the question ought to be decided on the broadest grounds of right. The decision of Lord Stowell, for example, that it is lawful for the captor to burn an enemy's vessel at sea rather than suffer her to escape, though really applying only to a case of special necessity, has been supposed to cover a system of burning prizes at sea, which is opposed to the policy and sentiment of all civilized nations, and which Lord Stowell never could have had in view. And it must be owned that this war, unexampled in all respects, has been fruitful of novel questions respecting belligerent rights, on which a government meaning no evil might easily be led astray. Among its results we may hope that this revolution will give birth to a better system of international law. Would there were reason to hope that it might lead to the erection of some high tribunal of justice among nations to supersede for ever the dreadful and uncertain ordeal of war. Has the government of England, in any case where your right was clear, really done you a wrong? If it has, I trust that the English nation, temperately and respectfully approached, as a proud nation requires to be, will surely constrain its government to make the reparation which becomes its honour.

But let it not be forgotten that, in the worst of times, at the moment of your lowest depression, England has refused to recognise the Confederate States, or in any way to interfere in their behalf; and that the steadiness of this refusal has driven the Confederate envoy, Mr. Mason, to seek what he deems a more hospitable shore. The inducement of cotton for our idle looms and our famishing people has been a strong one to our statesmen as well as to our people, and the tempter has been at their side. Despotism, like Slavery, is necessarily propagandist. It cannot bear the contagion, it cannot bear the moral rebuke of neighbouring freedom. The new French satrapy in Mexico needs some more, congenial and some weaker neighbour than the United Republic and we have had more than one intimation that this need is felt.

And this suggests one closing word as to our blockade running. Nothing done on our side, I should think, can have been more galling, as nothing has been so injurious to your success. For myself, in common with all who think as I do on these questions, I abhor the blockade runners; I heartily wish that the curse of ill-gotten gain may rest on every piece of gold they make; and never did I feel less proud of my country than when, on my way hither, I saw those vessels in Halifax sheltered under English guns. But blockade running is the law; it is the test, in fact, of an effective blockade. And Englishmen are the blockade runners, not because England as a nation is your enemy, but because her merchants are more adventurous and her seamen more daring than those of any nation but your own. You, I suspect, would not be the least active of blockade runners if we were carrying on a blockade. The nearness of our fortresses at Halifax and Nassau to your shores, which makes them the haunt of blockade runners, is not the result of malice, but of accident—of most unhappy accident as I believe. We have not planted them there for this purpose. They have come down to us among the general inheritance of an age of conquest, when aggression was thought to be strength and glory—when all kings and nations were alike rapacious—and when the prize remained with us, not because we were below our neighbours in morality, but because we were more resolute in council and mightier in arms. Our conquering hour was yours. You, too, were then English citizens. You welcomed the arms of Cromwell to Jamaica. Your hearts thrilled at the tidings of Blenheim and Ramilies, and exulted in the thunders of Chatham. You shared the laurels and the conquests of Wolfe. For you and with you we overthrew France and Spain upon this continent, and made America the land of the Anglo-Saxon race. Halifax will share the destinies of the North American confederation—destinies, as I said before, not alien to yours. Nassau is an appendage to our West Indian possessions. Those possessions are and have long been, and been known to every reasoning Englishman to be, a mere burden to us. But we have been bound in honour and humanity to protect our emancipated slaves from a danger which lay near. An ocean of changed thought and feeling

has rolled over the memory of this nation within the last three years. You forget that but yesterday you were the great Slave Power.

You, till yesterday, were the great Slave Power. And England, with all her faults and shortcomings, was the great enemy of Slavery. Therefore the slave-owners, who had gained possession of your government, hated her, insulted her, tried to embroil you with her. They represented her, and I trust not without truth, as restlessly conspiring against the existence of their great institution. They laboured, not in vain, to excite your jealousy of her maritime ambition, when, in enforcing the right of search and striving to put down the slave trade, she was really obeying her conscience and the conscience of mankind. They bore themselves towards her in these controversies as they bore themselves towards you—as their character compels them to bear themselves towards all with whom they have to deal. Living in their own homes above law, they proclaimed doctrines of lawless aggression which alarmed and offended not England alone, but every civilized nation. And this, as I trust and believe, has been the main cause of the estrangement between us, so far as it has been an estrangement between the nations, not merely between certain sections and classes. It is a cause which will henceforth operate no more. A Scandinavian hero, as the Norse legend tells, waged a terrible combat through a whole night with the dead body of his brother-in-arms, animated by a demon; but with the morning the demon fled.

Other thoughts crowd upon my mind—thoughts of what the two nations have been to each other in the past, thoughts of what they may yet be to each other in the future. But these thoughts will rise in other minds as well as in mine, if they are not stifled by the passion of the hour. If there is any question to be settled between us, let us settle it without disparagement to the just claims or the honour of either party, yet, if possible, as kindred nations; for, if we do not, our posterity will curse us. A century hence the passions which caused the quarrel will be dead, the black record of the quarrel will survive and be detested. Do what we will now we shall not cancel the tie of blood, nor prevent it from hereafter asserting its undying power. The Englishmen of



this day will not prevent those who come after them from being proud of England's grandest achievement, the sum of all her noblest victories—the foundation of this the great commonwealth of the New World. And you will not prevent the hearts of your children's children from turning to the birthplace of their nation, the land of their history and of their early greatness, the land which holds the august monuments of your ancient race, the works of your illustrious fathers, and their graves.













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