

CHARACTER

OF THE

SOUTHERN STATES OF AMERICA.

LETTER

TO A

FRIEND WHO HAD JOINED THE SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE
ASSOCIATION,

BY F. W. NEWMAN,

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[The following pages are a *part* of what was really elicited by a friend's letter, which is no fiction. In the attempt to wound my friend as little as possible, I re-wrote my reply from different points of view so often, that material for a little book was produced. My actual answer was different from this: but it has seemed to me, that in the epistolary form, which was genuine, the matter appropriate to the public ears gains somewhat in liveliness.—F. W. N.]

In Exchange
Cornell Univ.

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MY DEAR —

I take in good part the uncomplimentary epithets which you apply to me and others with whom I have acted. I only wish you had so pointed them that I could know what in particular it is that you censure. At present you give me no chance of profiting by them. I approve of strong words when they are strictly in point. I am not aware that in this controversy I have myself ever used a strong word without giving reasons for it, except where I have supposed the facts to be so notorious and their colour so confessed that the time of discussion is past and reasoning superfluous. It may be that the younger generation have to learn afresh things long since decided. I confess I have found that persons who expressed agreement with everything else which I wrote in a certain letter thought me extravagant in comparing the Slave Power to Thugs, cannibals, and buccaneers. Since this is probably the strongest thing which I have said, I ask leave, against your vague imputation that I "fanatically misrepresent," to assign some justification of those words.

Buccaneers.

"Buccaneer" has its equivalent in the modern term "filibuster," and for a long series of years the latter term has been systematically applied to the Southerners by the whole English press, and most emphatically by the Tory-Whig press, and by the "Times." The facts are before the world. The greatest example of buccaneering known to the present generation is the seizure of Texas. American colonists, who had been peaceably admitted into a free province of Mexico, schemed to subject the country to the curse of slavery. They got up, first brigandage, and then war, by aid of sympathizers in the South; and—with the connivance of the President,—actually conquered the province, (a region fully adequate for four States,) and planted slavery anew, where Mexico had rooted it up. After this, they voted that Texas should enter the Union; and the intrigues of the Southern party accepted the gift, against the indignant protests of the free party of the North. The Mexican war which followed, politically was not worse than our Asiatic war, but about as bad. It was nevertheless entered

into (as I understand) by a breach of the constitution, and against the utmost effort of all that party of the North which is now in power; and it aimed avowedly at the extension of slavery, which cannot be said of us, in our worst wickedness. Victorious in this war, the South endeavoured, but failed in the endeavour, to establish slavery in California. After this came the buccaneering attacks on Cuba and Nicaragua, the ferocious marauding against Kansas, also the Ostend congress of the American ministers in Europe, which but a few years back was accepted by all England as nothing short of an apotheosis of unlimited "filibustering." This would suffice to justify my comparing the Slave Power to buccaneers. But I must not stop there. All their leading men, all who are the soul and impetus of this secession, are avowed defenders of the African slave trade. Their President rejects with indignant disdain the idea of its being morally wrong, and avows that it is a mere question of time and of prudence. The Vice-President emphatically points out the uselessness of lands which they cannot people, and that to obtain new masses of the African race is matter of vital importance. Their (foreign) Secretary of State, Mr. Judah Benjamin, has written to his agent, the Hon. L. Q. C. Lamar, the commissioner at St. Petersburg, strictly prohibiting *any treaty-stipulations against* the African Slave Trade. The celebrated writer, the Hon. L. W. Spratt, author of the "Philosophy of Secession," and the most influential literary politician of the South, insists that that trade is morally, commercially and politically, of the first necessity; and believes that the South may snap its fingers at Europe, because we shall pocket our profits from the trade and our consciences together. (I hope you are not willing to give him new grounds for his confidence.) The go-ahead Georgian statesmen are as eager for the trade as is their greatest intellect, Mr Stephens. All the interests of all the States, which are not already wholly conquered, are for it, except Virginia, who seceded last, and largely under military compulsion. It is therefore *certain*, that if the remnant could succeed in establishing their independence, they would quickly re-open that trade, which is the worst and most wicked form of buccaneering that has yet existed on earth. Mr. W. H. Russell, the celebrated correspondent of the "Times,"—who was sent to America to write the North down and the South up, as soon as it pleased his masters to adopt that line,—was not willing to allow the letters which appeared in the "Times," as his, to speak for him longer than 18 months. After they had done their work in its columns, he published his own Diary, which depicts the Southerners as bloody treacherous barbarians. Compared with his account of their truculence, the word *buccaneer* seems to me feeble. But I now particularly refer to him as testifying, that in case the South should establish its independence, the re-opening of the African slave trade would be an inevitable necessity. For even if the planters were averse, "the poor whites who have won the fight will demand their share of the spoils." They will have cheap slaves from Africa "*in spite of their masters*, unless a *stronger* power than the Slave States prevent the accomplishment of their wishes." He adds, that he fears few people in England are aware of "the complications" which would arise. This means that England herself would have to enter into war against the South. But with what avail?

Thugs.

Next, as to Thuggee: what was it? The Thugs were a religious community, which with plausible and amiable manners combined one fanatical and pestilential doctrine,—that, after all due religious solemnities, they had a divine commission to inveigle, lasso, murder, and plunder innocent travellers on the high road. The English Government had to break through all lawyerlike scruples, and invent totally new law and new legal proceedings, before it could put down this monstrosity. The Southern Confederacy has all the fanaticism and all the self-complacency of the Thugs, while it is vastly more dangerous to the world. It is not satisfied with having forced slavery upon Texas: it clutches at the Territories for slavery, and at new slaves from Africa for the Territories.

Which of us,—what man that has the heart of a free man,—would not rather be strangled on the spot by a Thug, than caught alive at the bidding of an American, carried to America, and destined there to propagate “chattels” or flogged to death if we refuse? If I were to go on a slave-trading “venture,” our law would pronounce me a felon, and (I rather think) would hang me. What more would it do to a Thug? Yet the leaders of the South, whom you and your Association desire to introduce as ambassadors to our Queen, and to establish as moral equals to the representatives of other civilized powers;—these leaders justify and panegyryze, as christian and civilizing, that trade, which with us is felony.

Cannibals.

As to “cannibals,” these seem to me, in comparison with the Slave Power, only rude and almost innocent barbarians. They do not make war upon people in order to eat them; but, having for other reasons killed men in battle, think they may as well eat them. The practice probably springs from and tends to ferocity. You may be sure that I do not patronize it. But I would rather patronize it than patronize the South. I would rather have a daughter killed and eaten by savages, than have her submitted to the brutality of a slavemaster or sold into prostitution. If an Aulus Virginius stabbed a daughter to save her from this fate, I could not blame him.

Sources of Information.

You express disapprobation of my speaking with such confidence concerning “foreign events,” which are only “known to us by newspapers.” If newspapers were the sole means of knowledge, yet newspapers contain a variety of public documents, which editors even in their worst mood do not forge, and, in the case of the American events, cannot garble by mistranslation. Such documents would in fact decide the whole question; and in passing I observe, that you are bound to explain why your Association is just as shy of quoting them, as is the whole press of England, in so far as it sides with the South. But there never was such a concentration of light on any public subject as on the character and plots of the Slave Power; which have been notorious to all Europe, and denounced on all sides as infamous, until April, 1861; when the London press with few exceptions went right round in one week, and put Darkness for Light, and Light for Darkness. I am “headstrong” enough to resist this, even if you tell me that all the aristocracy and all the gentry approve it, and that the London Clubs dictated this course.

As materials for judgment, we have: 1, The Slave Codes; 2, The speeches and sentences of slave judges; 3, The speeches of senators in Congress, and governors of States, and, more recently, decisive speeches of the President and Vice-President of the South, besides the writings of the Hon. Mr. Spratt, which have nearly the weight of official statements; 4, Recently, we have also the manifestos of the States on seceding; 5, The articles of Southern newspapers, which not only testify to the love of freedom in the North (which you preposterously deny), but display an agony of indignation at the thought of a compromise which should look to a termination of slavery; 6, Public events, such as were developed in the Fugitive Slave Law, and the buccaneerings to which I have referred; 7, The behaviour of the Presidents in the wars of Texas and of Kansas; 8, The diplomatic action of the Slave Power, and its perpetual hectoring against England; 9, The dastardly attempt to murder Mr. Sumner in the Senate, for having spoken a speech from his heart, as was a senator's duty; for which assault the ruffian received compliments from the South, without one whisper of disapproval; 10, The notoriety of Lynch-law, virtually a Southern institution, and *confessedly a necessary adjunct VITAL to the slave system*; 11,

Advertisements concerning Fugitive Slaves, which detail their various brandings and mutilations, and offer reward for bringing them dead or alive. To the great frequency of such brandings, wounds, or marks of the teeth of hounds, several Northern Generals have borne emphatic testimony; 12, The phenomena of the Dismal Swamp, the existence of a class of men called slave catchers, and the maintenance of dogs expressly trained to hunt fugitives; 13, The testimony of unbiassed English travellers, of Southern refugees, and of other men, either Southerners or of the Southern party. I may indeed justly say, that it is far easier for a boy to understand the Slave Power to the bottom, than for the wisest man among us to understand an English ministry. For, while with us dissimulation is an official duty, and the policy of a cabinet is an obscure and ever shifting compromise between the essentially diverse sentiments of the individuals; the Slave Power has but one sentiment, and one motive for political existence, namely, the intensifying of slavery, which at once gives them an energetic unity of action, and a habit of unlimited frankness. Each sees his own feelings and views reflected from all the rest; and confident in support of his order, disdains the judgment of mankind. Some are refined in expression; others coarse, to the point of brutality: but all are pre-eminently clear, and perfectly in harmony, except that the "Breeding" States have an interest opposed to the African Slave Trade. Your difficulty as to our materials of judgment is therefore purely imaginary.

What can be more deliciously clear than the last and celebrated sentence of the Supreme Court, while in the hands of judges appointed by the Slave Power?—"Coloured men have no rights, which the white man is bound to respect!" No one can misunderstand that. The thrill of horror caused in the hearts of the North by this sentence, energetically aided to Mr. Lincoln's election. You cannot think that slave-owners gratuitously covet the execrations of mankind. When they enunciate such a principle, it is not that it may remain a dead letter, but that it may be a frightful reality. In fact, had they not long acted upon it, they could not have enunciated it.

Slave Breeding for the Market.

I shall first advert to one application of this principle, that which concerns the Inter-State Slave Trade,—a trade, which Mr. Macaulay, speaking as a leading Whig in 1845, before a Parliament very intolerant of fanatical exaggeration,—pronounced to be more odious and demoralizing than the African slave trade itself. (He deliberately re-printed it in 1854.) By the laws of competition no one can carry on a thriving business in breeding niggers for the market, unless—1, The rights of mothers be utterly trampled under foot, and (to borrow Mrs. Stowe's phrase,) babies be sold by the pound; 2, The right of chastity be utterly denied to every slave woman, and the right of rape be sharply conceded to the master; 3, All right of a slave to a wife or children, as well as to property or to a native soil, be totally exploded; 4, The unlimited use of the whip be given to the master. Every one of these things is not only a stern reality, (and if you do not know them, I must say it is you that are ignorant, not I that misrepresent,) but they are even so cherished that no man in the South could publicly speak against any of them, without being tarred and feathered, or otherwise violently driven out.

Did you never read an account of a slave auction in Richmond or Washington? of the heartrending scenes when families are separated; families of those, who, bereft of every other enjoyment and relief in life, solace their weariness, their pains, their helplessness, by one and only one pleasure, the sweet tenderness of mother and child, brother and sister, or sometimes by that contraband indulgence, love between husband and wife? Compared to the agonies of separation, the hard-hearted rudenesses of the auction appear slight. Yet I cannot permit myself to think that you will make little of the profane indignity to human nature, which puts a man or woman on the block, permits bidders to

come and examine their parts, pull open their mouths, and thrust fingers in to feel their teeth, fumble in their bosoms, pinch their muscles, and feel a young woman as a butcher feels a lamb. Yet all this is as nothing; for all is swallowed up in the agony of parting. Even the *threat* of selling a woman to the plantations of the South subdues her, as might the threat of Siberian exile; overpowers her modesty, if she has any; while the dim certainty, branded into the heart of every mother, that this fate is destined, ere long, for her beloved children, is as a shadow of hell, oppressing the whole heart through the whole life.

The right of rape practically acts in two different ways. On the majority of slavewomen it induces a total recklessness as to female honour. They are taught by precept and example, that it is their duty to have a child once a year, and it matters not who is the father. To this degradation they learn to submit, though they cannot put off maternal feelings, and escape pangs of anguish, when one child after another is rent away from them. But there is another still more piteous case,—that of mulattos, mestizos, quadroons, quinteroons, &c. who have been reared delicately and trained modestly.* With inhumanity unparalleled, the American code has pronounced the mixed blood to be slaves. One drop of the African is held to pollute an ocean of European blood; and the master's licentiousness, instead of conducing to freedom, as in Cuba, does but breed for him a peculiarly valuable stock of cattle. A man's beautiful daughter, reared in his house, may be sold to men's lust through her parents' death or pecuniary difficulties. If she be forced to incest by her father or brother, the law justifies it; and however rare this last enormity, no Southerner would dare to propose to forbid it. "The slave has no rights which the white man is bound to respect," is a summary warning against all utopian ideas of amendment. Even if we had not, what we have, actual cases in point, showing the execrable nature of the infliction on beautiful quadroons, what say you to a law which justifies a man in whipping a woman to death, because she will not submit to rape? Mrs. Beecher Stowe, in her *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* (a book with which your Association seems to be unacquainted), relates an actual case of Delia Clarke, a beautiful quinteroon, her mother being a quadroon, and her father a Scotchman, who married as he thought and intended, legitimately, and on the promise that she would be made free. But nine children were nevertheless kept in slavery, Delia among them. Delia was pious, and a member of the Baptist church; but was sold, apparently for her beauty. In sight of her brother and mother, she was brutally whipped, because she would not submit to her new master's lust. When nothing could conquer her resolution, he sold her to the brothels of New Orleans. No thanks to him nor to the slave code, that her beauty attracted a Frenchman, who took her to Mexico, emancipated and married her. Does a Power which maintains such laws *deserve* to be shielded by the collective patronage or force of Europe from extinction by any greater Power which will take the trouble? Is it not strictly AN ENEMY OF MANKIND? Europe does not espouse the King of Ashantee, or cherish the political existence of Dahomey, who are far more bearable than this Slave Power.

And here, in passing, I beg to protest emphatically against the confusion of thought which the word RECOGNIZE covers. If pirates or mutineers become very powerful, we cannot shut our eyes to this matter of fact; and if we get into war with them, we must *call* it war, and deal with them by the laws of war, which we criminally refused to do in the Indian Mutiny. But before we *adopt* into

*(Note.)—Even the quadroon (or descendant of an African mother in the fourth generation), is undistinguishable from a pure European, and ordinarily much handsomer than the inhabitants of at least Northern Europe. "The quadroons," says the Duke of Saxs Weimar in his *Travels through North America*, vol. ii, p. 61, "are almost entirely white." Of the quinteroons, Mr. Edwards says in his *West Indies*, book 1, ch. 1. "There is no visible difference between them and the whites, either in colour or features." Since all of these and their posterity are treated as cattle, equally with jet black negroes, we see that it is mere hypocrisy in philosophic men like Mr. Stephens and Mr. Spratt, to base the defence of their slavery on the doctrine of an *inferior race*. What of Mr. Thomas Carlyle?

the family of European nations any particular power, we must enquire not only whether it be a power,—as was the chief of the Pindarrees, or as the King of Lagos is,—but whether it have the moral qualities which justify receiving it into our national amity and comity. To this day we have refused an ambassador from the Pope on moral grounds; yet now it is pretended that if a power do but exist, it has at once a right of admission to the Queen's Court.

You have never heard from me any fierce indignation against Mahomedan or Brazilian slavery. If American slavery now stood as Washington left it—declining, deplored, and faintly apologized for,—with the light of freedom, free speech, and the opinion of leading men undermining it, I should see nothing in it to threaten the morality of Europe and the welfare of the world. If I were an American, with *such* a slavery surrounding me as Washington left, I should prefer to see it die under moral influences, rather than destroyed by bloodshed and convulsion. But the exceptional characteristic of the Confederate Slave Power, is, (as distinctly stated by its Vice President,) that it exists solely to glorify and immortalize slavery. It is no longer apologetic, but fanatically self-righteous and propagandist. It violently suppresses free speech on the part of its own citizens against the sacred institution of slavery, and makes any amelioration impossible. If you, a humane man, were a planter in Georgia or South Carolina, and dared to propose to modify the wickedest of its wicked laws, your life would not be safe for a day. Do you know, that our friend, —, was warned out of Washington, and forced to escape for his life, for a twofold offence? 1.—That he had been present at an Abolition meeting in the North. 2.—In Washington he waited tenderly on the sick bed of a slave.

But I am wrong to refer to private events, as to which it may be thought there was perhaps some mistake or some hoax. There is no mistake, no obscurity in the following: Senator Hammond, of South Carolina, (the same, I believe, who was afterwards Governor,) said in the U.S. Senate in 1836, "If chance throw an abolitionist into our hands, he may expect a felon's death." So Senator Preston, in a debate in the U.S. Senate, Jan. 1838, said: "Let an abolitionist come within the borders of South Carolina: if we can catch him, we will try him; and notwithstanding all the interference of all the governments on earth, including the Federal Government, we will hang him." Am I presumptuous in having a strong opinion on these foreign events? But the South has moved on since 1838. Their manifestos call the *whole* of Mr. Lincoln's party abolitionists. The Richmond newspapers chime in; and the "Southern Literary Messenger," without being thought to be ironical or traitorous, proclaims that every man is an abolitionist "who does not love (American) slavery for its own sake as a divine institution." Does it behove a wise man to expect any improvement to spring from such a fanatical, sanguinary, polluted, and polluting source?

I frankly confess, though I can manage to *write* with perfect calmness on these things, I cannot *spea*k calmly. My heart often becomes like a volcano. I do not see how it can be otherwise with any honest man who knows the facts; and I have not yet alluded to all of them. If you have not gone through them, as I have,—peculiarly for twenty-five years past, and in some sense for forty years; for in early youth I took the keenest interest in West Indian emancipation,—I cannot in five minutes' talk communicate to you the rightfulness of my agitation, while in imagination I see the beautiful quadroon writhing under the whip, the mother agonized to lose her child, the pregnant, sick or suckling woman cruelly driven to the field. And then, perhaps, if my words are choked and hurried, and my eyes gleam with fierceness, you suppose my judgment to be disordered and fanatical.

I have not yet probed the breeding system to the bottom. A respectable American gentleman made to me the following statement: He interrogated a fugitive slave, a man of noble stature and magnificent chest, why he had run away. The man was slow to reply; said that he had *not* been cruelly treated, but

he did not like his work. On being further pressed to explain what his work was, — forgive me that I tell you; but where atrocity stalks abroad, we must not cloak it through fastidiousness,—the fugitive at last unwillingly stated, that he had been kept as a *breeding man*, in order to improve the stock of little niggers for the market. He had felt this to be a great degradation, but knew that he would be cruelly flogged if he disobeyed orders. At last the day came, when he succeeded in escaping. Of course I cannot guarantee the story; but I believe it, not so much because similar statements are whispered from other quarters, but because, by the nature of trade itself, under the principles legally laid down it seems nearly inevitable. Nay, I feel certain, that that ingenuous and thorough-going logician, the Hon. L. W. Spratt, of South Carolina, would treat with high disdain any objection to such a practice. "What!" he would say, "when of course no girl can be allowed to care who is the father of her children, who but a madman can object to her master so regulating the matter as to obtain the most vigorous offspring? This is not only beneficial to his purse, and conducive to national energy, but is also humane to the inferior race, in which we demand high animal power and deprecate development of brain and mind." At any rate, such a practice is *perfectly legal*, and *cannot give offence to social opinion* in the South. The same may be said of white men selling their daughters. An English gentleman who had lived 25 years in Illinois, and came away at last, because the South became ever more fanatical and more over-bearing, so that his life from week to week was unsafe; told me that when he had expressed pity for a poor girl, whom her father was taking down the Mississippi to sell for the purposes of New Orleans, the first reply that he received was, "that it was the old man who ought to be pitied, for he would not do it unless he was hard up." On his replying to this with some indignation, he was advised "not to land on *that bank*," (Missouri or Arkansas) "or they would string him up, quick enough." His comment to me was, "No one can live on the borders of the South, without one of two results. He must either put on the spirit of a martyr, risk his life frequently, and live with perpetual laceration of feeling; or he must stop his mouth, wink hard at atrocities, and become callous in self-defence, sink in moral delicacy and humanity, and adopt fundamentally slaveholding sentiment." When, by ferocity and bribes combined, the South had thus corrupted a part of the Northern population, the English gentry give this as a reason for invective against the North, and for equalizing it with the South! I cannot without seeming uncivil declare, how VERY unintelligent I must regard such reasoning to be.

Planting States.

In the struggle for West Indian freedom, the enormity of slavery drove men to speak plainly, as does the patronage of the Slave Power by refined and amiable Englishmen drive me now. I well remember the shudder which passed through society, when the "Edinburgh Review" gave currency to the statement, that in Jamaica it was an ordinary piece of hospitality to a guest before retiring to bed, to ask him whether he would like a girl to sleep with him; in short as naturally as one would ask, Did he wish for a jug of hot water? Nothing in the laws or in the social morals of the South forbids this; perhaps in the breeding States thrifty owners shrink from such liberality. Nevertheless, on the whole, the yellow breed approaches in number the mass of West Indian slaves freed by England. What an amount of moral agony is implied in the dry fact, that hundreds of thousands of this more intelligent, sensitive ambitious race are treated as cattle by the law! And what are we to think of men, whose hearts and consciences are so seared, as to extol and glorify this system, and piously moralize over its humanity and its divine sanction? This junction of religion with cruelty was also a feature of the Thugs. A Louisiana planter said to Mr. Olmstead*: "There is not a likely looking black girl in this State that is not the paramour of a white man. There is not an old plantation in which the grandchildren of the owner are not whipped

*Seaboard Slave States, p. 602; quoted by Professor Cairnes

in the field by his overseer." "The practice," he added, "was not occasional or general, but universal." I never heard of Thugs, cannibals, or buccaneers, in Asia, Polynesia, or Africa, who have maintained institutions so hideous. Perhaps Lord Wharnccliffe, as your president, will patronize a book to be called *The Southern Peerage*; which, with necessary polygamous or agamous illustration, will inform us how many of his brothers, sisters and cousins, each chivalrous planter "whips in the field" or has sold off to distant markets. To me, reading these things, the bloodshed of five years' war, with all its devastation, appears a slight and merciful fine imposed by Divine Justice on those who have sustained or connived at such enormities.

In regard to the Planting States, I will, for conciseness, confine myself to three additional testimonies. The first is that of Mrs. Fanny Kemble, an unexceptionable witness concerning the estate of her own husband, in South Carolina. In vain did she, as mistress, try to soften the miseries of women, who from being driven to the field when pregnant, suckling or sick, encountered not only exhaustion and wearing pain, but internal maladies. This and other cruelties were irremovable, not because her husband or his overseer were, in Southern estimate, hard and stern, but because any relaxation of iron rule would produce such a mass of pretended ailments as to paralyze industry on the estate. The mortality among the children was enormous. Such are the happiest peasantry in the world! My second witness is Judge Winter of Georgia, a refugee driven out in the beginning of the war for his attachment to the Union. He has publicly stated, that he had taken note of more than 500 murders of coloured men, committed within his own range; and in not one case was the murderer brought into court. In general, white evidence is not forthcoming, and without this no murderer can be punished. But if ever it was known that whites were cognizant of the crime, a Committee of Vigilance, as a thing of course, forbade the summoning of a jury, and quashed the proceedings. The Judge stated that the few laws in the public code which ostensibly protect the slave are uniformly made void by the lynch-law, which supersedes legality. So of course it must be, if "slaves have no rights which white men are bound to respect." My third witness is General Benjamin Butler, whom no one will accuse of mawkish philanthropy. In past years he was a "Hunker" or Proslavery Democrat, and a personal friend of Jefferson Davis. But when at New Orleans he had to make judicial decisions, and he discovered by the sworn evidence of white men the actual state of things, he was converted by the facts themselves and became outright an Abolitionist. On returning to New York, and thence to Massachusetts, he frankly defended himself before his old friends. He declared that the condition of things in New Orleans was enough to drive men into atheism: and told his "Hunker" friends, that he had taken with him Southward all the "Hunkerest" Democrats he could get; and every one of them had become an Abolitionist, as he had; and so would those whom he addressed, if they could go South, and see what slavery really meant. I submit, that such testimonies—which, after all, are only illustrations of the *Law*, and might confidently have been predicted after merely reading the Statute Book—are not to be set aside by any vague declamation, nor by a natural and rightful unwillingness to believe in the guilt of polished men.

Frankness of Fanaticism in the South.

Before closing this subject, since you fancy I ought not to be so sure that I know what goes on across the Atlantic, I wish to quote as one specimen of *frankness*, the speech of Mr. Gauden, a delegate from Georgia to the Charleston Convention in 1860. He says,—“I am a Southern-States-rights man. I am an African slave-trader. I believe that slavery is right, morally, religiously, socially and politically; and has done more good for this country and for civilization, than all other interests put together. I would ask my friends of the South to come up in a proper spirit. Ask our Northern friends to give us

our RIGHTS, and take off the RUTHLESS restrictions which cut off the supply of slaves from foreign lands. As a matter of RIGHT and JUSTICE to the South, I would ask the democracy of the North to grant us this thing; and I believe they have the patriotism and honesty to do it, because it is right in itself. I tell you, fellow Democrats, that *the African slave-trader is the true Union man*. The slave-trading of Virginia is more immoral, more unchristian in every point of view, than the African slave trade. We are told upon high authority, that there is a class of men, who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Virginia, which authorizes the buying of Christian men, separating them from their wives and children, from all the relations and associations amid which they have lived for years, *rolls up her eyes in holy horror*, when I would go to Africa, buy a savage, and introduce him to the blessings of civilization and Christianity. . . . It has been my fortune to go into that noble old State and buy a few darkies, and I have had to pay from 1,000 to 2,000 dollars a head, when I could go to Africa and buy better negroes for 50 dollars a-piece. Virginia knows that the African slave-trade would break up her monopoly, and hence her objections to it. I come from the first congressional district of the State of Georgia. I represent the African slave-trade interests of that section. I am proud of the position I occupy in that respect. I believe that the African slave-trader is a true missionary and Christian; and I have pleaded with my delegation to put this issue squarely to the Northern democracy, and say to them,—‘Are you prepared to go back to first principles, and take off your unconstitutional restrictions, and leave the question to be settled by each State?’ Now do this, fellow citizens, and *you will have peace in the country*. But as long as your Federal Legislature takes jurisdiction of this question, *so long will there be war*; and *this glorious Union of ours shall be disrupted, and go out in blood and night for ever.*”

This speech, taken in connection with more guarded official utterances, makes it certain, that beside the reason for Secession alleged in the Manifestos, namely that it was expressly in order to save slavery from extinction within the Union; another reason impelled the leading seceders,—the desire to people the Territories by re-opening the African Slave-Trade.

Want of Frankness in your Association.

Your Association, on the contrary, has ingeniously said the truth in words so covered as to deceive your own President, who says that the South does not wish to support slavery!! In the manifesto, signed by Thomas Staley, Secretary, (to which you have pledged your hitherto unspotted name,) you give as a *third* reason for secession, that the seceders were convinced that *the Constitution would soon cease to protect their rights*. That is most correct, if you will honourably explain what it is that they call their RIGHTS. Mr. Gaulden tells you: It is not *merely* the right to whip their own daughters, subject them to rape or incest, flog men and women at pleasure, even to death, with practical impunity in carrying out the frightful doctrine that “Slaves have no rights, &c. &c.” but ALSO the right to fetch more slaves at pleasure from Africa; or as others have expressed it, to make it as legal for the South to import niggers, as for the Yankees to import jackasses or nutmegs. And who among them all can possibly answer Mr. Gaulden, when he asks: “Why forbid me to buy a savage in Africa for 50 dollars, and force me to buy a Christian in Virginia for 1000 dollars?”

I do not now ask, whether the ratio of 50 to 1000 would not infallibly reopen the slave trade; but, whether, knowing that the South *has re-imposed slavery* on Texas, and has rushed into border war to carry it into Kansas, you can put your hand on your heart, and affirm the doctrine of your manifesto, that it is wise to promote the independence of the South, in *hope* that it will abolish slavery. According to this, if a fierce beast had killed one man and severely wounded another, and in consequence some one had chained him up, you might innocently

let him loose, and tell us, "it is your SINCERE opinion, that that is the way to secure that he will do no harm in future." It is painful to use strong words; but I think *you* would use them in that case. You would ask; Is this *idiotcy*? or *hypocrisy*? So here you drive me to ask, which of the two is it in your Association? Rather, I entreat you to show me some way of escape from a most unpleasant alternative of judgment, when you tell us that the Power which, by every act and by every utterance of every official, every celebrated preacher or writer, declares its fanatical resolution to do more energetically, when free from control, what it has hitherto done in spite of control,—will nevertheless lay its ferocity aside and become humane, if its pride be but intensified by new conquest. If your Association is sincere, but only ignorant, yet ignorance, which deliberately shuts its eyes to specific facts, in pursuance of a fantasy of its own, and tries to do Evil, calling it Good, is surely criminal. When your Association must know that it is advancing things flatly opposed to every thing that we maintain to be fact, I feel it scandalous in the extreme (and I am sorry to say, a stain on every member) that not a single testimony is quoted in proof. Are you all so very ignorant as not to know anything of the speeches of the President and Vice-President of the South, or of the manifestos on the secession? Why are they not quoted? I well know, that those who work the machinery of your Association *dare* not quote them. Let your Association, if it please, take up the defence of American chattel-slavery, as Mr. Gauden does, as Jefferson Davis, Alexander Stephens, Toombs, Spratt, Mason, Yancey, Williams, Maury, and every active Secessionist does. Let it, with the courage, bravado, and brazen-facedness of these men, expose itself to the indignation of Europe and of India; there is something heroic in such self-complacent impudence. But I find no marks of out-spoken sincerity, such as I desire to find in *you*, when your Association tells me that you cordially hate Slavery, yet do what you can in favour of the power which is fanatical and furious to extend Slavery. Do you know that Mr. Spence was cashiered from his post of Agent for the South, and attacked with frenzied vituperation by a leading Richmond newspaper, for having dared to apologize for slavery, instead of glorifying it? Did you never see the declaration of the *Richmond Examiner*, in Maylast,—“For Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, we have deliberately substituted Slavery, Subordination, and Government?” The line of argument adopted by your Association can only damage the reputation, moral or intellectual, of every member; yet no other line has a chance of gaining any honest Englishman to the cause of the South.

I can only advert here to one other topic, on which I cannot reconcile the suppressions practised in your manifesto with honest intentions. I refer to the alleged legality of Secession. If an English Prime-Minister were to conspire with a Governor-General of India to separate India from the Queen's dominion; were to use his official power to empty the English treasury, arsenals, and docks; to withdraw the garrisons so that fortresses could be seized, and place ships where they would either be burnt or made of least use; and, by aid of all the Queen's civil and military servants in India, had succeeded in bringing about a general revolt in that great country;—I believe you would think it highly dishonest in an American, if, while reasoning in favour of the natural and legal rights of the insurgents, he should omit the CARDINAL fact that every man who was active in the secession was *under oath of office* to the QUEEN. The American insurgents were under oath of office to the UNION, and by it alone gained their power of insurrection. This is suppressed in your manifesto. Mr. Conway, of Virginia, (as one illustration of fact and law,) had to take this oath to the Union, under a Southern President, before he could be made Deputy clerk in a county town,—Warrenton in Virginia. England regarded as unpardonable the guilt of soldiers, who broke their allegiance to the E. I. Company, after the great Mogul, (the suzerain, *under* whom the Company held its legal power,) was at war with us. The guilt of Cabinet ministers, or Governors of Provinces, who break their oath of allegiance, is surely as much worse and more unpardonable than that of a private soldier, as their power is greater.

Outram and Havelock did not dare to promise life to insurgent soldiers, who desired to lay down their arms; so sacred to Englishmen did an oath, taken to *their own* supremacy, appear to be. Is your Association suddenly converted to the belief, that oaths of office are things too trivial to deserve mention? Let me suppose that the nations of Europe, expressly in order to prevent in the future such wars as have desolated the past, were solemnly to renounce the right of private war, and were to establish over the heads of all the sovereigns a European Union, which should, under a single flag and single Executive, hold all the armies, all the fortresses, all the navies, and alone represent all Europe to the foreigner, each State resigning its right of foreign embassies. If Queen Victoria, and every one of her servants from highest to lowest, and all her successors, and their servants, had to take an oath of office to this European Union, the Queen by the very fact would cease to be an *independent* sovereign. Her sovereignty thenceforth would be only local; for she herself would be *under allegiance* to a SUPERIOR; nor could she possibly have a legal right to separate at her own mere will, while no breach of faith had been committed against her. She would be *less* of an independent sovereign, than the Nizam or the Rajah of Travancore, or any other Indian Prince, who, I believe, do not take oaths of office to the British power on ascending the throne: yet we well know how any of these princes would be dealt with if he presumed to send embassies to foreign powers, and avowed that he had a right freely to break the treaties which his predecessor had freely made. If a historian, pretending to narrate such events as I imagine in Europe, were to omit that our Queen was under oath of allegiance to a power higher than herself, you would condemn him as suppressing a CARDINAL FACT. Your Association does much worse. It not only suppresses the official perjury, and tissue of treachery, which stamps the Southern officials as more unpardonable than mutineers, and their cause as evidently illegal. It suppresses also other manifold proofs, that all the citizens of all the States were *subjects* to the Union, one and indivisible; such as, the fact that every citizen of one State has a right of residence in every other under protection of the Central Power; that the Central Executive has power of arrest upon individuals in every State, and is bound to sustain republican government in each; that, for the protection of all, the Central Legislature can command soldiers from each; and that Southern Presidents have impressed negroes into the national army without indemnifying their masters. Thus it hides the fact, that the rebels are violently withdrawing from the Union three million loyal coloured subjects of the Union; to say nothing of the loyalists of East Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Texas, Western Virginia, all of whom the insurgents have claimed a right to subdue to their own will. It further suppresses, that only the old and less important States took part at all in the original act of Union, while the newer States are *creations* of the Union, and stand on soil, which at least as strictly belongs to the Union as the West Indian islands to our Queen, and that the same is true of the outlying Territories, in the cause of which this struggle arose. Using such liberties of suppression, your Association, if it could exist fifty years, might at the end of that time justify Florence in revolting against the king of Italy at its own mere caprice, and without grievances; by urging that Florence had voluntarily joined the crown of Piedmont, and therefore had an eternal indefeasible right of arbitrary separation. You will only need to do as you now do,—*suppress all the facts which prove allegiance to a higher power*,—and you can justify ANARCHY in Italy, ANARCHY in America, ANARCHY in England. You may thus resolve our island into the Heptarchy, and bless us with such perpetual border-war between our counties as your advice would complacently bestow on the Northern States.

In conclusion, I claim to remark on certain words of yours; but distinctly add that they neither surprize nor offend me. You express dislike of my "preachings," and call us "embarrassers of the government." I take the latter point first. The government at present represents *all* England. It contains Tories, Whigs, and radicals, some openly bitter against the North, others known to be favourable to its cause. Your party "embarrassed" the government for

more than twelve months before we moved; that is to say, it drove forward one section of the government, and impeded another section. Had we not succoured the friends of the North, the cabinet, as a whole, would not have had fair play. Not that I need any apology, had we had to oppose the entire ministry, the entire aristocracy, and all the richer classes, when your party was doing its utmost to involve us in a war, which must certainly have been funereal to both sides, and probably fatal to England,—a war against our dearest friends, in favour of such a power as I have developed above,—a Power which is our necessary and implacable enemy. And pray take a short retrospect. I hardly think you can believe that the ministry would have been so compliant to the zeal of your party in offensive demonstrations of war, if any one had foreseen that New Orleans would be captured before an English fleet could reach it,—that in March, 1862, the Northern armies would subdue Western Tennessee,—that the Merrimac and Monitor would presently demonstrate the helplessness of the English fleet against a single iron-clad,—and that the English Admiralty, after years of the most lavish experiment, would pronounce the old 68-pounder their best gun, while the Northerners fire 440-pounders with fatal effect. Those who yield to explosive pride or crooked expediency are the mischievous meddlers with state affairs, not those who “preach morality.”

And this leads me to the other topic. When a whole order of men rushes into immorality, and shows itself ready for crime, it may be the duty of humble persons like you and me, to smother sorrow in our hearts, and be silent; but if I speak *at all*, (and I suppose that if I follow Mr. Spence by eighteen months, I have been modest enough,) the nature of the case forbids tones of diffidence. Morality is dogmatic, and must be “preached,” not timidly whispered. Crimes must be denounced without dissembling indignation. I do not carve out a *new morality of my own*, but I follow up the precedents of the British Government, and argue from its own deliberate conduct. Nothing is more baneful and detestable than that a Great Power should have one code of morality for itself and another for the foreigner. I cannot forget that the Queen’s ministry was so far from recognizing the Great Mogul, or the Princes of Oude, as “belligerent” that it treated the former as a *felon*, and sent him to a penal settlement, and winked at his sons having been shot in cold blood, when they had, without compulsion, entrusted themselves to the honour of an English officer. You cannot doubt that a frenzy of rage would have swept through England, if the American Government had declared the Great Mogul to be “belligerent,” in the summer of 1857, and thereby enabled his agents to buy arms and ships at New York, and send them out against English commerce; yet our ministry did worse than this. Boasting of “neutrality” between perjured traitors and a Government allied to us, it insisted on reserving for the rebellious South a right of privateering, against its own moral doctrines, and before the South had come into existence as a naval power, *or had any national rights but what England gratuitously gave it*, a step utterly unprecedented, and of immense avail to encourage an insurrection, which its own Vice-President had publicly avowed to be without grievances, and to be the “height of *madness, folly, and wickedness*.”—So spoke Mr. Stephens at the Convention in Georgia, in dissuading Secession.

England, which might have reduced bloodshed to a minimum, has inflamed it to a maximum by the acts and speeches of our ministers, under the stimulus of your party. When our blood had had time to cool from the Indian war, Tantia Topee was hanged for having led Indian armies against British armies, in what he must undoubtedly have felt to be a *national* contest; yet I do not remember any outcries of horror in Parliament. Space fails me to detail the many other glaring proofs which recent years have displayed, that the ruling classes of England have one morality for themselves, and another for free republics; and that unless the humbler classes proclaim their indignant protest in “preachings” which the whole world may hear, the world will believe that we deserve the title *Puritanical Pharisees*, applied to us by the Southern slaveholders.

I am, heartily yours,

F. W. NEWMAN.