REPLY

OF

MESSRS. AGENOR DE GASPARIN, EDOUARD LABOULAYE, HENRI MARTIN, AUGUSTIN COCHIN,

TO THE

Loyal National League of New York,

TOGETHER WITH

THE ADDRESS OF THE LEAGUE,

ADOPTED AT THE

MASS INAUGURAL MEETING,

In Union Square, April 11, 1863.

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REPLY

OF

MESSRS. AGENOR DE GASPARIN, EDOUARD LABOULAYE, HENRI MARTIN, AUGUSTIN COCHIN,

TO

THE LETTER OF THE LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE.

TRANSLATED BY JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS, JR.

GENTLEMEN,—We would have thanked you much sooner but for the prolonged absence of one of our number. It would have been painful to us to have lost the collective character of this reply; for the blending of our four names is a proof of that great unity of sentiment upon all that concerns the cause of justice which by God's favor manifests itself here below, in spite of political and religious differences.

Yet we are careful not to overrate our personal importance. The League does not address us as individuals; it speaks to France, who cherishes, as a national tradition, the friendship of the United States. It speaks to European opinion, which will rise up and declare itself more clearly as it recognizes that the struggle is between Slavery and Liberty.

You have comprehended, gentlemen, that neither France nor Europe have been free from misapprehensions. Light did not at first dawn upon the nature of the salutary but painful crisis through which you are passing; it was not plain to all, at the outset, that the work inaugurated by the election of Mr. LINCOLN yielded

nothing in grandeur to that which your fathers accomplished with the aid of La Fayette and under the guidance of Washington.

Europe has had her errors, her hesitations, for which we are paying dearly to-day on both shores of the Atlantic. What blood would have been spared to you, what industrial suffering avoided by us, had European opinion declared itself with that force which you had the right to hope for! There is a protest of the universal conscience before which mankind necessarily recoils; moral forces are, after all, the great forces.

The revolted South, which needed our aid, which relied, and perhaps still relies upon us, would not have long dared to affront the indignation of the civilized world.

I.

Why has this indignation been withheld? Why has a sort of favor been granted to the only insurrection which has had neither motive nor pretext—to the only one which has dared to unfurl the banner of slavery? What has been the merit of this insurrection? By what charm has it conciliated the sympathy of more than one enlightened mind? This is a question humiliating to put, but useful to solve.

In the first place, Europe doubted whether slavery was the real cause of conflict. Strange doubt, in truth! For many years slavery had been the great, the only subject of strife in the United States. At the time of the election of Mr. Buchanan the only issue was slavery. The electoral platforms prove this fact; the manifestos of the South were unanimous in this sense; her party leaders, her governors, her deliberative assemblies, her press, spoke but of slavery; the Vice-President of the insurgent Confederacy had made haste to declare officially that the mission of the new State was to present to the

admiration of mankind a society founded on the "*corner-stone*" of slavery. Lastly, it would seem that to all reflecting minds the acts of Mr. BUCHANAN and other Presidents named by the South were proof enough of this truth. The South thinks only of slavery. In her eyes all means are right to secure to slavery its triumphs and boundless conquests.

But, it is objected that Mr. LINCOLN and his friends were not abolitionists. That is certain; their programme went no further than to stop the extension of slavery, and shut it out from the territories. Was this nothing? Was it not, in fact, every thing? Who could have foreseen that, on the appearance of such a programme, of a progress so unexpected, of an attack so bold upon the policy which was lowering and ruining the United States, the friends of liberty would not all have hastened to applaud? Was not this the time to cheer and strengthen those who were thus entering on the good path? Was it not due to urge them on in their liberal tendencies, so that, the first step taken, they should take the second, and go on to the end? Ought not that which terrified and dismayed the champions of slavery to rejoice the hearts of its adversaries?

Your letter, gentlemen, puts in bold relief the reasons which hindered Mr. LINCOLN from adopting at the outset an abolition policy. The President could disregard neither his oath of office nor the Federal Constitution; he had also to keep in mind the opposition which a plan of emancipation would encounter in the loyal States. The head of a great government cannot act with the freedom of a philosopher in his study. In simple truth, Mr. LINCOLN should be accused neither of timidity nor indifference. Your letter recalls the measures of his presidency, abolition of slavery in the capital and in the District of Columbia, the proclaiming of freedom to fugitive slaves, the principle of compensated emancipation submitted to all the loyal States, the death penalty actually inflicted on captains of slavers, the treaty with

England admitting the right of search, the establishment of diplomatic relations with the black Republics of Liberia and Hayti, the arming of free negroes, and at last, when the length and gravity of the war sanctioned an extreme exercise of the powers of commander-in-chief, the absolute and final suppression of slavery in all the revolted States.

We, gentlemen, are abolitionists; and we declare that we have never hoped nor wished for a more steady, rapid, and resolute progress. We have understood the difficulties which surrounded Mr. Lincoln. We have honored his scruples of conscience with regard to the Constitution of his country, which stopped his path. We have admired the courageous good sense with which he moved straight on, the instant he could so do without danger to his cause or violation of the law.

Wonder is expressed that slavery is abolished in the revolted States, and yet preserved in the loyal States! In other words, there is wonder that he who has sworn to obey the Constitution should respect it. Let no one take alarm at this. There is no danger that the "*domestic institution*" crushed in the Carolinas and Louisiana will long survive in Kentucky or Maryland. Already, as you have stated to us, a solemn proposition has been made to all the loyal States; already one of the most important, Missouri, has set the example of acceptance. To be thus uneasy about the maintenance of slavery in the North argues to our minds quite too much tenderness for the South. We look with suspicion upon this pretended abolitionism whose unfriendly exactions were first put forth on the very day illumined in America by the dawn of abolition. We frankly say we could never have foreseen that the election of Mr. Lincoln, and the several acts which we have just enumerated, would be an endless cause of complaint and distrust and unworthy denunciation from so many men who plume themselves in Europe upon their hatred of slavery.

And since to destroy the North in public opinion it was not enough to accuse it of too much favor for slavery, another grievance has been found. The North oppressed the South! The struggle was of two nationalities! The South had risen for independence!

Its independence! There were, then, subject provinces in the heart of the Union? Doubtless these provinces had no part in the government of the country—the South had not the same rights as the North? Of course the South was held in this state of inferiority and subjection by numerous Federal garrisons? Not at all. All the States enjoyed the same rights, took like part in elections. If any section was favored, it was the South, to which a further suffrage was granted in proportion to the number of its slaves. If any advantage had been enjoyed, it was by the South, which had given the majority of Presidents and chief officers. Yet in this free country—a country without an army, and whose material means as well as laws were a sufficient barrier against oppression—in such a country we are told of a province claiming independenee!

We are of your opinion, gentlemen, that *independence* and *nationality* are words too noble to be abused. In their abuse, things are compromised, and the more noble and sacred these things, the more careful should we be not to confound them with what is neither noble nor sacred—a revolt in the name of slavery, a fratricidal revolt which would destroy a free Constitution, and tear asunder a common country, for fear lest there might be interference with the internal slave traffic, the continued breeding in Virginia, the sale and separation of families, and lest perchance some territories should be shut out from the conquests of slavery.

In vain we seek in the United States for a nationality striving to regain its independence. Not only has independence been nowhere assailed, but there is absolutely no trace of a separate

nationality. Nowhere, perhaps, is there a more thorough national homogeneity. North and South the race is the same; faith, language, history, and, we boldly add, interests are all the same. All these States have struggled together, suffered together, triumphed together. Their glories, their defeats, are common. Their Constitution sprung from the free consent of all; all pledged themselves alike to remain faithful to its obligations.

This pledge is no empty word with which caprice may idly sport. Among the inventions of our epoch, there is none more extraordinary than the *right of secession.* Those who discovered it will no doubt teach us where it should stop. If each section has a right of secession from the country as a whole, why not each state a right of secession from such section? Why not each county a right of secession from the State? Why not each town a right of secession from the county? Why not each citizen a right of secession from the town?

The truth is, that, but for slavery, the South would not talk of its suppressed independence, nor of the right of secession. Slavery has brought the two sections to strife. The extinction of slavery will restore Unity. The North and the South will some day wonder that they could have failed to appreciate the most complete and homogeneous of nationalities.

A last resort remains. That we here may not see the great struggle on the subject of slavery, an attempt is made to present the struggle as one for domination.

But this latter struggle is the very life of free countries. It is not surprising that the North and the South each strove actively, energetically, noisily, for the triumph of their candidate and policy. But when one of them, losing the battle of the ballot, plunges without hesitation into another kind of battle; when it resists, arms in hand, the result of a regular election; when on the very day that it ceases to rule it tears into fragments the

common country, it is guilty of a crime for which it is difficult to imagine an excuse.

II.

You will crush the revolt, gentlemen. You will succeed—such is our belief—in re-establishing the Union. It will emerge from the bloody trial stronger, more free, more worthy of the noble destiny to which God summons it.

It has been *demonstrated* to us, it is true, that the re-establishment of the Union was impossible; but was it not also *demonstrated* to us, and by irrefutable argument, that you would be always, and of necessity, defeated; that you would never know how to handle a musket; that recruiting would become impracticable; that your finances would be exhausted; that your loans would not be taken; that you would become bankrupt; that riots would ravage your cities; that your Government would be overthrown. You have given to all these oracles the simplest and best answer. You will reply in the same manner to those who assert that the re-establishment of the Union is impossible.

What seems really impossible is *not* to restore the Union. Where draw the line between North and South? How maintain between them a state of peace, or even of truce? How shall Slavery and Liberty live side by side? How, moreover, restrain the South from European protectorates, and by what means arrest the frightful consequences of such protectorates? Geographically, morally, politically, separation would create an unnatural situation, a situation violent and hazardous, where each would live, arms in hand, waiting for the hour of conflict.

We have full faith, gentlemen, that such a trial will be spared to you. It is not that we overlook the difficulties which still remain for you to overcome; they are great—greater perhaps than we imagine. War has its vicissitudes, and you may per

haps be yet called upon to pass through periods of ill-fortune. Yet, one fact always remains, and shows on which side the final triumph will be found, supposing that there be no foreign intervention. The flag of the Union has now, for two years, never paused in its advance. It floats to-day over the soil of every revolted State without exception. The South has had its victories; it has never gained an inch of ground. The North has had its defeats; it has never fallen back. Master to-day of the entire course of the Mississippi, master of the Border States and of Louisiana, all that remains is to stifle the revolt in the narrow territory where it first burst forth and back to which it has been driven. We believe that you will succeed in this; for Europe, the only hope of the South, seems now little disposed to give her aid.

In short, the rebellion is already reduced to such narrow proportions, that should it ever become a distinct confederation, accepted as such from weariness of war, the confederacy thus created will not be born with the functions of life. Neither European recognition nor your own could give it a serious chance of duration. It would end in a return to you. But we delight to believe the re-establishment of the Union less distant. And in the presence of that prospect which thrills our hearts with joy, permit us, us your friends, to offer you some sincere advice. The dangers of victory, you are aware, are not less than those of the combat. We give you, therefore, our loyal, frank opinion, sure that in the main it will agree with your own, and feeling, also, that these communications between us have an aim more serious than a simple exchange of words of sympathy.

We hold it to be of the first importance that the cause of the war shall not survive the war; that your real foe, slavery, shall not remain upon the field. We have often asked ourselves, these last three years, why God permitted the prolongation of this

bloody struggle. Was it not that the real issue might present itself with perfect clearness? Conquering earlier, the Federal Government would, perhaps, have been led to make concessions, to enter anew upon the fatal path of compromise. To-day all eyes, not willingly blind, see clearly. The New York riot, breaking out at an appointed day to aid the invasion of Lee, and falling instantly upon the negro in a way to show to every witness of its cowardly ferocity what kind of spirit animated certain friends of the South—the New York riot was a supreme warning to your country. Your line of action is clearly traced. So long as anything of slavery remain, there will be a cause of antagonism in the bosom of the Union. There must be no longer any question of slavery. It must be so ordered and settled as never to return. An *amendment to the Constitution* to this end must be proposed and adopted before the return of the States.

The condition of the free blacks must also be secured against the iniquities which they have so long endured. No more plans of colonization abroad, no more disabling laws, no more inequality. Those whom you have armed, who fought so bravely before the walls of Port Hudson and Fort Wagner, can never be other than citizens. Leave the problem of the races to its own solution—the most natural solutions are always the best. Under the rule of the common law, the free blacks of the South and of the North will find their legitimate place in your society, of which they will become useful members, honorable and honored.

In thus ordering in a definitive manner all that relates to slavery and the colored race you will have done more than is generally imagined for the lasting pacification of the South. What remains for you to do on this point may be stated in three words—*Moderation*, *Generosity*, *Liberty*.

There can be no question, as you have often said, of an occu-

pation of the South, of a conquest of the South, of reducing the Southern States to the condition of provinces where the conqueror will maintain his garrisons and the public life will be suspended. Save in the districts yet ravaged by guerillas and in the heart of which the Federal troops must finish their work, victory will everywhere bring with the re-establishment of the Union the re-establishment as promptly as possible of Constitutional rights. You hope, gentlemen, that those whom you conquer to-day will to-morrow meet you in debate, and you will accept in all their truth the struggle of the press, of the legislative hall, and of the ballot which will replace the strife of the battle-field.

We all feel it is much better that you should have to encounter difficulties fruitful of liberty, than that you should seek for yourselves the deceitful advantages of a dictatorial regime. To apply to the South an exceptional rule would be, alas, quite easy. It would be easy also to pronounce the death penalty, to outlaw, to execute confiscation bills; but in treading this path of vulgar tyranny you would sacrifice two things—your high renown in the present, a lasting Union with the South in the future.

But if, on the other hand, you show the world the novel spectacle of victory without reprisals, of liberty strong enough to survive civil war; if your Constitution remain, and slavery alone fall in such a conflict; if on the morrow of the struggle the law remain supreme, if elections for the Senate and House of Representatives be again open as in the old time, if the representatives of the Southern States reappear at Washington; if, taking the oath to be faithful to the Union and to support the modified Constitution, they find themselves on a footing of perfect equality with the representatives of the North; if it is permitted to them to attack and to embarrass the Government,—you will have won the most glorious of victories, and as-

sured to your country the best chance of prosperity and greatness.

Accept, gentlemen, in the advice which we tender to you, a proof of our esteem. It is not of every government, it is not of every people, that such things can be asked. Protracted civil wars tend to arbitrary customs, stir up passions and hates, and at last engender a development of military power and irresponsible authority which generally hinders a return to control, to free opinion, and to the strict letter of the law. We honor the United States enough to believe that they will be capable of setting us this too, after so many other examples.

The moderation which we hope for from you at home, we look for also from you abroad. Assuredly on the morrow of the submission of the South there will not be wanting a class of persons eager to recall to you wrongs, real or fancied, suffered at the hands of this or that power. They will point to your armies and disposable fleets. They will prove to you that a foreign war is perhaps the surest way to draw together the two sections so lately hostile. They will tell you that a common enmity, common dangers, are the cement needed to strengthen your shattered edifice.

You will not believe them, gentlemen. You will feel that after these jars it is needful before all else to restore to America peace and liberty. You will not seek new adventures and thus lengthen the temptation of dictatorships, the peril of exceptional rule.

You will fear a return to the aggressive policy which, with its invasions and turbulence, the influence of the South forced upon you, the day when, to assure the extension of slavery, it awakened in your hearts a wicked covetousness, and pushed you almost to the violation of the law of nations. Your glory will be to take the opposite of those violent declarations, of those fillibustering expeditions, of those unscrupulous ambitions.

The temptations which a great army excites are of the class most difficult to repress. May you not hesitate to reduce your forces after peace! Not only your material prosperity but your very liberty is involved in disarming, in a reduction of your expenses, and a return to the old idea of small armies and small budgets.

But we do not deceive ourselves. Your small armies, do what you may, will be large compared with those of three years ago. Your military education is completed; you have replied but too well to those who smiled at the recital of your battles of 1861. You have learned but too quickly to face death and to kill, and what you have learned you will not unlearn. You will not return to your former situation.

But while we do not expect again to see your effective force at ten thousand men, we do hope that effective forces which are now numbered by hundreds of thousands will not long be witnessed on American soil.

III.

Courage! You have before you one of the most noble works, the most sublime which can be accomplished here below—a work in the success of which we are as interested as yourselves—a work the success of which will be the honor and the consolation of our time.

This generation will have seen nothing more grand than the abolition of slavery (in destroying it with you, you destroy it everywhere), and the energetic uprising of a people which, in the midst of its growing prosperity, was visibly sinking under the weight of the tyranny of the South, the complicity of the North, odious laws and compromises.

Now, at the cost of immense sacrifices, you have stood up against the evil; you have chosen rather to pour out your blood

and your dollars than to descend further the slope of degradation where, rich, united, powerful, you were sure to lose that which is far nobler than wealth, or union, or power.

Well! Europe begins to understand, willingly or unwillingly, what you have done. In France, in England, everywhere, your cause gains ground, and be it said for the honor of the nineteenth century, the obstacle which our ill-will and our evil passions could not overcome, the obstacle which the intrigues of the South could not surmount, is an idea, a principle. Hatred of slavery has been your champion in the Old World. A poor champion seemingly. Laughed at, scorned, it seems weak and lonely. But what matters it? Ere the account be closed, principles will stand for something, and conscience, in all human affairs, will have the last word.

This, gentlemen, is what we would say to you in the name of all who, with us, and better than ourselves, defend your cause in Europe. Your words have cheered us; may ours, in turn, cheer you! You have yet to cross many a dark valley. More than once the impossibility of success will be demonstrated to you; more than once, in the face of some military check or political difficulty, the cry will be raised that all is lost. What matters it to you? Strengthen your cause daily by daily making it more just, and fear not: there is a God above.

We love to contemplate in hope the noble future which seems to stretch itself before you. The day you emerge at last from the anguish of civil war—and you will surely come out freed from the odious institution which corrupted your public manners, and degraded your domestic as well as your foreign policy—that day your whole country, South as well as North, and the South perhaps more fully than the North, will enter upon a wholly new prosperity. European emigration will hasten toward your ports, and will learn the road to those whom until now it has feared to approach. Cultivation, now abandoned,

will renew its yield. Liberty—for these are her miracles—will revivify by her touch the soil which slavery had rendered barren.

Then there will be born unto you a greatness nobler and more stable than the old, for in this greatness there will be no sacrifice of justice.

AGENOR DE GASPARIN.
AUGUSTIN COCHIN.
EDOUARD LABOULAYE,
Member of the Institute of France.
HENRI MARTIN.

Paris, October 31, 1863.

ADDRESS

OF THE

LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE

TO

MESSRS. AGENOR DE GASPARIN, EDOUARD LABOULAYE, AUGUSTIN COCHIN, HENRI MARTIN, AND OTHER FRIENDS OF AMERICA IN FRANCE.

BY JAMES McKAYE.

GENTLEMEN,—

The Loyal National League in the city of New York, an organization having its ramifications throughout all the loyal States, and bound together by the simple pledge "to maintain unimpaired the national unity both in idea and territorial boundary," have charged us with the grateful duty, in their name, to thank you for your disinterested and distinguished services in behalf of the American People and Union, in France.

Amidst the general misapprehension and bewilderment of the public opinion of Europe, you have clearly understood and appreciated the nature of the struggle in which the People and Government of the United States are involved, and your pertinent and impressive words have traversed the ocean and have inspired us with renewed hope and courage. In the heart of the American people, by the side of WASHINGTON, stands enshrined

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forever that ancient form of French sympathy, generosity, and valor, the Marquis de La Fayette. He and his companions who stood by our fathers, in their great struggle against arbitrary power, in the popular imagination, have always represented France. Is it strange, then, that their children, treacherously assailed in the very citadel of their national life, by a far more pernicious and despotic power, should listen with reluctant ear to the voices that would persuade them that France had lost the clew of her own great career, and, repudiating the traditions of her own glory, conspired with such a power to overthrow freedom, the rights of human nature, and Christian civilization in America? The messages you have sent us, have cleared away the doubts that weighed upon our hearts, and proved to us, that notwithstanding the persistent efforts of the advocates of the slave power to conceal its deformities, and to misrepresent the true issues involved in its attack upon American nationality, the enlightened and liberal mind of France penetrates the whole mass of subterfuges, and sees clearly on which side lie truth and justice.

We esteem so much the more highly your enlightened and just appreciation of the cause for which we contend, inasmuch as we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that many things in the manner of conducting it, must seem anomalous to an European observer, unacquainted with the more intimate circumstances and principles peculiar to our American system and life.

The supreme necessity of a government founded in the will of the people, is to hold their public servants to the most exact and inexorable obedience to that will, as expressed in the written constitution—for that is the supreme law. To permit any assumption of power on the part of any one or all of these servants, under the pressure of any exigency, would be to open the door to endless ambitions and to incur the hazards of the most fatal consequences. Doubtless the founders of our national system of government intended, as far as possible, to ignore the

whole subject of slavery, to leave its interests entirely in the hands of the authorities of the several States in which it already existed, and to keep them wholly without the jurisdiction of the national constitution. For the sake of UNION they found it necessary to recognize it as an existing, but, as they believed, temporary *fact*, but never as a RIGHT; and so from the period of the adoption of the national constitution, the idea of the complete independence of slavery of the national government had been inculcated and strengthened. Its masters called it an *institution*, to put it upon a level with the fundamental law, the constitution itself. They moreover, at an early day, possessed themselves of its supreme judicial powers, and had thus in their own hands its interpretation. They proceeded to wrest its meaning to their own purposes, and to make of it an instrument for the perpetual maintenance of human bondage, instead of giving to it the true sense of its framers, a charter of liberty for all men. By allying themselves with a prevalent democracy at the North, they were able to instil and establish these interpretations, first in the popular mind of the whole country, and thence in much of the legislation of the national government. And if, with all this, you will bear in mind that the constitution, to the American citizen, stands in the place of the person of the sovereign, in the monarchical systems of Europe; that to it he owes paramount allegiance; that it is the supreme object of his loyalty, you will be the better able to understand the apparent hesitancy of the national government to strike at the existence of slavery, even in repelling its own blow at the life of the nation.

To destroy slavery, the acknowledged cause of the war, and at the same time to preserve intact the wise inhibitions of the constitution, according to the settled construction of that instrument, has been from the beginning a question of no little practical difficulty to the national administration. To carry on the war it must have the hearty support of the country. To be

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sure of this support, it must not outrun pre-established public opinion. To enlighten and correct public opinion, time is necessary. Let us assure you that your own generous efforts to enlighten the public opinion of Europe have effected much to the same end here, and that the whole loyal country is fast coming up to the just and only solution of the great question in issue. The President's recent proclamation of emancipation is a proof; for, while it by no means completes the work, even in idea, it is at least a great step in the right direction. Issued under his constitutional powers as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, and as a measure of war, its direct operation must of necessity be restricted to such districts of country as still remain in unsubdued rebellion; but indirectly, and as a ground of *right* to freedom for the slave, its scope is much wider and more important. In any view of it, it surely deserves the hearty sympathy and support of all the enlightened lovers of liberty and progress, rather than such captious and unworthy criticisms as that of the English minister. Lord John Russell is the minister of a constitutional government; he cannot be ignorant what rights of war a commander-in-chief may exercise; he knows that the rights of war are restricted to the theatre of the war, and that under every constitutional government, power, in theory at least, is restricted to the exercise of rights.

We are glad to perceive, from a quite recent letter of your great historian and publicist, a name honored equally by the enlightened men of this country as of yours, that this act of our Chief Magistrate is clearly understood and appreciated in France. We are sure, also, that you do not misjudge our attachment to the forms of our institutions, for you understand that we value these forms, only, for the great principles and ideas of liberty and human justice which they embody, and because we believe them to constitute the surest guarantee for

the preservation and popular enjoyment of these principles and ideas.

Another ground of popular misapprehension, on your side of the Atlantic, as to the true issues at stake in our struggle, may very naturally have arisen out of the fact that in all the revolutionary movements of modern Europe, the insurgents have usually represented liberty, nationality, and progress, while the governments represented, if not arbitrary power, at best *authority* only, and the *status quo*. Here, on the contrary, exactly the reverse is true. Here the insurrection represents a power founded upon the utter annihilation of the commonest human rights—a boasted repudiation of all ideas of liberty and progress; while the national government, founded upon the principles of the Declaration of Independence of 1776, "the self-evident truths that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," wars only to preserve the institutions in which these rights are embodied, and under which alone they can be maintained in the present exigency. But with all this, it is not difficult to see how the European mercenaries of the slave power, skillfully concealing the true character of its atrocious attempt to overthrow free government in America, and stealing the battle cry of the oppressed nationalities of the Old World—"NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE"—should have been able to bewilder the public opinion, and draw to its shameless cause much of the sympathy of the popular heart of Europe, even of France.

Assuming, for the occasion, the part of the oppressed, these frenzied devastators of a whole race of men, have not hesitated to charge the loyal people of the North and the national government, with fighting only for dominion. "You fight," say they, "not for freedom, not for the emancipation of the enslaved, but only for the maintenance of power." The slightest examination will prove how unfounded and nefarious is this

charge. The whole controversy in the election of Mr. LINCOLN turned upon the question of the limitation of the area of slavery. The Republican party, who made him their candidate and carried him into office, planted themselves upon the simple ground of limiting slavery to the lines within which it already existed. This attempt to resist the arrogant demand of the slave masters to appropriate to their own use the whole of the still unoccupied domain of the nation, constituted the whole offence of the People of the United States in that election. They simply said to them, the national domain and the national Government belong to us as well as you. Liberty is *our* heritage, and henceforth we mean that it shall have its rights in both government and domain.

No other ground of offence than this had the slave power for tearing asunder our national unity, no other excuse for the unparalleled crime of beginning the present war to destroy the national life. These facts are patent to the whole world. Who then is it, that is fighting for dominion?

We do not mean to say, that the diabolical exigencies of slavery do not necessitate the illimitable appropriation of territory and the unrestrained exercise of dominion which is demanded for it. Doubtless, like every other system of authority founded in mere power without right, slavery requires that its masters should be masters also of the law-making power of the government under which it exists.

Let the friends of the slave power in Europe have the benefit of the admission, that the exigencies of a slave society demand for its maintenance universal dominion, and the ultimate invasion of all the territories, that may at any given period lie adjacent to its boundaries. Thence not only all the territories of the Union, but when these should be absorbed, all Mexico and the South American States. Its inevitable instincts have already made themselves manifest in the various predatory expeditions, that from time to time have been set on foot at the South.

These were but a kind of offshoot of its exuberant and monstrous vitality; but they serve to illustrate the nature of the slave power.

In stripping from it the veil of sophistries with which it has sought to conceal its enormities, you have not only rendered a great service to our national cause, but to the cause of public justice and Christian civilization everywhere. For the cause of the Union is the cause of humanity, unless it is to be taken for granted that the public morality of Christendom requires that the United States should abdicate the character of a nation in the interests of the power which assails it. If the true nature of this power could be clearly presented to the public conscience of France, we should fearlessly rest ourselves upon its verdict. As it is, we cannot so much blame the general misapprehension, which has caused it not only to be tolerated, but to be clothed with a certain popular esteem, as well as with certain public rights, by the peoples and authorities of Europe, when we remember that even here, in the more immediate arena of its crimes, the peculiar character of American slavery has not hitherto been thoroughly apprehended by the popular mind.

Simple slavery is not a modern form of inhumanity. The annals of our race are full of the groans of the enslaved. But hitherto slavery has founded itself upon power—has rested its claim in the might of the strongest—has been content to enjoy its profits in the category of things without remedy. In no age of human history until now, has it ever been attempted to clothe slavery with the SACREDNESS OF RIGHT. The distinguished infamy belongs to the founders of the Southern confederacy, of setting up a government, whose corner stone, to use the language of one of the most notorious of them, Alex. H. Stephens, is "the RIGHT of the superior race to enslave the inferior." "This right," he says, "settles forever the agitating question of American Slavery;" and boastfully declares that "our new gov-

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ernment is the first in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and *moral* truth."

The announcement is a sufficient notice to all the world. The establishment of the Southern confederacy is not alone the setting up of a new power upon the earth, but the introduction into the public law of the civilized world of a NEW RIGHT; and into the family of nations of a NEW FORM OF CIVILIZATION.

It is in this aspect of our struggle, that it becomes of the deepest interest to the people of France and to all men. An attempt to supplant the laws founded by the Divine Master of these Christian centuries, by a new code, derived from the reeking shambles of the King of Dahomey, is an enterprise in which the people of the United States are not alone interested.

Is it possible that the idea can be anywhere entertained, that the glory of France or the permanent well-being of her people, requires the successful prosecution of this atrocious enterprise on this continent? Will she aid in the overthrow of a nationality founded upon the principles of her own great revolution, and cemented by the blood of her noblest sons, for the sake of any profits to be derived from the meretricious embraces of such an ally? At the South they make a commerce out of their own blood, when it flows under a colored skin. That doubtless is in accordance with the new confederate code. For the sake of national recognition, the new confederate power would allow any respectable nation to participate in all the benefits of this commerce as well as of the trade in cotton. We cannot be persuaded that France will be the first to take advantage of the offer.

If at the instant of the slave master's attempt to force the new right into the public code of the Christian world, the governments of France and England had promptly refused to accept it —if they had simply declared that no state founded upon any such atrocious right should ever be admitted into the family of

Christian nations—the struggle would never have taken the disastrous form of war. There would have been no idle and starving spinners and weavers in Lancashire, no unemployed and famishing workpeople at Rouen and Mulhouse. Even now these governments have it in their power to say the word that shall at once put an end to the pernicious hopes that prolong our disasters, and the continually more and more aggravated sufferings of their own peoples.

As for us, we know now that the issues at stake, in the war which we wage, belong to humanity; we know also how momentous they are, and that the great question is not as to the day or month or year in which peace shall be declared, but as to the hour in which the *impious right* organized by the slave power into a Confederacy of States, shall be utterly overthrown and extinguished. If we doubted as to our duty in such a crisis, we should turn to one of you and learn, that "a People accustomed to liberty, should risk their last man and their last dollar to keep the inheritance of their fathers"—"that the dismemberment of the Union—the rending asunder of the country, would be degradation without remedy."

We would by no means speak boastfully of the military successes of the armies of the Union. A singularly peaceful people, like those of the Northern States, do not learn war in a day. Besides, this is emphatically a war of ideas, and they take time to put on their armor and march. Still, an inspection of the map of the insurgent States, will show you, that some portion of every one of them, is already in the occupation of our military forces. Let us assure you, that the present condition of these forces, both physically and morally, never was as good as at this hour, nor their future success so well assured. At the same time, let us further assure you that the resources of the people of the loyal States, both in men and money, remain unexhausted, and still adequate, as we believe, to the work which Providence has committed to their hands.

And again thanking you for the many just and inspiring words you have spoken in behalf of the great cause for which we fight, let us express to you our hope and our belief, that when the end of our battle shall come, neither you nor we shall be made ashamed by the result.

With sentiments of the highest individual esteem we remain, respectfully yours,

COUNCIL.

CHARLES KING,
GEORGE OPDYKE,
WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,
JOHN A. STEVENS,
JOHN J. CISCO,
MORRIS KETCHUM,
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ORISON BLUNT,
WILLIAM T. BLODGETT,
SYDNEY HOWARD GAY,
WILLIAM ORTON.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE.

At a Meeting of the Council and Executive Committee of the Loyal National League of New York, held on the 23d March, 1863, it was unanimously

Resolved, That the officers of the Loyal National League, have heard with interest and satisfaction that the Loyal Publication Society of the city have in course of preparation letters of thanks to the able defenders of the cause of our National Unity in England and France, among whom are included those distinguished advocates of civil liberty, whose fame is not circumscribed by country, or by race, John Stuart Mill, Richard Cobden, John Bright, I. F. Cairnes, Newman Hall, and others, in England, and Edouard Laboulaye, Agenor de Gasparin, and others, in France; and they request, in behalf of the League, that these letters may be submitted to the Council of this League; and on approval, be recommended for adoption at the Great Mass Meeting, to be called on the 11th of April, on Union Square, to the end that these noble men, loyal to the principle of nationality, may receive a just acknowledgment of their service from a free and grateful people.

Charles King,
Chairman.

James A. Roosevelt,
Secretary.

ADOPTION OF THE LETTER BY THE LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE.

In accordance with the request of the Loyal National League, an address was drafted by Mr. James McKaye, on behalf of of the Loyal Publication Society, which was submitted to the great mass meeting of the League, on Union Square, on the 11th of April, and adopted with enthusiasm.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE.

A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE WAS HELD AT THE HALL OF THE LEAGUE ON THE 18TH DECEMBER, 1863, IN PURSUANCE OF THE FOLLOWING CALL:

HALL OF THE LOYAL NATIONAL LEAGUE,
813 Broadway, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

A letter of reply to "The Address of the Loyal National League to Messrs. the Count de GASPARIN, LABOULAYE, COCHIN, MARTIN, and other friends of America in France," has been lately received. A translation will be read to the Council and Executive Committee on Friday Evening next, 18th inst., at 8 P. M., at the Hall of the League.

Your presence is particularly requested at the hour named.

Respectfully yours,

FRANCIS LIEBER,
JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS, JR.

December 15, 1863.

Hon. JOHN COCHRANE was called to the chair.

Mr. JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS, Jr., appointed Secretary.

Dr. FRANCIS LIEBER stated that he had received by the hands of Mr. SAMUEL B. RUGGLES, from Mr. EDOUARD LABOULAYE, of Paris, the "Reply of Messrs. GASPARIN, LABOULAYE, COCHIN, MARTIN, and other friends of America in France," to the Address of the League; that a translation had been made, at his request, by Mr. JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS, Jr., which would now be read to the Joint Committee.

The translation was then read by Mr. STEVENS, and on motion, unanimously accepted and adopted.

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At the instance of Mr. Stevens he was authorized to have a copy of the translation handsomely engrossed and forwarded to the Hon. S. P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, with a request to place it in the hands of the President of the United States prior to its publication.

On motion, Dr. Francis Lieber, Mr. John Austin Stevens, Jr., and Charles Butler, Esq., were appointed a Committee to superintend the publication of the original and translation of the Reply, together with the Letter of the League, and to take such measures in conjunction with a Committee of the Loyal Publication Society of New York as shall be necessary to this end.

On motion, it was *Resolved* that the translated Reply be published simultaneously in the New York *Tribune*, *Times* and *Herald*, if arrangements can be satisfactorily made.

On motion, it was *Ordered*, that ten thousand copies of the translated Reply be printed, and a sufficient number of copies of the original French letter and the complete pamphlet.

On motion, it was *Ordered*, that the original manuscript be handsomely bound and presented to the managers of the Metropolitan Fair in behalf of the Sanitary Commission.

On motion Dr. Francis Lieber was requested to acknowledge receipt of the letter to Mr. Laboulaye at an early day.

And with expressions of admiration for the noble sentiments of the Letter, and of renewed gratitude to our French friends, the Committee adjourned.

John Cochrane,
Chairman.

John Austin Stevens, Jr.,
Secretary.