

P326.4
Am 35L
no. 1

Liberty Tract. No. 1.

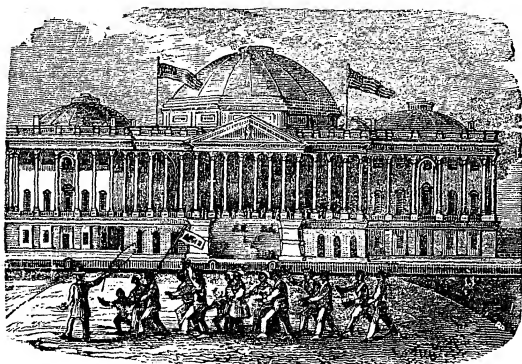
SLAVERY

AND THE

SLAVE TRADE

AT THE

NATION'S CAPITAL.



NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM HARNED,

FOR THE

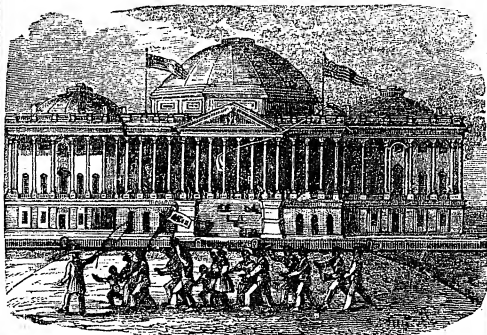
AMERICAN AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

5 Spruce Street,

\$1 PER 100, \$8 PER 1000.

SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE AT THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

HAIL COLUMBIA!!



View of the Capitol at Washington.

One would think that slavery and the slave trade were the last things to have a legal and protected existence in the capital of a boasted free nation. But there they are—unpaid toil, whips, chains, dungeons, separations, murders, and all! That slave coffle marching by the capitol is not fancy, but a fact not unfrequently occurring. Dr. Torrey (*Portraiture of Domestic Slavery*, p. 64), states, on the authority of Mr. Aldgate, a member of the House of Representatives, that "during the last session of Congress (1815-16), as several members were standing in the street near the new capitol, a drove of manacled colored people were passing by, and when just opposite, one of them elevating his manacles as high as he could reach, commenced singing the favorite national song, "Hail Columbia! happy land," &c.

So late as the session of 1838-9, a similar scene was enacted. The House, in base subservieney to the slaveholders, had passed resolutions declaring that Congress had no constitutional power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and excluding all petitions on the subject of slavery from being read or referred. "Nine days after the adoption of these resolutions," says Hon. J. R. Giddings (*Rights of the Free States subverted*, p. 13) "a coffle of thirty slaves chained together, and followed by about the same number of females, who were permitted to travel unchained, were driven past the capitol, on their way to a southern market."

Slavery and the Slave Trade no Right at the Nation's Capital.

When the people of this country rose in resistance to British oppression, they declared to the world (*Dec. Am. Ind.*)—"We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

When the same people adopted the present Constitution of Government, they also declared, in the preamble, that its object was "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and

our posterity;" and in reference to the seat of government, they also provided, Art. I. Sec. 8, that "Congress shall have power to exercise exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of Government of the United States."

When the Hebrews were in bondage in Egypt, "they sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage, and God heard their groaning" (Ex. 2: 23:), and God overthrew Egypt. When oppression was subsequently allowed among the Jews themselves, God said to the executive and people of the kingdom (Jer. 21: 12), "Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hands of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings." And surely here is no authority, divine or human, to establish and maintain slavery and the slave trade at the nation's capital. So far as they exist there, they are in defiance of God's commands and in violation of our own fundamental national law.

Slavery and the Slave Trade at the Nation's Capital by National Legislation.

Congress has no power, by the Constitution, to establish Slavery anywhere, much less at the seat of Government, itself. Yet by express acts it has done so. Those acts are as follows. With the provision already in the Constitution, that Congress should have "exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever," over the Federal District, *December 23d, 1788*, Maryland passed an act "to cede to the Congress of the United States, any district in this State, not exceeding ten miles square, which Congress may fix upon and accept for the seat of Government of the United States" *December 3d, 1789*, Virginia did the same, in these words—"And the same is hereby forever ceded and relinquished to the Congress and Government of the United States, in full and absolute right and exclusive jurisdiction, as well of soil as of persons residing or to reside thereon, pursuant to the tenor and effect of the eighth section of the first article of the Constitution." This was accompanied by both the States with a provision in respect to "soil," and another to the effect that the laws of the State "shall not cease until Congress, having accepted the cession, shall, by law, provide for the government thereof, under their jurisdiction." *July 16th, 1790*, Congress accepted the cession, and provided that the laws of the State should remain in force "until the time fixed on for the removal of the government thereto, and until Congress shall otherwise by law provide." *February 27th, 1801*, Congress enacted, "That the laws of the State of Virginia, as they now exist, shall be and continue in force in that part of the District of Columbia, which was ceded by the said State to the United States and by them accepted for the permanent seat of Government; and that the laws of the State of Maryland, as they now exist, shall be and continue in force in that part of the said District, which was ceded by that State to the United States, and by them accepted as aforesaid." *March 3d, 1801*, Congress further enacted: "That in all cases where the Constitution or laws of the United States provide that criminals and fugitives from justice, or persons held to labor in any State, escaping in another State, shall be delivered up, the Chief Justice of the said District shall be, and he is hereby empowered and required to cause to be apprehended and delivered up such criminal, fugitive from justice, or persons fleeing from service, as the case may be, who shall be found within the District, in the same manner, and under the same regulations as the Executive Authority of the several States are required to do the same; and all executive and judicial officers are hereby required to obey all lawful precepts or other process issued for that purpose, and to be aiding and assisting in such delivery." And *May 3d, 1802*, Congress further enacted, "That no part of the laws of Virginia or Maryland, declared by an act of Congress, aforesaid, to be in force within the said District, shall ever be construed so as to prohibit the owners of slaves to hire them within, or remove them to the said District, in the same way as was practised prior to the passage of the above recited act." So carefully and fully has Congress, with the approval of the National Executive, established slavery and the slave trade in the Federal District.

Had they, as they were competent and bound to do, in providing for its government, extended the laws of Virginia and Maryland over it, *excepting such as authorized the holding of human beings as slaves*, slavery and the slave trade would have ceased the moment the District came under Federal jurisdiction. And what right had they, under the Constitution, by a different proceeding, to re-enact, re-establish, and re-continue these abominations, in the nation's Capital, for a single hour? Yet what have they done!

Slave Law at the Nation's Capital.

This is what it was in Virginia and Maryland forty-five years ago. The slave is, to "all intents, purposes, and constructions, the property of his master"—the creature of his power, the victim of his avarice, rage and lust. January 29, 1829, the Committee on the District of Columbia reported to the House of Representatives, "that the laws recognizing slavery within the District of Columbia, are such as existed within the States of Virginia and Maryland prior to, and at the time of the cession by those States respectively." And there has been no revision and amendment of them by Congress to this day. Some of these laws are as follows:

1. An Act of 1723, Chap. XV., "to prevent the tumultuous meetings, and other irregularities of Negroes and other slaves." The object of the act, as stated in the preamble, is to prevent "the evil consequences that do and may attend the suffering of negro and other slaves to meet in great numbers on Sabbath and other holidays," &c. Sec. 2 provides for the appointment of constables and requires "every constable to repair once a month to all suspected places within his hundred, and if at any such place, he shall find any negroes or other slaves besides the negroes or other slaves belonging to the owner of such place, not having a license under their owner's or overseer's hand, that it shall and may be lawful for the constable, and he is by this act required to whip every such negro *on the bare back, at his discretion, not exceeding thirty-nine stripes.*" Sec. 3 authorizes the constable to summon assistance in the execution of the act. Among others, "all negroes and other slaves belonging to the owner of the place where such assembly shall be, if required, shall aid and assist the constable, *on pain of being whipped, each of them, with thirty-nine stripes on the bare back.*" Sec. 4 provides that, "if it shall so happen at any time, that any negro or other slave shall strike any white person, it shall and may be lawful, upon proof made thereof, either by the oath of the party so struck, or otherwise, before any justice of the peace, for such justice to *cause one of the negro's or other slave's ears, so offending, to be cropped.*" And Sec. 7 provides, "That, whereas many negroes and other slaves absent themselves from their master's service, and run out into the woods, and there remain, killing and destroying of hogs and cattle belonging unto the people of this province, if that such negro or negroes, or other slaves so out-lying as aforesaid, shall refuse to surrender themselves, making resistance against such person or persons as pursue to apprehend and take them up, being thereunto legally empowered, it shall be lawful to and for such pursuers, upon such resistance made, *to shoot, kill, and destroy such negro or negroes, or other slave as aforesaid.*"

2. Act of 1729, Chap. IV. "for the more effectual punishing of Negroes and other Slaves," &c. By this act it is enacted, "That when any negro or other slave shall be convicted, by confession or verdict of a jury, of any petit treason or murder, or wilful burning of a dwelling house, it shall and may be lawful for the justices before whom such conviction shall be, to give judgment against such negro or other slave, *to have the right hand cut off, to be hanged in the usual manner, the head severed from the body, the body divided into four quarters, and the head and quarters set up in the most public places of the county where such act was committed.*"

3. An Act of 1751, Chap. XIV., "supplementary and explanatory, of the two former." Of this, Sec. 5 enacts, "That any slave or slaves who shall give any false testimony against any slave or slaves who shall be prosecuted, and shall be thereof legally convict, *shall have one ear cut off on the day of his or her conviction, and receive thirty-nine stripes on the bare back, and the other ear shall be cropped.*"

the next day, and the like number of stripes given the offender on his or her bare back." And Sec. 8 enacts, "That where any slave shall be guilty of rambling, riding or going abroad in the night, or riding horses in the day time without leave, or running away, it shall and may be lawful for the justices of the county court, and they are hereby obliged, upon the application or complaint of the master or owner of such slave, or to his, her or their order, or on the application or complaint of any other person who shall be any ways damaged or injured by such slave, immediately to punish such slave by whipping, cropping, or branding in the cheek with the letter R., or otherwise, not extending to life or to render such slave unfit for labor."

Federal law in the Federal District of a free and Christian people! Hail Columbia!!

Slavery and the Slave Trade as they are at the Nation's Capital.

On the 9th of January, 1829, Mr. Miner, of Pennsylvania, in a preamble to resolutions offered to the House of Representatives, presented the following graphic statement of facts as they then were. He said:—

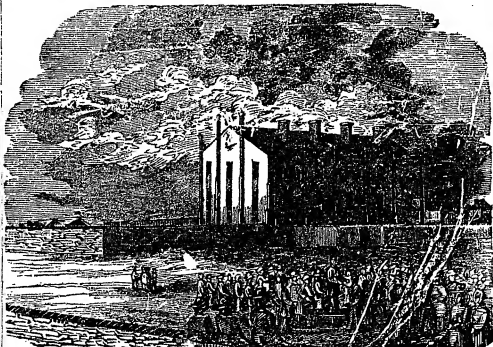
1. Slave dealers, gaining confidence from impunity, have made the seat of the Federal Government their head quarters for carrying on the domestic slave-trade.
2. The public prisons have been extensively used (perverted from the purposes for which they were erected) for carrying on the domestic slave-trade.
3. Officers of the Federal Government have been employed and derive emoluments from carrying on the domestic slave-trade.
4. Private and secret prisons exist in the District for carrying on the traffic in human beings.
5. The trade is not confined to those who are slaves for life; but persons having a limited time to serve, are bought by the slave-dealers, and sent where redress is hopeless.
6. Others are kidnapped and hurried away before they can be rescued.
7. Instances of death, from the anguish of despair, exhibited in the District, mark the cruelty of this traffic.
8. Instances of maiming and suicide, executed, or attempted, have been exhibited, growing out of this traffic within the District.
9. Free persons of color, coming into the District, are liable to arrest and imprisonment, and sold into slavery for life, for jail fees, if unable from ignorance, misfortune, or fraud, to prove their freedom.
10. Advertisements beginning, "We will give cash for 100 likely young negroes of both sexes from eight to twenty-five years old," contained in the public prints of the city, under the notice of Congress, indicate the openness and extent of the traffic.
11. Scenes of human beings exposed at public vendue are exhibited here (at Washington), permitted by the laws of the General Government."

A multitude of facts might be presented under each of these particulars, showing that every one of them is, to this hour, a true account of scenes at the Nation's Capital.

American Freemen arrested on suspicion of being Slaves.

January 11th, 1827, the Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom the subject had been referred by the House of Representatives, reported, "that in this District, as in all the slaveholding States in the Union, the legal presumption is, that persons of color going at large, without any evidences of their freedom, are absconding slaves, and, *prima facie*, liable to all the legal provisions applicable to that class of persons." And they stated, that in the part of the District ceded by Virginia, a free negro may be arrested and put in jail for three months on suspicion of being a fugitive; and is then to be hired out to pay his jail fees, and, if he do not prove his freedom within a year, is to be sold as a slave. And in the part ceded by Maryland, they say; "If a free man of color should be apprehended as a runaway, he is subjected to the payment of all fees and rewards, given by law for apprehending runaways, and upon failure to make such payment, is liable to be sold as a slave"—a confessedly free man, sold as a slave to pay the "fees and rewards given by law for apprehending runaways!" This is the law at the Capitol to this day, and under it such scenes as the following are still occurring.

Public Prisons at the Nation's Capital.



The above is a view of the present Jail, at Washington. The public prisons of the District are, of course, built with the nation's money. Every man in the free States has his share of the expense to pay. May 3d, 1802, Congress appropriated out of the public treasury \$3000, to build "a good and sufficient jail within the city of Washington." In 1826, Congress appropriated \$5000, "for the purpose of altering or repairing the jail in the city of Washington," and \$10,000 to build "a county jail for the city and county of Alexandria." March 3d, 1839, Congress appropriated \$31,500 for the creation of a new jail in Washington." March 3d, 1841, \$5000 were added "for enclosing the new jail yard;" and August 23th, 1842, Congress voted to convert the old jail to a hospital, and appropriated \$40,000, to refit it for the purpose. The following statements and facts show how these jails have been and are used:—

American Freemen, uncharged with Crime, sold as Slaves.

March 27th, 1828, one thousand citizens of the District, in a petition sent to Congress, said: "A colored man last summer, who stated that he was entitled to freedom, was taken up as a runaway slave and lodged within the jail of Washington city. He was advertised, but no one appearing to claim him, he was according to law put up at public auction for payment of his jail fees, and sold as a slave for life! He was purchased by a slave trader, who was not required to give security for his remaining in the District, and he was soon after shipped from Alexandria for one of the Southern States. Thus was a human being sold into perpetual bondage, at the capital of the freest government on earth, without even a pretence of a trial, or the allegation of a crime."

January 13th, 1829, Tench Ringold, the marshal of the District, made an official report to the Committee on the District, from which it appears, that within three years, from 1826 to 1829, one hundred and seventy-nine persons were committed to the Washington jail as runaways; that twenty-six of these were, by the confession of the marshal, free men; and that six of the free were actually sold as slaves, and all of them would have been but for the beneficence of the jailor.

In 1834, one of the Washington papers contained the following:—

"NOTICE.—Will be sold at the prison of Washington county, District of Columbia, on Monday, Oct. 13, 1834, at 10 o'clock, a Negro Man, who calls himself JESSE HARRIS; he is above 5 feet 3 or 4 inches high; had on, when committed,

a blue pair of pantaloons, coarse roundabout, and straw hat. He says he is free and was raised in Virginia. He is a dark mulatto, stout and thick set, and about thirty years of age; he has a large scar over the right eye, and a scar on the right arm just above the elbow; several scars on the forehead, and one on the end of the nose; and he has a wry look when spoken to. The said negro was committed as a runaway.

"The owner or owners, if any, are hereby notified to come forward, prove him, pay charges, and take him away, or he will be sold for his prison and other expenses as the law directs.

"For A. HUNTER, Marshal of the District of Columbia.

"ROBERT BALL,

"Keeper of the Prison of Washington County, Dist. Col."

And 1846 witnesses no change in these atrocities, perpetrated by national authority at the nation's capital.

The Man-Trade at the Nation's Capital.



PRIVATE SLAVE PRISON AT WASHINGTON.

The city of Washington is incorporated by act of Congress. Under this charter the city authorities license regular slave traders for \$400 each, the year; and ordinary auctioneers for \$100, who are allowed to sell slaves with other "goods and chattels." The above is a view of the "slave pen" of THOMAS WILLIAMS, one of the regular man-traders at Washington. The engraving is from a Daguerreotype taken by W. J. Corcoran, of that city. The standing advertisement of Williams in the Washington papers is as follows:—

"NEGROES WANTED. The subscriber wishes to purchase any number of Negroes for the New Orleans market, and will give at all times the highest market-price, in cash, for likely young Negroes. Those wishing to sell will find it to their interest to call at my establishment, corner of 7th Street and Maryland Avenue, where myself or agent can be seen at any time. Communications promptly attended to.

'THOS. WILLIAMS.'

Man-Auctioneering at the Nation's Capital.

Among the regular auctioneers at Washington, are R. W. Dyer & Co., and A. Green. In the National Intelligencer, Dec. 30, 1845. Dyer & Co. have the following:—

SERVANT WOMAN FOR SALE.—We have for private sale a very valuable servant woman, a good cook, washer, &c. Apply to R. W. DYER & Co.

In the same paper, July 20, 1846, Mr. Green advertises as follows:

SALE OF HOUSEHOLD AND KITCHEN FURNITURE.—On Thursday, the 30th instant, at 10 o'clock, A.M., will be sold, at the auction rooms of the subscriber, a genteel lot of Furniture, worthy the attention of housekeepers, as the sale must positively take place.

Terms of sale: All sums of, and under, \$20, cash; over \$20, a credit of 60 and 90 days, for notes satisfactorily endorsed, bearing interest.

A. GREEN, Auctioneer.

UPON THE SAME DAY, AT 5 O'CLOCK, P. M., AND AT THE SAME PLACE, WILL BE sold a very likely and valuable servant Boy, about 17 years of age, a slave for life.

Terms of sale: One half cash, and the balance in 60 days, to be secured by note satisfactorily endorsed, bearing interest.

July 20--2tw1w&3taw1w

A. GREEN, Auctioneer.

For some reason the sale did not come off on the 30th, and accordingly the *Intelligencer* of July 31st, contains the following:—

SERVANT AT AUCTION.—The sale of the servant boy, advertised to take place at my store on Thursday, the 30th instant, is postponed until Thursday, the 6th of August, at 5 o'clock, P. M., when the sale will positively take place at my auction store.

July 31--eod

A. GREEN, Auctioneer.

Shame of the National Man-Trade.

In 1842, the Grand Jury of Alexandria said:—"These dealers, in the persons of our fellow-men, collect within this District, from various parts, numbers of these victims of slavery, and lodge them in some place of confinement until they have completed their numbers. They are then turned out into our streets, and exposed to view *loaded with chains.*"

In 1816, Judge Morrell, charging the Grand Jury of Washington, said:—"The frequency with which the streets of the city had been crowded with *manacled captives*, sometimes on the Sabbath, could not fail to shock the feelings of all humane persons."

June 22, 1827, the Alexandria Gazette said:—"Scarcely a week passes without some of these wretched creatures being driven through our streets. After having been confined, and sometimes manacled in a loathsome prison, they are turned out in public view to take their departure for the South. The children and some of the women are generally crowded into a cart or wagon, while others follow on foot, not unfrequently *handcuffed and chained together.*"

In 1829, the Grand Jury of Washington said:—"The manner in which they (slaves) are brought and confined in these places, and carried through our streets, is necessarily such as to excite the most painful feelings."

In 1830, the Washington Spectator said:—"Let it be known to the citizens of America, that at the very time when the procession, which contained the President of the United States and his cabinet, was marching in triumph to the Capitol, another kind of procession was marching another way; and that consisted of colored human beings, *handcuffed in pairs*, and driven along by what had the appearance of a man on horseback! A similar scene was repeated on Saturday last; a drove consisting of males and females, *chained in couples*, starting from Ro'y's tavern on foot for Alexandria, where, with others, they are to embark on board a slave-ship in waiting to convey them to the South."

Horrors of the National Man-Trade.

The Alexandria Gazette, as quoted above, adds:—"Here you may behold fathers and brothers leaving behind them the dearest objects of affection, and moving slowly along in the mate agony of despair—there the young mother sobbing over the infant whose innocent smiles seem but to increase her misery."

From some you will hear the burst of bitter lamentation, while from others, the loud hysteric laugh breaks forth, denoting still deeper agony."

October 15th, 1834, Mr. Heth F. Camp, of Washington, made an appeal to Mr. A. Tappan, of New York, in behalf of Cecilia Thomas, a slave. She had been sold by one Lloyd of Alexandria, a dissipated gambler, to one Milburn, a slave-trader in Washington. Lloyd had before sold all her children, six in number. After her sale to Milburn, she became the mother of a babe—her only child. Milburn was about to send her South. Mr. Camp, describing her says:—"She possesses a most excellent disposition, more than ordinary mental capacity, is honest, pious, and industrious. She is a woman of great sensibility, and her feelings with regard to her situation can better be imagined than described—bereft of all her children except the last—expecting soon to be separated from that and her husband for ever, to be sold to go she knows not where, and endure hardships and miseries she knows not how severe. * * She is greatly to be pitied. * * Her constant groans and sighs are enough to melt a heart of stone."

In 1834, the Rev. John Frost, then of Whitesboro', N. Y., was informed by a Methodist clergyman, in Georgetown, of the case of a husband, who, upon his wife being sold and carried to the South, pined away, and in a few weeks died of a broken heart. The same year, it was stated in the Baltimore Telegraph, that a female slave who had been sold, with her child, on her way from Bladensburg to Washington, heroically and mortally cut the throats of both her child and herself. And, Dec. 3d, 1838, a Washington correspondent of the N. Y. American wrote—"This morning, in 10th Street, a colored man cut his throat. It is said, he committed the deed in despair, at being sold away from his family."

In 1846, a Washington correspondent of the New York Observer, says:—"Sometimes—indeed, quite often—a poor woman may be seen going from door to door in this district, with a subscription to 'buy her freedom!' in sight of the Temple of Liberty on the Capitoline hill. A few days since, such a paper was presented to me. Here is a literal transcript: 'E—B—, a free woman of color, invokes a generous and liberal public to aid her in purchasing her daughter (!!) who has recently been sold by her former master to Mr. —, who is willing to take for her \$550. The mother appeals to the rich and the great to assist her in effecting an object so naturally dear to every mother's heart, to wit; that of rescuing a dutiful, gentle, and moral child, from the justly apprehended ills of bondage.' It would have moved a heart of stone, but not that of a slave-trader, to see the poor old mother in her grief and tears trying to raise this sum in dribblets to purchase a child whom God had given to her."

Help for the Nation's Paper.

In May, 1840, Levi Woodbury, secretary of the Treasury, upon a call of the Senate, submitted a "statement of expenditures of the United States from 1824 to 1829." In that statement is the following item:—"Occasional donations in money to objects in the District of Columbia." The sums thus given were, in 1832, \$32,000; 1833, \$313,000; 1834, \$117,729; 1835, \$159,675; 1836, \$131,245; 1837, \$235,241; 1838, \$177,617; 1839, \$126,315.—Total in 8 years of \$1,292,822. Of these sums, Senator Benton, commenting on the statement at the time said—"It was a gratuity, to the District, which had no political rights; and it was a gratuity which had no other object than to relieve it from burthens *improvidently contracted.*" Yet in this District are the abominations now detailed.

Auxiliary Guard to Catch Slaves.

And to crown all, Aug. 23, 1842, Congress passed "An Act to establish an auxiliary guard for the protection of public and private property in the city of Washington." This is, of course, in addition to the regular city police. In support of this Guard, Congress appropriated in four years, from 1843—46, inclusive, the sum of \$26,097, or \$6,528 annually. Mr. Giddings, in his Rights of the Free States Subverted, p. 10, declares this to be "a guard at the expense of the nation, *now used to catch fugitive slaves.*" How long will American freemen allow their own Federal District to be the profligate plunderer of their treasure; the loathsome blot of their dishonor?

LIBERTY PARTY.

The nature and objects of this party have been set forth, by three large conventions of abolitionists, within the last year, as follows:—

THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN LIBERTY CONVENTION, at Cincinnati, June 11, 1845, said: "That there is such a party, is well known. It is the Liberty Party of the United States. Its principles, measures, and objects we cordially approve. It founds itself upon the great cardinal principle of true democracy and of true Christianity, the brotherhood of the human family. It avows its purpose to wage implacable war against slaveholding as the direst form of oppression, and then against every other species of tyranny and injustice. Its members agree to regard the extinction of slavery as the most important end which can, at this time, be proposed to political action: and they agree to differ as to other questions of minor importance, such as those of trade and currency, believing that these can be satisfactorily disposed of when the question of slavery shall be settled, and that, until then, they cannot be satisfactorily disposed of at all."—*Address.*

CONVENTION OF THE FRIENDS OF FREEDOM IN THE MIDDLE AND EASTERN STATES, at Boston, Oct. 1, 1845: "Resolved, That slavery is the greatest political evil which afflicts this nation; the parent of most of the other political evils which we suffer, and that the Liberty Party is nothing more nor less than a united effort to throw it off."

"Resolved, That the Liberty Party is unanimously committed to the abolition of American slavery, as the first and highest duty of the sovereign people of this Federal Republic, and that whatever political doctrines on other subjects may be expressed by this or any other Liberty Convention, the party cannot be considered as unanimously committed to any other measure."

NORTH WESTERN LIBERTY CONVENTION, at Chicago, June 24, 1846: "Resolved, That we regard the question of slavery as the greatest political question now agitated before the country, and are determined not to sacrifice or defer the cause of Freedom to any other political measure."

"Resolved, That, as a national party, our purpose and determination is to divorce the Federal Government from slavery, to prohibit slaveholding in all places of exclusive national jurisdiction, to abolish the domestic slave trade, to restore the balances of the Federal Government—in a word, to step to 'the verge of our constitutional powers' for the destruction of slavery itself."

Demand for the Liberty Party.

The Liberty State Committee, of Massachusetts, in their address to the people of that State, in August, 1846, say:—

"The present posture of affairs furnishes overwhelming proof, were it needed, to satisfy every reflecting mind of the utter incapacity of the existing old parties, or either of them, to offer any effectual resistance to the encroachments and usurpations of the Slave Power. When we speak of these parties, we mean to be understood of their combined action as organized parties, marshalled under certain leaders, and struggling for certain objects in which slaveholders and non-slaveholders have a common interest. In both these parties, slaveholders rule with absolute sway, and thus secure the verification of Mr. Clay's declaration, that neither of these parties has any view to the emancipation of the slaves as a part of its policy.

"It shows, too, in the light of almost a century's experience, the insufficiency of our institutions to circumscribe this giant evil, or to protect the liberties of the people against its encroachments. From the day when John Adams told Samuel Adams that it was necessary to give the South the command in order to secure their fidelity to the infant Revolution; and especially from the adoption of the present Constitution of the Union, the Slave Power has gone on with a steady and continual progress of assumption, now using the Democratic party as its allies to give it new conquests, and then employing the conservative

influence of the anti-democratic party to secure its acquisitions. The admission of Missouri, and the annexation of Texas as a Slave State, are but stages in its career of usurpation. For fifty-seven years, the friends of freedom have maintained an intellectual struggle in defence, but have been baffled in every instance, have never gained one victory, have been continually driven back, have given the slaveholders, first the balance, and then the control of the Senate, have grown weaker and more submissive, and less hopeful, until at length, on the annexation of Texas, multitudes of Northern men gave up in despair, and were ready to agree to serve without complaint or resistance, provided only, that the conquerors would mercifully consent to spare them the pecuniary benefits of a protective tariff a few years longer. Even this humiliating surrender has been treated with scorn, and the blow which was so slavishly deprecated by the Whigs of New England and the Democrats of Pennsylvania, has been struck by the slaveholders, without deigning a word of pity or explanation. There is no longer any power left of giving further resistance; and the haughty overseers believe that now they can have everything their own way.

"There is no hope that the Free States can ever escape from this thralldom, but by a radical change of policy on the subject of slavery. **WE MUST TAKE THE AGGRESSIVE!** We are driven back to the wall and must turn. We must henceforth unite in a firm resolve, not only to resist the further encroachments of slavery, but to employ the powers which the Constitution gives us, with inflexible firmness, to promote the peaceful extinction of slavery itself. Here is our only hope. Unless the non-slaveholders of the country, north and south, can now be rallied on this ground, it is manifest that nothing awaits us but a still deeper degradation, and still more disastrous domination of the Slave Power. Have we not bowed down long enough? The example of New Hampshire shows that the people think so, and that they are ready now to lay aside every other question, and unite on anti-slavery ground, just as soon as their leaders will let them. Now is the time, and now the hour, to raise high the banner of the Liberty Party, which was organized six years ago for this very purpose, and which can never be turned aside from its one object,—**THE PEACEFUL AND CONSTITUTIONAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.**"

How the Liberty Party can effect its Object.

"In the first place," continues the above address, "there would be the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia. Slaves are now held and bought and sold in that district solely by authority of the Act of Congress, extending the laws of Maryland over the district. Had Congress incorporated in that act a single clause, to the effect of '*excepting all such laws as are supposed to authorise the holding of mankind as slaves,*' slavery would have ceased the moment the District passed under the authority of the Federal Government. An act, repealing so much of the laws of Maryland as may authorise slavery, would free every slave in the district: and the same laws which now prevent kidnapping in Massachusetts would consign to the penitentiary every man who should attempt to re-enslave the freed people. So general is the belief that this ought to be done, that nothing but the political control of slaveholders has prevented it from being done long since. It is highly probable that other parties will eagerly forestall the Liberty Party in doing this deed of justice, as soon as this party gives those decided proofs of speedy growth and certain triumph, which leave no room for uncertainty. The Anti-Corn-Law League in England, which was the exact counterpart of the Liberty Party, so far as the different constitutions and usages of the two countries would allow, has carried all its objects, and dissolved by its own limitation, before it had elected twenty members of parliament. Our object is larger, more complicated, and less directly in the power of Congress, but we may hope that so far as the District of Columbia is concerned, it will be done by others by the time we shall have carried half a dozen States. Mr. Calhoun assures us that the District is the **KEY OF SLAVERY.** And when we have gained this Gibraltar, we shall need no prophet to promise us the whole land.

"The exclusion of slaveholders from office, is our next potent weapon. The

slaveholder is guilty of a high crime, and all such ought to be excluded from the honors of office. This crime is peculiarly anti-republican, and its effect upon our country is most disastrous, making every man who upholds it worthy to be considered a public enemy. It is suicidal, therefore, for us to trust and honor slaveholders. Now consider how devoted the slaveholders are to politics; how dependent large sections of the South are upon the public crib; and how diligently the slave party avails itself of political power, and we see that this one principle strikes out the main pillar of the whole system, and slavery must fall. Let us have anti-slavery men in every post-office and custom-house and land-office, throughout the South. Let them understand that they can have no mail, that is not superintended by a non-slaveholder. Let it be known that no man can be retained in any office, high or low, who holds slaves. Let the people of the United States declare by their votes, that no slaveholder can ever hope to be President or Vice-President of the United States, or judge, or ambassador, or secretary, or commissioner, or even clerk in the departments. Who has not forsown slavery, and the politicians of Kentucky and Virginia, and even of South Carolina and Mississippi, will make haste to qualify themselves for public honor, by not only freeing their own slaves, but by exerting themselves to rid their States of the evil. How soon, if the people of the North were earnest, would Delaware and Maryland and Missouri, be added to the list of free States. The whole system would be driven from the country in less time than any of us dare to imagine.

"There are many other acts of specific legislation, within the power of Congress, which will hasten this consummation. The repeal of the vile Act of 1793, in regard to the recapture of fugitives from slavery, the prohibition of the interstate slave trade, the reform of the judiciary, the recognition of the equal rights of citizens of color, in Washington city and elsewhere, and the amendment of the Constitution so as to abolish the representation of slave property in Congress, with all help on the result. There are doubtless many other measures that will disclose themselves, whenever it is settled that the government is henceforth to be administered, in all its branches, for the overthrow of slavery, as it is now administered for its support and extension. A few years' prevalence of Liberty principles will give us a reformed judiciary, as the final guaranty of the whole. Among so many general clauses of the Constitution, whose full scope and application has never yet been tested, and is yet imperfectly understood, there will doubtless be found powers of legislation, not now acknowledged, which the Liberty party keeps itself free to employ for the accomplishment of its end, by pledging itself against nothing but a breach of the Constitution.

"Here, then, is full authority for our enterprise. We can abolish slavery, if we will.—We have undertaken to do it. And unless our resolution fails we cannot but do it. Only satisfy the people that it can be done, and we believe they will resolve to do it.

"There never was so favorable a time for the Liberty party to advance. Both the old parties are distracted and disorganized, and disgusted with their slave masters. The people at large are opening their eyes upon the arrogance of the overseers. The revolution in New Hampshire, by which two anti-slavery Senators have been chosen, is an omen of what is to come. Let us prove ourselves men, and men competent for the deliverance of our country from its worst enemy."

THE INSOLENT BUT TRUE BOAST.—John Randolph, in the debate upon the Missouri Question, said: "We do not govern them (the people of the North) by our black slaves, but by their own white slaves. We know what we are doing. We of the South are always united, from the Ohio to Florida; and we can always unite; but you of the North are beginning to divide. We have conquered you once, and we can, and we will, conquer you again. Aye, Sir, we will drive you to the wall, and when we have you there once more, we mean to keep you there, and nail you down like base money."