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THE

UNITED STATES AND FRANCE.

BY

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The pamphlet, which is translated in the following pages, was printed in Paris in September, 1862, with the following title:—

“ Les Etats Unis et la France, par Edouard Laboulaye, Professeur au Collège de France, Avocat à la Cour Impériale de Paris, Membre de l'Institut. Paris, 1862.”

The papers of which the pamphlet is made up first appeared in the Paris Journal des Débats of August 26, and 27, and having attracted great attention, were collected and printed with some additional pages of documentary illustrations, including particularly the important note in the policy of Napoleon, appended to the present translation.

M. Laboulaye, the author of the pamphlet, is well known in Europe as an able publicist, of liberal opinions. The argument and tone of his present publication and the close acquaintance with American affairs and history which it discloses, will commend it to all readers, as not only a clear and thoroughly sympathetic view of the present contest, but also a most intelligent statement of the great issues involved.

The present translation was made for the Boston Daily Advertiser, and was printed in that paper in its issues of October 15th and 18th. It has been revised by the translator, preparatory to printing it in this form.

Boston, October, 1862.

PREFACE.

This pamphlet is merely a new edition of two articles published last month [August] in the *Journal des Débats*, on the appearance of M. de Gasparin's excellent book, "L'Amérique devant l'Europe."

It has been thought that it would be useful to give a wider publicity to an essay in which the author has endeavored to demonstrate the three following points,—not by arguments which passion may dispute, but by proofs that amount to certainty and facts that cannot be denied.

1. That slavery, or to be more precise, the desire to perpetuate and to extend slavery, and to make it the foundation of a new political system is the true cause of the Southern Rebellion.

2. That the South had no constitutional right to withdraw from the Union. It cannot allege in justification of this extreme measure, a single right violated, or a single right threatened.

3. The commercial interests of France counsel neutrality. This is the surest and the speediest means of terminating the war. The political interests of France enjoin her to remain faithful to the great traditions of Louis XVI. and of Napoleon. The unity and independence of America, that is to say of the sole maritime power that counterpoises England, constitutes for all Europe the only guarantee of the liberty of the seas and the peace of the world.

In the estimation of every man of good faith then these points must decide the question of recognition and of intervention.

But the tariff? it may be asked,—what have you to say about that?

The tariff is a sheer fiction,—a fiction got up, I might say, to throw dust in the eyes of Europe. It was invented on this side of the Atlantic to mask the question of slavery and to divert public opinion. The tariff played no appreciable part in the separation, and there are several reasons why this should be so.

In the first place, what means had the North of imposing a tariff on the South by force?

Of the thirty-one States which composed the Union at the time the tariff was passed, fifteen were slave States; and as each State, without regard to its population, sends two Senators to the Congress, only a single State more was wanted by the South to prevent the tariff being voted without its consent.

Now it is very far from being the case that all the States of the North are manufacturing States: on the contrary, the new States of the West—Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan—live by agriculture. It is these States that furnish Europe with flour, maize, and salted meats. Can any man be made to believe that these States have exercised oppression towards the South for an interest which did not in the least concern them? "The pretended distinction between slave States and free States as

being the first agricultural, the others manufacturing, is absolutely false. Of seventeen free States, there are eleven whose industry and whose interests are as completely agricultural as those of any of the slave States: there are three which are both agricultural and manufacturing; and the others—only three out of seventeen—are largely interested in manufactures."—[Letter of Mr. Beckwith, cited by M. Picard in *Le Conflit Américain*, Paris, 1862.]

Further, is it forgotten that for more than thirty years the presidents and the entire administration have always been chosen under the influence of the South? Is it conceivable that the South, always so impatient and haughty, should, under these circumstances have acquiesced in oppression?

Again: to the honor of the human race be it said, no people has ever yet revolted for interest merely. At the bottom of all revolutions there is some idea, good or bad, true or false. Nothing else can make a people rise. What was it that made America revolt against England in 1776? Was it an insignificant tax, the stamp tax, or a duty on tea? No; the insurrection was for an idea: the Americans were resolved that no tax should be imposed without their consent. "No representation, no tax,"—that was the cry of the revolution. Why did France rise in 1789? Was it that wretched deficit of 40 millions! No; she was weary of the old social system: she demanded liberty and equality. In 1830 it was a question of law that brought on the Three Days. This is an historical law which has been invariable. When some interest has been injured, you will see a stir among the injured party, you will hear complaints and you will hear protests, but you will see nothing of that fierce passion that sets a whole people on fire, and plunges them into the risks of civil war. The true, the only cause which stirred the planters to revolt, was avarice, it was a mad thirst for dominion, it was a desire to found a new Roman empire where they were to tyrannize over a subject population. This is a detestable idea, an idea abhorrent to the Gospel and to modern civilization: but still it is an idea. To reduce the rebellion to a calculation of the dollars and cents, lost by the passage of a tariff openly discussed and freely voted, is to cast an imputation upon the South which it has not deserved.

Are we told that the citizens of a State have broken up the national unity, and raised their partricial hands against their country, all to avoid paying a cent more upon a yard of cotton cloth? That would be a crime in which absurdity would dispute the palm with baseness. The South, blinded by her prejudices, and more still by her habit of exercising despotism has even in her delusion one excuse, and to take this away is to steep her in degradation. In attributing to her violent passions rather than mean-spirited covetousness, her adversaries show her better treatment than her apologists.

May I say, in conclusion, that one single wish has

governed my pen, and *that* the desire to be of service to my country, by showing that in this melancholy question her duty and her interest are one and the same, and that both enjoin neutrality.

In writing these pages, I have never forgotten that I am a Frenchman and not an American. And yet to say the truth this distinction might be spared. Until very recent days, until a new line of public policy was devised for us, it was a maxim received

on both sides of the ocean, and almost an article of faith, that America and France were two sisters, united by community of interests and by glorious recollections. The North has remained faithful to this friendship,—and are we, out of affection to slavery, after a duration of eighty years, to break the only alliance which never cost us a sacrifice, and never caused us a regret?

Versailles, Sept. 5, 1862.

THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE.

I. SLAVERY IS THE TRUE CAUSE OF THE REBELLION.

Let us begin with a review of the facts, for they have an eloquence and a force which nothing can exceed.

General opinion is not deceived in thinking slavery the true cause of the civil war. A day came when the North, weary of a thirty years' subjection to a disgraceful policy, declared by the election of Mr. Lincoln that servitude should make no further progress in America. By so doing the North did not interfere with the domestic institutions of the South. The North had no right to liberate negroes that did not belong to it, or to change laws which it had not made, and it simply said to slavery—thou shalt go no farther. But with the instinct of privileged orders, the Southern planters saw distinctly that if the growth of slavery was stopped, slavery must die. Instead of resigning themselves to a remote emancipation, they sprang to arms and proclaimed that separation which they had been perpetually threatening for thirty years, and had made use of as the instrument of an ambition which no concessions could appease. The very moment they found they no longer had the upper hand, the very moment that by the free working of the government the North gained a constitutional majority, the politicians of the South tore up the compact which stood in their way. The Union, to their minds, had but one meaning, and that was, the preponderance of the slavery-party, and the instant it could no longer be made to serve the purpose of propagating slavery, they destroyed it without scruple and without remorse. This it is that some have called a patriotic resistance to the despotism of the North, a war in which slavery is only a pretext! Never was an act of violence concealed under softer and more innocent names.

If the proofs of this assertion are required, they are but too abundant. For thirty years the Southern leaders have been perpetually engaged in a conspiracy; for thirty years they have had but two words in their mouth,—the supremacy of slavery or separation; for thirty years the history of the United States has been a history of violent menaces and passionate outbreaks on the part of the South, and of concessions and of weaknesses on the part of the North. Channing predicted, twenty-five years ago, exactly what is going on at the present moment; and thirty years ago a novel written by a Southerner, entitled *The Partisan Leader*, fixed the epoch of the triumph of slavery and of the separation at 1861.

Who was it that in 1830 was the first to proclaim the lawfulness of slavery and the right of nullification, that is to say, of secession? That apostle of the South, the man whose fatal notions are now bearing fruit in blood, Mr. Calhoun.

At that time not less than now, from a regard to public opinion, there was a talk about the Tariff, but nobody was deceived. President Jackson, who stifled the first germ of rebellion by his decision and energy, declared in 1833, with a presentiment which has proved correct—"The Tariff is a mere pretence; disunion, and the establishment of a Southern Confederacy are their real objects. The next time their pretext will be the negro question and slavery."

Who was it that let loose troops of adventurers upon Texas? Who was it that in contempt of the law of nations, in contempt of humanity itself, re-established slavery in a territory which had been enfranchised by the Mexicans? The South.

Who was it that stirred up Walker and his filibusters to invade Nicaragua, and Lopez to attack Ha-

vana? Who proclaimed that the United States must have Cuba to make four new slave States? Who proclaimed that the emancipation of the negroes in that island would be regarded as a declaration of war? The South.

Who was it that opposed in 1850 the admission of California as a free State, because such admission would reduce the slave States to a minority, and the Stars of freedom would eclipse the Stars of servitude? The South.

Who caused the law against fugitive slaves to be passed, that barbarous law that laid its clutches on these poor wretches in a land of freedom, that shameful law which forced the officers of a free people to act as jailors for slave owners? The South.

Who was it that, after having imposed the Missouri Compromise in 1820, had it rescinded in 1850, because it interfered with the extension of slavery? The South.

Who invaded Kansas, drove out and killed the free settlers, in order to reduce Kansas to the condition of a slave State? The South.

Who was it that procured the Dred Scott decision to be given, that celebrated decree which authorizes the planter to carry his slaves with him wherever he may wish, like his horses and his dogs, the local law being forbidden in any way to obstruct or abridge the privileges of the master? The South.

Who was it that by these means may be said to have carried slavery into the midst of the free States themselves? The South.

In 1856, when the election of Colonel Fremont seemed certain, who was it that cried: "Trample under foot the Constitution of the United States, form a southern confederacy, of which all the members shall be slave States. If Fremont is chosen, our advice is that the people of the South should rise in their majesty, superior to the law and the magistrates, take the power into their own hands, and lay the strong hand of the fremen of the south on the treasury and the archives of the government." This was Congressman Brooks, that terrible logician who refuted Mr. Sumner by savagely beating him, the hero to whom the grateful south decreed "a cane of honor" in recompense for his exploits.

Who was it that declared that if Mr. Lincoln was elected, the Union ought not to last a single hour? The South.

And what was the platform of Mr. Lincoln while his election was pending? Did he say anything about the tariff? Did he threaten the independence of the States as to their internal affairs? Mr. Lincoln's programme embraced simply these points, all clearly within the Constitution: "No extension of slavery beyond its present limits; no more slave States to be admitted into the Union; the adoption of efficacious measures against the slave trade; the modification of the fugitive slave law, and the renunciation of the Dred Scott decision, which turns the free States into slave States."

Compared with this declaration of policy, what now was the programme of Mr. Breckinridge, the candidate of the South? "Slavery shall be national, and no longer sectional; in other words, it shall be recognized by the Constitution; it shall be extended into the new territories, according to the wish of the people, as the Union shall extend; no State shall be allowed to prevent the transit of slaves, and the fugitive slave law shall be made more stringent."

Can anybody deny these facts? Assuredly not, unless the history of thirty years is to be effaced. Slavery everywhere and forever, and attending upon slavery the threat of separation, that is the phantom which, ever since Mr. Calhoun's days, has beset the United States. Clay and Webster exhaust-

ed their genius and their lives in devising impossible compromises; Channing and Parker proclaimed that this cancer would eat away and destroy the Union; the most distinguished men of the present generation, Everett, Bancroft, Sumner, had repeated the prophecies of Channing; the nomination of Fremont, like that of Lincoln, had but one meaning, and that was to circumscribe and to concentrate servitude. The one effort of men's minds, in the South as in the North, has been directed to preparing the triumph either of the policy of liberty or of the policy of slavery. For thirty long years has the mine been charging which has just been sprung, and which by its explosion threatens to sweep away the republic; and the day after the disaster there are found publicists in Europe, who come forward and announce to us oracularly that we are the dupes of appearances, and that people are butchering one another for a tariff! In good sooth, these gentlemen have too much confidence both in their own strong imaginations and in the simplicity of the public.

At last the South throws off the mask and threatens to secede, unless its demands are instantly complied with. If the tariff is the cause, this is the moment of all others for them to protest against the greediness of the North. Do they do it?—Oh no—they have not a word to say about that, the only question is slavery. In the first moment of intoxication they do not think of Europe, and they let us know all that is in their hearts.

There was at Washington at this time, a president who had given himself over, body and soul, to the planters. Before leaving office he addressed a last appeal to the nation; he conjured the North to concede everything, in order to avoid the destruction of the Union. In this his final supplication, his last solemn summons, so to speak, to the offenders, we may of course expect that Mr. Buchanan will reproach the North with its rapacity, and call upon it to amend its iniquitous tariff; he will not say so much as a word about slavery, since slavery, if we are to believe those who understand the matter, had absolutely not a straw's weight in bringing about the separation. Let us hear what his words are:—

“Throughout the year, since our last meeting, the country has been eminently prosperous in all its material interests. The general health has been excellent, our harvests have been abundant, and plenty smiles throughout the land. Our commerce and manufactures have been prosecuted with energy and industry, and have yielded fair and ample returns. In short, no nation in the tide of time has ever presented a spectacle of greater material prosperity than we have done until a very recent period.

“Why is it, then, that discontent now so extensively prevails, and the Union of the States, which is the source of all these blessings, is threatened with destruction? *The long-continued and intemperate interference of the Northern people with the question of slavery in the Southern States has at length produced its natural effects.* . . . I have long foreseen and often forewarned my countrymen of the now impending danger. This does not proceed solely from the claim on the part of Congress or the Territorial Legislatures to exclude slavery from the Territories, nor from the efforts of different States to defeat the execution of the fugitive slave law. . . . The immediate peril arises not so much from these causes as from the fact that the incessant and violent agitation of the slavery question throughout the North for the last quarter of a century, *has at length produced its malign influence on the slaves, and inspired them with vague notions of freedom.* Hence a sense of security no longer exists around the family altar. . . . *Should this apprehension of domestic danger extend and intensify itself, then disunion will become inevitable, &c.*

“But let us take warning in time, and remove the cause of the danger. . . . How easy would it be for the American people to settle the slavery question

forever, and to restore peace and harmony to distracted country.”

What now was it necessary to do in order to avoid the impending revolution? According to Mr. Buchanan, it would answer the purpose if an amendment were inserted in the Constitution, which, 1, should recognise expressly the right of property in slaves; 2, should reserve to the inhabitants of the respective territories the right of introducing or of rejecting slavery; 3, should sanction the right of masters to pursue fugitive slaves into the free States, and should declare every state law infringing upon this right a violation of the Constitution. In other words, the only means of saving the Union was to consecrate slavery for all coming time, and make it the corner stone of the Constitution.

Here we have the political legacy of the last President of the United States, a document proper to decide the question before us. And what is the burden of this address but slavery, and slavery exclusively? Really, when certain of the European newspapers throw in our face such arguments as the tariff, we almost ready to believe that they are only making game of us?

The revolution breaks out. The South declares that it will retain the Federal Constitution, and certainly this is the very best thing it could do; two articles only are to be changed, but these two articles speak volumes as to the true cause of the rebellion. It is declared that the sovereign States shall always have the right of withdrawing from the confederacy,—which proves to a certainty that they could not, find such a right in the handiwork of Washington—and further, according to the proposition of Mr. Buchanan, that slavery shall be recognized and protected in all States and territories; it is no longer to be an institution of particular States, “sectional” as it was called, but it is to be the common law of the new empire. Is it not plain after this that slavery had no part or lot in the rebellion!

Is there a reader on whose mind there still remains the shadow of a doubt, and who still has a lingering faith in the fiction of the tariff? Then let such reader listen a moment to Mr. Stephens, the Vice-President of the Southern Confederacy, and the most eloquent of its orators:—

“The new Constitution has put at rest forever all the agitating questions relating to *our peculiar institution*. Slavery was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson, in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the rock upon which the old Union would split. He was right. . . . The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old Constitution were, that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature. . . . These ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. The government built upon them, rested on a sandy foundation; when the storm came and the wind blew—it fell. Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas; its foundations are laid, its corner stone rests upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery; subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first in the history of the world based upon this great physical, philosophical and moral truth. . . . The negro by nature, or by the curse against Canaan, is fitted for that condition which he occupies in our system. *This stone which was rejected by the first builders is become the chief stone of the corner in our new edifice.*”

I think a man need not be a particularly fervent Christian to be disgusted by this sacrilegious abuse of one of the grandest expressions of the Bible; but slavery is a poison which intoxicates the master, and its venom has even corrupted religion. The churches of the South hold the same tone as Mr. Stephens. In every page of the Gospel they find

arguments to justify servitude. It is not the crucified divinity they adore, it is slavery.

In confirmation of this, take a specimen of the Gospel as preached by one of the great doctors of divinity of the South, the Rev. B. M. Palmer, in his church at New Orleans:—

“Need I pause to show how this system of servitude underlies and supports our material interests? That our wealth consists in our lands and in the serfs who till them? That from the nature of our products they can only be cultivated by labor which must be controlled in order to be certain? This argument establishes the nature and solemnity of our present trust, to preserve and transmit our existing system of domestic servitude, with the right unchallenged by man, to go and cast itself wherever Providence and nature may carry it. This trust we will discharge in the face of the worst possible peril. Though war be the aggregation of all evils, yet should the madness of the hour appeal to the arbitration of the sword, we will not shrink even from the baptism of fire. Not till the last man has fallen behind the last rampart shall the sword drop from our hands. . . . The position of the South is at this moment sublime. If she has grace given her to know her hour, she will save her self, the country and the world. If she will arise in her majesty, she will roll back for all time the curse that is upon her. If she succumbs now, she transmits that curse as an heirloom to posterity.”

And this is not the rant of an individual, an effusion of the folly and hatred of an accidental theologian; it is the voice of the churches of the South. They have canonized slavery. The Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Episcopalians of the South, have all broken with their northern brethren. There is now in the United States a Free Christianity and a Slave Christianity. Whence came the rupture? Not from a question of tariff, or simple supremacy, for the church of course takes no part in disputes about worldly matters. The letter of the Presbyterian Synod of the South, addressed to *All the Churches throughout the World*, will let us into the origin and cause of this schism proceeding from a new dogma—the sanctity of slavery.

“The antagonism between the North and the South on the subject of slavery is the root of all the difficulties, which have brought about the rupture of the Federal Union and the horrors of an unnatural war. It is certain that the North nourishes a profound antipathy to slavery, while the South is equally animated with zeal in favor of that institution. The course of events will necessarily strengthen the antipathy of one party and the zeal of the other.

The Synods came to the conclusion that they must separate from a hostile sect, and they had the right so to do. But let them not deceive themselves; it is not the North only that they are no longer in communion with, but the Christian Church all over the earth. The gospel in which they discover a divine approbation of slavery is not that of Christ.

In view of what we have read, what can be truer than these eloquent words of Mr. Sumner:

“Look at the war as you will, and you will always see slavery. Never were the words of the Roman orator more applicable: *nulum facinus extitit nisi per te, nulum flagitium sine te*: no guilt unless through thee, no crime without thee. Slavery is its inspiration, its motive power, its end and aim, its be-all and end-all. It is often said that the war will make an end to slavery. This is probable. But it is surer still that the overthrow of slavery will at once make an end of the war.”

What now have the apologists of the South to say in answer to these overwhelming arguments, in answer to the judgment which the South has pronounced against herself? Nothing but a mere sophism. They shift the question. They tell us that the proof that slavery is not a cause of seces-

sion is found in the fact that the North never wished to abolish slavery: that even at this very moment it hesitates to proclaim emancipation. This is an admirable way of reasoning, but perhaps those who adopt it do not clearly perceive where it will leave them. If the advocates of the South can get this plea allowed, they will ruin their client. Prove, if you will, that the North never wished to abolish slavery: it still remains true that slavery was with the South the sole motive for separation. How will it then be with the conspiracy which the men of South Carolina boast has been going on for these thirty years? Will that conspiracy be the more justifiable when you take away every shadow of excuse for it? Is ambition the nobler in the very proportion that it breaks the most sacred of contracts *without reason*, and even without a pretext to give a color to its violence? The South is accused of having broken up the Union in order to be free to extend and perpetuate slavery. What justification has it to allege for this double crime against the country, and against mankind? Will it deny the overwhelming facts, or will it withdraw from the words it has pronounced and the acts by which it is condemned? Neither: the answer is that the South had nothing to fear from the northern feeling about slavery!—and what sort of defence is that? Surely no one can believe that the public conscience of Europe is so deadened as not to feel that the weakness of the North would be no justification of the South.

Let us now see what it was that the Free States really did? I am not their advocate, and I do not approve of all their past conduct; but I cannot refrain from saying that an artifice has been employed against them which was worn out long ago. In every revolution, the party which is in the wrong never fails to accuse its adversaries of all the evils it has itself caused. Words change their meanings. Virtue is called a crime, and resistance oppression. To defend the laws is to be guilty of violence, to maintain the Constitution is tyranny. “Audacity! Audacity!” was the motto of Danton. I presume to think that this device has had its day. Sixty years of experience of its effects have cured us of our credulity.

The North then, so it is alleged, never desired to put down slavery in the South.

If by the North, here, is meant the North as a constitutional power, the North as represented in Congress, the assertion is true. The abolitionists never received any encouragement from the authorities of the government, never received any from Congress. No law was ever brought before the national Congress for the abolishment of servitude. The reason of this is simple enough, and does honor to the States: it is that the Constitution stood in the way of such a measure, and the North bowed reverently before the Constitution as before the ark of the covenant. In 1787, the thirteen independent States abdicated their political sovereignty, and transferred it to the Congress, reserving to themselves a civil and administrative sovereignty, and each State retaining its peculiar laws and institutions. Slavery was in the number of these institutions. Slavery, therefore, could not be abolished in South Carolina save by the representatives of South Carolina: this is a point which nobody ever disputed. Mr. Lincoln, on entering on the presidency, declared, like his predecessors, that he would interfere with no State laws and would maintain the Constitution. That some enthusiastic souls should reproach the Yankees with their love of a Union and

¹ “Neither the election of Mr. Lincoln nor the non-execution of the Fugitive Slave Law had anything to do with bringing about the separation. It is a thing which has been growing and preparing these thirty years.” (Mr. Rhett in the South Carolina Convention.) At the first moment of intoxication everybody boasted of having been conspiring against the government for thirty years.

their devotion to a law that made them keep terms with slavery (with which they had no right to intermeddle), I can understand; but I cannot see how the toleration, or, if you please, the inertia of the North can be made to justify the conduct of the South. Does anybody mean to maintain that, because the North *respected* the Constitution, the South had a right to *violate* it?

Further: the friends of the South tell us that in the free States the negroes are held in no sort of consideration, that they are worse treated and are more unhappy than they are in the South.

It is true that in the North, through the influence of a prejudice unworthy of a Christian people, the blacks are looked upon as a race disgraced by the brand of servitude, and are not treated as citizens. It is also true that at New Orleans the plauter sometimes takes a certain pleasure in witnessing the sports of his slaves, as he would in observing the gambols of his horses or his dogs, while at New York the white man looks down on the black man with scorn. But has anybody ever been at the trouble to ask the slave whether, in spite of all this, he does not envy his brothers in the North? Is it to go for nothing that in the North the black man is master of his own person, of his wife and children, his labor and his possessions? And after all, what would the argument prove? *It was clearly not out of love to the negroes that the South left the Union.*

Once more, they tell us that it is at New York and Boston that all the slave-traders are fitted out, and that the North, which talks so loudly of its love of liberty, has been purveyor for the South.

This again proves nothing, except that everywhere infamous speculators are to be found who make no account of the blood and lives of men if they can only gratify their covetousness. These criminal practices (which were a source of profit to the South,) though the offence of a few exceptional pirates, have been a spot on the fame of the people that has suffered them,—*but what conclusion can be drawn from them?* We ask again—did the South revolt to avenge this abomination?

Let us waive all these recriminations, which can impose upon nobody, and look at things as they are. What the North wanted was, that slavery should not be extended, that it should be restricted to the limits within which it is now confined, and should die out gradually in a natural way. Here you have the true and the only cause of the rebellion, and from this you may estimate the criminality or the glory that belongs to Mr. Lincoln and his party. To go further than this they had no right, and, besides, to use a beautiful and deeply significant expression of Mrs. Stowe, a measureless compassion restrained them. To emancipate four millions of men in one day, would be to launch the South on a career whose uncertainties it may make us tremble to contemplate. But in marked distinction from the high-souled gentlemen who taunt the North with its weakness, and who clamor for instantaneous and universal emancipation, on the ground of principle, in order that they may cover over their real design to perpetuate slavery from motives of interest, Mr. Lincoln and his friends, with as much courage as wisdom, took the sole path which was at once constitutional and safe. To set impassable bounds to this curse of the land, to the end that it might gradually be reduced and finally extinguished,—this was the plan of these excellent men, a noble and beneficent conception, and one which haply deserved some better treatment than the indifference or the contempt of nations that call themselves Christian.

But was the North really animated by these lofty views, in treating with the slave party, and electing an anti-slavery President? Let the facts reply. Let us see what services the Congress has rendered to the cause of liberty in the course of the past year.

The District of Columbia, the seat of the Federal Government, being within the territory of Mary-

land and bordering on Virginia, had always been subject to slave laws, for the South would not suffer an oasis of liberty to exist as a place of refuge between two slave States. Negroes were sold at the foot of the capitol, and for thirty years all efforts to do away with this scandal had been in vain. The Congress has just declared the District of Columbia free territory.

The South was resolved to carry slavery into the territories, immense wastes, into which cultivation and civilization were every day making their way. The Congress has dedicated all the territories to freedom, and has thus shut up slavery within a circle which it cannot overstep.

The prospect of emancipation fills the masters with terror; it involves the loss of a kind of property, not quite respectable to own, to be sure, but still consecrated, like all abuses, by time, and habit, and by the interests which are bound up with it. The Congress has made an offer to the slave States to contribute largely to the redemption of their negroes, and all the people of the United States are bound by their action to pay the ransom.

To concede the possession of rights to free blacks, even without the bounds of the United States, has hitherto been regarded by the proud Southerners as an outrage not to be thought of. Although the trade carried on with Hayti was much more considerable than the trade with Russia, the old government never maintained consuls at her ports. The very idea of treating the blacks as men and as Christians, still worse of going so far as to receive a black envoy at Washington, was most revolting to the planters. The Congress has recently decided to recognize both Hayti and Liberia.

Under cover of the American flag the slave-trade was carried on with impunity. By stimulating national jealousy, the right of search, the only means of checking this form of piracy, was withheld from other nations. The Congress has ratified a treaty with England for the suppression of this abominable traffic. In the interior of the country, where justice was in the hands of the democrats, the faithful friends of the South, the slave-traders, if brought to trial, were shamelessly acquitted. Under the presidency of Mr. Lincoln they are sentenced to death and hanged. Assuredly we have got a long way beyond the Ostend Conferences, and threats to Cuba.

Finally an immense step was taken the day when it was decided, in virtue of the rights of war, to employ the slaves of rebels in the service of the Union, and that the slaves thus employed should be entitled to freedom.² This was a terrible blow to the South. At present, while all the free and able-bodied population of the South is engaged in the war, the negroes, by cultivating the land, are indirectly adding to the military force of the rebels. To free the blacks, therefore, and, if necessary, to put arms into their hands, would be to weaken the enemy and strengthen the side of liberty.

All this the Congress has done since the rebellion broke out. In one year the North, become its own master, has shown how its heart was disposed. Whatever shall be the issue of the war, we may say that the year 1861 opens the era of emancipation. A question which sets thirty millions of men of the same blood by the ears is not a matter to be stifled by a compromise.

It is of no use to represent these acts as the offspring of a desire for retaliation, anger and revenge.

² "Another bill, presented to the Confederate Congress by the President, Jefferson Davis, provides that those corps of the Union army which may be composed partly of whites and partly of blacks shall not enjoy the privileges (read *rights*) of war. The negroes, if taken, shall be sold, and their commanders hanged." I extract this telegraph despatch from the French newspapers of September 3. It gives a pretty accurate idea of the new code of international law which the South will establish when the cause of slavery shall have triumphed.

All this is absolutely to no purpose, for it remains none the less true that the cause of the North is the cause of freedom.

While the North was making such spirited preparations for the war, what was the South about? What prevented the South from competing with the North for the sympathy of Europe? What measures did they take in behalf of the negroes, and what pledges have they given of a seasonable emancipation. If the tariff was the true origin of the war, and the supremacy of the North the only fear of the planters, a fairer occasion could not have presented itself for throwing overboard the fatal clog of slavery. Let somebody publish a programme of what the South proposes to do; that is the way to bring round public opinion. The North is acting, and why should the South preserve silence, when she knows that this is so dangerous.

Let not the South delude herself. Her soldiers are brave, her diplomatists adroit. She is keeping back the cotton of which Europe has a pressing need, she is flattering certain political jealousies by predicting the approaching dismemberment of the United States; but notwithstanding all chances in her favor, the South will be deceived in the object of her ambition. It is possible that weary of the war, the North may submit to the separation of some of the States between the Alleghanies and the sea; but the new Roman empire which was to extend as far as Mexico, the new civilization founded on slavery, all that is but a dream which is even now vanishing, a bubble which will burst in the first breeze. To succeed, the South must have the help of Europe, and this help she will not have. Whatever may be the sufferings of the manufacturing classes, and whatever the schemes of diplomatists, there is one fact which towers above everything else, and that is—SLAVERY. Victory for the North is the redemption of four millions of men—but triumph for the South is the perpetuation and extension of slavery, with all its miseries and all its infamies. This is the feeling of Europe, and the knowledge of this feeling will hold back more than one government. The multitude, whom great politicians despise but dare not defy, the fanatics who believe in the gospel, the narrow minds whose conceptions do not soar above liberty, the silly hearts that melt at the recital of the sufferings of an unknown negro, and all that mass of sentimental people who throw into the balance their love of right and of humanity, these always get the better in the end. The world belongs to those ignorant beings who care not a straw for political combinations, and who set justice and charity high above their own interests.

Frenchmen, is it possible that the cause of slavery should ever become popular with us? Our fathers once fought in America with Lafayette and Rochambeau to uphold freedom there. This is a part of our national glory, and it is the service then rendered the United States which has caused us to be regarded in that country as brothers and friends. Shall we obliterate the memorable past? Shall the name of France be associated with the triumph of the South, that is, whatever we may do or say, with the endless perpetuity of slavery? It is impossible. France, we are told, never fights for a selfish interest, but always for an idea. I accept this proud motto, and I now ask,—if we give help to the South, *what idea shall we be fighting for?*

II. THE SOUTH HAD NO RIGHT TO SEPARATE. SEPARATION IS REVOLUTION.

Before proceeding to separation, the planters intended to make sure of Europe. Cotton and free trade, those two irresistible allurements, were to put at the service of the rebellion all the interests of the old continent. Living in the midst of slavery, accustomed to exercising hereditary domination, the people of the South had not taken into account what

they call the abolitionist fanaticism. Could they imagine that in this age of business, there should still be in Europe a great number of persons foolish enough to put the rights of miserable negroes before their own advantage, and to sacrifice themselves to such empty words as humanity and liberty? The defenders of the South soon perceived that they were on the wrong road; and therefore one after another they have drawn the curtain over this sad tragedy of slavery. All the world hates servitude, that is a settled thing; so now we are told that no body detests it so heartily as those who through pity for the incupiscates, it is her own which she defends. Certainly, the field is better chosen; these words, liberty and independence, always make us pick up our ears; are like the sound of the trumpet to the war-horse; but let us take care that we are not misled by a vain flourish.

The question is now transferred to political ground. The South no longer claims the right of tyrannizing over the blacks, but her own independence; it is no longer the liberty of millions of men which she confiscates, it is her own which she defends. Certainly, the field is better chosen; these words, liberty and independence, always make us pick up our ears; are like the sound of the trumpet to the war-horse; but let us take care that we are not misled by a vain flourish.

The United States, it is said, are a Confederation; the Constitution authorizes any of the States to separate from the rest.

Of these two arguments, one is based upon a word of which the sense is falsified; the other rests upon an error.

Let us begin with the second. It is easy to consult the Constitution of the United States. The text of it is clear, the proceedings of Congress are within reach. Story has written a commentary worthy of Roman jurists. Where do we find that the right is conceded to one or to many States to separate? Or rather where do we not see that this pretended right has never existed? The compact is perpetual, and can only be modified by the majority of the States. It is in this manner, besides, that the constitutional law was understood up to the day when Mr. Calhoun, the prophet of slavery and of separation, put forward his theory of nullification. The President, General Jackson, energetically resented this theory of anarchy. In his message of 1833, he says to Congress: "The right of the inhabitants to free themselves at their will, and without the consent of the other States, from their most solemn obligations, and to put in peril the liberties and the happiness of the millions of men of whom the Union is composed, cannot be recognized. To say that a State may at will separate itself from the Union, is to say that the United States are not a nation."

Such was the official reply; but, in addition, the General caused Mr. Calhoun to be told that, if he brought his theories to Washington, he would have him hanged;—a threat which, in a free country where a man is put to death only by process of law, signifies that the President would have had Mr. Calhoun tried on a charge of high treason. In other words, to attack the national unity is a crime at Washington as it is at Paris. The law is the same in the two countries.

Is it now necessary to cite legal authorities to prove that everywhere in the world and alike among nations as among individuals, there exists no contract which one of the parties can break at will?

Take for instance an alliance, a simple treaty between independent and sovereign nations; this treaty will have a certain duration, there will be forms for proclaiming it and for annulling it. Where is the duration and the expiration of the Constitution fixed? Where is it stipulated that any of the parties shall have the strange right to break it through caprice and by force? What government has ever admitted this sort of *amicable dismemberment*, in which the minority would give the law to the majority? When I was a child I once saw a puppet which threw away one after another its arms, its legs and its body, till there was nothing left of it

but the head, and which then gathered up again piece by piece its scattered members. Behold the similitude of that chimera of a Constitution which is attributed to the United States! Between this impossible charter and a living, self-preserving law, there is the same difference as between a puppet and an animated body.

It will be said that the new Constitution of the South recognizes for all its members the right of separation. Yes, undoubtedly, for it was necessary to justify the rebellion; the excuse they could not find in the charter which was violated, they have put into the new one which they proclaimed. In time of war and of revolution declarations cost little; nobody thinks of their being carried out. But suppose that today North Carolina should return into the Union. Ask yourself if the Southern Confederacy, thus mutilated, would consent to be cut off from Virginia, and acquiesce in its own destruction out of regard for the liberty of Carolina. Why, Virginia has already been divided into two States, and do we see that the South has respected the new State of Kanawha! Things are stronger than laws; no people can willingly allow itself to be cut in two.

No, not a *people*, it will be answered; but the United States are not one people: they are a Confederation—that is to say, a voluntary alliance of sovereign States.

This is a definition invented for the necessities of the case, contrary to all the ideas received in the United States, to all the actual facts of the last seventy-five years. M. de Gasparin replies in a triumphant manner to this objection, which is a mere sophism. It is a play upon the word confederation.

The name of confederation, like that of monarchy, of republic, &c., is susceptible of different meanings. All language is an imperfect instrument, which cannot render the shades and the infinite varieties of human conceptions; we are, therefore, obliged to express by the same word ideas which have nothing in common but a distant analogy. It is custom, it is history, which in each country gives to the word its significance and stamps it with its legal value. It is clear, for example, that the name of liberty has a wholly different signification in England from what it has on the continent.

To say that the United States are a confederation, is therefore to say nothing unless you show at the same time what the United States understand by this word.

That there may be confederations of sovereign States history attests, although it nowhere shows us an alliance which one of the parties has the right to break at will. But that there may be also, under the title of confederation, a great number of political combinations in which the sovereignty of the individual State is surrendered, is what it is easy to see by looking round us.

What is the German Confederation, but an alliance of sovereign States which cannot disunite? If tomorrow Hesse wished to leave the Union, does not everybody know that the Diet would oblige her to remain, even were it necessary to have recourse to arms? Here is a primary form of Confederation which condemns the pretensions of the South. But even this is a tie too lax for the Germans, who every day feel more and more their national unity; therefore they attempt to draw the federal knot tighter, by changing the system of confederated States (*Staaten Bund*) into that of a confederation of States (*Bunden Staat*); in other terms, the Germans desire to borrow of the United States that Constitution which places the political sovereignty in a central power, and leaves to the individual States only civil independence. Can any one believe that if Germany shall one day arrive at that American unity which has so long been her dream, she will easily consent to the rupture of the union she has made such sacrifices to bring about?

The reform so much desired in Germany, Switzerland has almost a hived. She has put an end to

the perpetual *referenda* to the cantonal sovereignty, which drove diplomatists to despair. Custom-houses, general legislation, supreme jurisdiction, the right of making peace and of war, now belong to the Council and to the two Assemblies, which sit at Berne. Switzerland is still a confederation, but who does not see that the word has changed its meaning? It formerly denoted a league of sovereign cantons; now it denotes a nation. If tomorrow Geneva or Ticino wished to separate, alleging that the federal tie cannot bind them, does any one believe that Switzerland would not maintain her nationality with her cannon? And Europe, which has an interest in Helvetic neutrality, would it deny to the Federal Council the right of subduing the rebellion? Here, then, again is a confederation which can not be left at will.

What now has Switzerland done in strengthening the Federal unity, but distantly imitate the Constitution of the United States, an admirable combination, which avoids at the same time the feebleness of the ancient confederations, and the despotism of centralization. And how did America attain to that grand unity which Germany and Switzerland envy her? Is it forgotten that after the peace of 1783, America, though mistress of herself, came near perishing through the jealousy of the sovereign States? It was to escape from anarchy that patriots, like Washington, Hamilton, Madison and Jay, proposed the Federal compact and induced the States in 1787 to renounce their individual sovereignties. Before the Constitution there were thirteen independent and allied States; after the Constitution there was but one American people.

“These allied sovereignties,” said the Federal Court, in 1787, “have changed their league into a government and their Congress of ambassadors into a legislature.” Friends or enemies, federalists or partisans of the old order of things, no one was deceived. Patrick Henry, one of the first advocates of the revolution, but an enemy of the Federalists, said distinctly, “that this government is a consolidated government, (that is to say, a unit), is evident. The Constitution says, *We the people of America*, and not *We the States*.”

Open the Constitution, and there try to find what distinguishes the United States from the governments of Europe. Nothing but a greater local independence. As to the political sovereignty it belongs altogether to the President and to Congress.

The supreme executive, legislative and judicial power, the right of making peace and war are in the hands of the central authority. Diplomatic relations, the army, the navy, the custom-houses, the post-offices, coinage, all these privileges of sovereignty have been withdrawn from the States and given to the Federal government. It is the President who commands the militia of the several States; it is he who grants naturalization; it is he who represents the country before the world. The Constitution does not recognise thirty-three nations, but one alone which is called the United States. Europe follows the Constitution.

Is all this only a *political fiction*? In America are these different peoples united together by a federal tie, as there are in Switzerland German, French, Italian cantons? No; in this territory, twelve times greater than France, there are only men of the same family, who have the same remembrances, and, if slavery be done away with, the same institutions. Undoubtedly there are shades of difference between the different States; the character of the first colonists, the difference of climate, and above all slavery, give to the South a peculiar physiognomy; these are those provincial varieties found in all countries, and which are less marked in America than in old Europe, which is all made up of odds and ends. But that there can be there an antagonism of race it is impossible to admit in the case of a nation which sprang from one and the same cradle. The Americans are one people; this cannot be too often dinned in the

ears of Europe. What, I pray, is a people, if this title is refused to a society of men who have the same origin, the same language, the same faith, the same civilization, the same past, and who, for seventy-five years, have had the same history, the same government, the same laws?

I insist upon this point, because, if the Americans are one people (and it is impossible to deny it), the recognition of the South raises a question which touches us nearly. What is asked of us, whether people know it or not, is to introduce into the public law of Christendom a principle of anarchy which tomorrow may be turned against ourselves. This absolute right of separation which is so loudly proclaimed amounts to a denial of all national unity. It is strange that anybody should ask France to proclaim a dogma so contrary to our political faith, and to our love of country.

That no people is made to be the slave of another people, is a principle which, God be thanked, is now no longer disputed. The emancipation of Venice, the liberty of Poland, the enfranchisement of the Christian tribes in European Turkey, will be received as the triumph of right over force. But in America, where there is no subject people, except the forgotten negroes, what is implied in this right of separation, as claimed by the South, and as advocated by publicists who think themselves statesmen and defenders of order and peace?

This new right, this hitherto unheard-of pretension, may be translated thus: "Every province, every fraction of the people has the right to quit the State of which it forms a part, and that on the day and hour which it likes best. To justify such conduct, it is enough to procure a local majority, more or less doubtful, and which, besides, is only a minority of the nation. To offer resistance to such separation is an act of tyranny which Europe ought not to suffer."

Everybody will say this is monstrous; nevertheless, it is exactly what we are asked to declare as a rule of public law. Has the South been oppressed? Was it not absolute mistress of its administration and of its internal laws? Had it not in the general representation a part proportionate to its population? Had the North any exclusive political privileges? Was Mr. Lincoln a despot who would have violated his oaths, and trampled under foot the national liberties? No, the South in revolting can allege neither a law broken, nor an outrage right. What it complains of is that a change of majority was about to transfer the political superiority to the North. Is this a cause for rebellion? Is not submission to the majority in matters of general interest the very condition of the existence of a free people? Is it not the very idea of political liberty, that the power of opinion takes the place of the bloody game of revolutions?

If instead of free discussion and an appeal to reason every discontented minority may have recourse to separation, where would the process of disintegration and division stop? Why might not counties detach themselves from States? Why might not cities isolate themselves from counties? Why might not what is to-day the right of New Orleans be tomorrow the right of Geneva, of Cologne, or of Strasburg? Let these *pronunciamientos* once be recognised by political jurisprudence, and who can say where this principle of dissolution will end? To go over to an enemy, even in time of war, will no longer be treachery; it will be the use of an absolute and imprescriptible right, viz.—the right of separation. This amounts to introducing into international law the doctrine of free marriage and of divorce at will.

Such are the principles involved in this war. Passion may obscure them, but it cannot make them not to be. It is possible that the South may gain its point; it will not be the first time that an unjust revolt has had a transient success; but what we may

be sure of is that the cause of those who break up the unity of their country is an impious cause. The victory of the South will be an accursed victory and one from which the whole world will suffer. It will be not only the triumph of slavery, but it will be the destruction of the most patriotic and the wisest work of modern times. It will be the introduction into America of all the evils to which its divisions condemn old Europe, and this without there being in the new world the same diversity of races and of customs. Standing armies, enormous budgets, national rivalries, foreign intrigues, the beginning of an endless war, these are the curses which necessarily will follow upon this separation which some think so desirable. Such a prospect cannot but strike a profound sadness to the hearts of all lovers of peace, liberty and democracy.

Such being the state of things, I do not hesitate to say, that the duty of France is marked out for her. Can we stoop to associate the French name with the maintenance of slavery? Can we give aid to men who are engaged in destroying the unity of their nation, and can we assist in a proceeding in a distant land which here at home we should call a sacrilege and a crime?

Appealing to our love of country and of humanity, I say, No.

III. COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL INTERESTS ALIKE COUNSEL FRANCE TO PRESERVE NEUTRALITY.

The false position of the South is now fully perceived, and accordingly her advocates have shifted the question to the ground of our interest. By so doing they hope to rid themselves of those over-scrupulous politicians, who, while invoking justice, only know, it is said, how to construct fine phrases, but understand nothing of business. We are familiar with this old sophism: and in opposition to it we maintain that never was anything clearer than that on this point the interest and the duty of the country are one.

France has a two-fold interest at stake in America: a commercial interest and a political interest, both equally deserving of our attention, although at this moment cruel sufferings may make us forget the second and look only at the first.

The scarcity of cotton reduces to misery great masses of laborers. Whence came this scarcity? Is it the fault of the North? No; the North, notwithstanding the war, is willing to buy cotton from the insurgents and sell it to Europe. The North, on the contrary, greatly desires not to complicate an already difficult position. But the South has perceived from the first that it could not gain its point, except with the support of Europe; it has calculated on getting this help at last, though at a hard bargain perhaps, by starving us. To induce Europe to intervene, in spite of herself, is the hope and the policy of the confederates. "Let us count for our defence;" they say in their newspapers, "neither on our arms, nor on our arsenals, nor on our fortresses; let us count only on our cotton. The life or death of whole communities is in our hands. If we hold back our cotton they will die of hunger, and as soon as we bring it again into the market, they will take new life." This is the haughty summons upon which we are to lower our flag.

What means is there of obtaining cotton if the South persists in this selfish course which costs us so dear? There is but one, and that is the end of the war. The end of the war may come in a natural way, or it may be decided by the intervention of Europe. Of these two ways the second is the more dangerous and the less sure.

If the Americans are left to themselves, it is clear that the war cannot last long. There are in the field a million of men, whom fatigue and the climate are daily diminishing. The South is forced to call

out the men between thirty-five and forty-five; its young men are exhausted. The Confederate paper is at 50 per cent. discount, silver is disappearing from the North, where the army costs a million dollars a day. On both sides the immense losses and expenses will very soon bring on that weariness and debility which reduce the most infuriated opponents to accept of peace. *The more we avoid interference, the shorter will be the struggle,* is the best maxim we can act upon. It is not only politicians who feel but distantly the general misery, that tell us so, but English manufacturers, who understand America, and who are made sharp-sighted by their sufferings. To be always ready to offer a friendly mediation, to endeavor to shorten by our good offices a fratricidal war, such is our duty; but even to secure our own interests, let us not go farther. To intervene would be to excite on the one side the hopes, on the other the anger of two infuriated parties; it would be to add fuel to a flame which may set the whole world on fire. This wise neutrality which all our previous policy imposes on us, does not commend itself to a school of writers who wish that France should have a hand in everything, at the risk of wearing out and exhausting the country. These are those uneasy and restless people who propose to us *not to interfere*, but to *recognize* the South. But will this recognition procure us cotton? No; it will not give us the right to break the blockade, and so it will not end the war. What will it gain for us? Nothing, but the loss of that position of mediators and friends, which at a favorable moment might enable us to put an end to the conflict. To recognize the South is to give it our moral support, is to declare in advance that its pretensions are lawful, to take sides and therefore to abandon the position of possible arbitrators. Of what use to us will be this measure, which will offend the North and put our future in jeopardy?

Recognition, it is said, will not bind us to make war. That is a mistake. I fancy that those who say so, have too much sense to believe it. A great country like France never takes a useless step. When it declares for a people, it does not long remain satisfied with a barren declaration. In the train of recognition of the South, comes war with our old allies. The North will see a menace in this decisive measure. She has long been uneasy about the storm which has been pointed out to her on the horizon. "Every nation torn by civil war," Mr. Lincoln has said, "must expect to be treated without respect by foreign nations." Let me add also that, rightly or wrongly, it is from England that the North fears intervention; she still counts on the old and constant friendship of France.

If the North does not yield to the first summons of England and France, do they mean to go farther? Has the probable cost been calculated of the most fortunate war, carried on at such a distance, in an immense country, among a brave, industrious people who will defend their homes with the energy of despair? What are the losses and the sufferings of the cotton business compared with the evils and the burdens which would be the consequence of an undertaking longer and more difficult than the Crimean expedition? To sustain the policy of the slavery-party shall we add another thousand millions to our national debt, and spend the lives of sixty thousand men? Of course if the honor of France were a stake there should be no hesitation; but the Americans have in no way injured us; they have always been our friends. At this moment, even, it is in us that they put their trust; the neutrality of France is their safety. Under such circumstances a war will never be popular in France, for it would be in opposition to the interests, the ideas, and the feelings of the country.

But let us suppose that the North yields at the first threat of interference; let us suppose that worn out with the struggle it succumbs before our armed mediation; let us suppose that it does not deliver

up the South to servile war, and thus take an everlasting vengeance on the party which has called in a foreign nation; let us suppose that it allows us to regulate the dismemberment of America,—all impossible suppositions, when you remember that we are speaking of a youthful, ardent and patriotic people, a people which has been a year under arms;—when we shall have succeeded in this gigantic enterprise, what have we done? We shall have belied all our political traditions, we shall have weakened France and strengthened England, while crushing our most useful and most faithful allies! These political interests are more important than the interests of our manufactures; and yet some appear to forget this fact, or to wink it out of sight, whenever it is convenient for their purposes.

When Louis XVI. gave his assistance to the insurgent Americans, what was his intention but to avenge the insult that we had received in Canada, and to raise up on the shore of the Atlantic, a people who would one day come into competition with England, and would dispute with her the empire of the seas? Read the correspondence of M. de Vergennes; it will be seen that people in France were not deceived with regard to the destinies of America; it was understood as early as 1780 that it was not a few millions of men who were emancipated; it was a new world that France called into life.

When the First Consul sold Louisiana, which he would have done better to keep, when he decided to give up New Orleans, which the United States were ready to pay any price for as the key of the Mississippi, as a possession without which they could not live, what was the policy of Napoleon? He desired, like Louis XVI., to contribute to the power of this people, destined in no distant future to act as counterpoise to England. [See Note.] The first Consul was not mistaken in his calculations; in the year 1812 infant America accepted war with the parent country, and from that time made the rights of neutrals a reality.²

From this period England has had no maritime war; she has relinquished her pride, she has no longer talked of her maritime sovereignty; and why? Because opposite her, on the other side of the ocean, there was a people, whose growth partakes of the incredible, a people determined to go to war the very moment she interfered with the liberty of the seas.

This is the result of our French policy, this was our retaliation for a century of unfortunate wars, this is why the United States have been from the first our allies and our friends. Their interest is ours, their greatness contributes to ours; the downfall of the United States will reduce our power and blind is he who does not see it.

What, in fact, would be the effect of the dismemberment of America, but the weakening and the destruction of the United States navy to the advantage of the English navy? England is not accustomed to fight for an idea; the least that she could exact of the South after we should have given it freedom would be such privileges of navigation as would drive out the flag of the North to the advantage of the European flag. Besides, the South lives only on

¹ Les Etats Unis en 1861, p. 177.

² "We recognize and will maintain the rights of neutrals established in 17-0 by Catherine II., when placing herself at the head of the nations, she proclaimed these rights the law of nations." Declaration of war by Congress, 18 June, 1812. For eighty years the American policy, inspired by Washington, has been never to intermingle in the affairs of Europe, and always to defend the rights of neutrals. We owe to this policy the peace and the liberty of the seas. A great power, foreign to our quarrels, and having no other interest than its commerce, always neutral consequently, and always interested in the defence of neutrals, is an admirable safeguard for us which we should have to invent, if it was not made to our hands. The proposition has been made to destroy this safeguard, and the author of the proposal considers himself a statesman.

borrowed capital; it began the war by repudiating twelve hundred million francs due to Boston and New York; it depends upon the advances of speculators who will buy its cotton even before it is planted. Who will take the place of the North in making these necessary advances? Who in return will obtain the consignment and the transportation of the cotton? Who will be enriched by this great monopoly? Who will strengthen its merchant-marine, and in consequence its navy, by all that the North will lose? Is it France?—or, is it England?

England, the natural protectress of the Southern Confederacy, (which will always require foreign support against its neighbors, who will be more numerous by reason of their free institutions, and who will never forget the past,) England, mistress of the outlets of the Mississippi and of the St. Lawrence, will then control New Orleans as she does Quebec. She will regain a foothold on the continent; and it is we who will have reestablished her in the country from which our fathers drove her out.

Is this idle jealousy? I am certainly not one of those who raise an outcry against perfidious Albion. I love and envy the English institutions. I profoundly respect the energy and the virtues of the English people; but I know that among nations an equilibrium of forces is the best guaranty of peace. I have not forgotten either our past misfortunes or the wise conduct of our fathers, and I ask that the work of Louis XVI. and of Napoleon may not be destroyed in a moment of impatience. There is for every country a line of policy dictated by its position, which does not depend on men, and which outlives dynasties; and it is this policy that I defend.

England acts on the principle that its navy ought always to be twice as powerful as ours, which is the same as saying that the English choose always to be in a condition to cope with confederated Europe. Do away with America, which holds England in check and forces her to respect the rights of neutrals, and we may be sure that on the outbreak of the first continental war we shall see another manifestation of the ambition of former times, and an ascendancy established from which we shall be the first to suffer. To dismember America is the same thing as restoring the empire of the seas to our rivals; and to maintain the unity of America, is to maintain liberty on the ocean and the peace of the world. This is what we must never weary of repeating to men who, in order to apply a more than doubtful remedy to transient sufferings, would be willing to expose us to a repetition of the terrible trials of the past. If the United States with their thirty-one millions of men had existed in 1810, can it be thought that the continental blockade would have been possible? If they are crushed tomorrow, does not every one see that a repetition of this blockade would not be an impossibility, if, which God forbid, we should ever experience a disaster on the ocean?

Whatever the issue may be, there is, at this time a duty to be performed by the friends of liberty and by those who wish to maintain the greatness of France. They must speak, they must enlighten the country; they must show her the abyss toward which she is pushed on by those fair spoken politicians, who, through love of peace, would force us into a war, and who in the name of independence would enrol us under the banner of slavery. Christians, who believe in the Gospel and in the rights of an immortal soul, even when it is covered by a black skin; patriots, whose hearts beat for democracy and liberty; statesmen, who do not desire the restoration of that colonial policy which for two centuries stained the seas with blood; Frenchmen, who have not forgotten Lafayette nor the glorious memories we left behind us in the new world,—it is your cause which is trying in the United States. This cause has been defended by energetic men for a year with

equal courage and ability; our duty is to range ourselves round them, and to hold aloft with a firm hand that old French banner, on which is inscribed, Liberty!

Note.

POLICY OF NAPOLEON WITH REGARD TO THE UNITED STATES.

It is well known that the First Consul, taking up the ideas of M. de Vergennes, made Spain cede Louisiana back to us. He wished to found a great French Colony there which, placed between Americans and Spaniards might control the ambition of the one and protect the feebleness of the other. The rupture of the Peace of Amiens, foreseen from the first, prevented him from following out this project. Finding England everywhere in his way, the First Consul endeavored to destroy the maritime supremacy which was a source of uneasiness to him.

"The principles of a maritime supremacy," he said to his counsellors, "are subversive of one of the chief rights that Nature, Science and Genius have given to men. It is the right of traversing the Seas of the World with as much freedom as the bird cleaves the air; of making use of the waves, the winds, the various climates and productions of the globe; of bringing together by means of a bold navigation people that have been separated since the Creation; of carrying civilization into countries now given up to ignorance and barbarism. These rights England means to keep from all other nations."¹

"If we leave," he said again, "if we leave commerce and navigation in the exclusive possession of a single people, the whole world will be subjected by its arms, and by that gold which serves it in place of soldiers."²

It was then that the idea occurred to Bonaparte to cede Louisiana to the United States, in order to increase their power; and on that occasion he uttered the following words, which are a summary of the course of French policy for the last thirty years.

*"To deliver the nations of the world from the commercial tyranny of England, she must be counterbalanced by a maritime power which may one day become her rival, and this power is the United States. The English aspire to dispose of all the riches of the world. I shall do a service to the whole world if I can prevent them from becoming the masters of America as they have become the masters of Asia."*³

On signing the treaty of 1803, which doubled the extent of the United States, by giving them the immense territories which were then called Louisiana, territories which stretched from the mouth of the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, that is from New Orleans to California, Bonaparte said again:—

"This accession of territory establishes forever the power of the United States, and I have now raised up against England a maritime rival which sooner or later will humble her pride."⁴

The account by M. Thiers is neither less interesting nor less instructive.

"I shall not retain," said the First Consul to one of his ministers, "a possession which would not be safe in our hands, and which would embroil me perhaps with the Americans, or would bring on a coldness between us. I shall avail myself of it on the con-

¹ Barbé-Marbois, *Histoire de la Louisiane*. Paris, 1829, p. 280.

² Barbé-Marbois, p. 282.

³ Barbé-Marbois, *ibid.*

⁴ Barbé-Marbois, p. 335.

trary to attract them to me, to embroil them with the English, and I shall create for these last, enemies who will avenge us some day, if we do not succeed in avenging ourselves. My decision is made—I shall give Louisiana to the United States.”—(March, 1803.)⁵

“It is in this way,” continues M. Thiers, “that the Americans acquired from France that vast country which completed their sway over North America and made them the rulers of the Gulf of Mexico for the present and for the future. They are consequently indebted for their existence and for their greatness to the long struggle of France against England. To the first act of this struggle they owed their independence, to the second the completion of their territory.”⁶

The Americans perceived from the first the importance of this cession and the immense service which France had done them.

“As soon as the treaty was signed,” Barbé-Marbois tells us, who was the negotiator on the French side, “the three ministers rose, shook hands, and Livingston⁷ expressing the satisfaction they all felt, said—‘We have lived long, and this is the best work of our whole lives. The treaty we have just signed, which is equally advantageous to both of the contracting parties, will change vast solitudes into flourishing countries. *Today the United States come into the number of first class powers: all exclusive influence over the affairs of America passes from the hands of the English, never to return. In this way one of the principal causes of European rivalries and hatreds is about to cease.* Nevertheless, if wars are inevitable, France will have in the new world a *natural friend*, increasing in strength from year to year, and which cannot fail to become powerful and respected on all the seas of the world. *By the United States will be re-established the maritime rights of the nations of the earth, at present monopolized by one alone.* It is thus that these treaties will become as it were a guaranty of peace and of harmony between commercial States.”⁸

The English, whose interests made them not less clear-sighted than the Americans, felt what a fatal blow this cession was to them. In 1809 we see the governor of Canada favoring intrigues, of which the object was to divide the United States and to separate the North and South. We learn the policy of the English from a letter of the principal manager of the intrigue, a very able man who wished more

than fifty years ago to perform the work which the South is so patriotically trying to accomplish at this moment.

“We must hasten on another revolution in the United States; we must overthrow the only republic whose existence would prove that a government founded upon political equality is able in the midst of tumult and dissensions to secure the happiness of its people, and is in a condition to repel the attacks of foreigners. *The object of Great Britain should be then to foment divisions between the North and the South, and to extinguish the remains of the affection with which the French have inspired this people. Nothing need then prevent her from pursuing her designs in Europe, without troubling herself about the resentment of the American democrats. Her superiority on the sea will place her in a position to dictate her will to the seamen of the North, and even to the agriculturists of the South, whose products would be without value if our naval forces should prevent the exportation of them.*”⁸

The enterprise miscarried through the patriotism and the union of the Americans; but it may be said that since then the position of affairs has in no way changed. The Americans are still our *natural friends*, the defenders of neutrality; England alone can gain by a separation, for this event weakens the European continent not less than the New World.

I may add that, in case she should succeed, England would gain one of those unfortunate advantages from which she herself would have to suffer some day. She would become again an object of hatred to all nations. I do not doubt that enlightened men like Mr. Gladstone have a sincere desire to preserve unimpaired the greatness of a nation which is after all only the glorious daughter of Protestant England. Peace is to the advantage alike of humanity and of civilization. But there are not wanting in England more than elsewhere short sighted politicians, who seek in all matters, like a character in fable,—

“First their own good, and then another’s harm.”

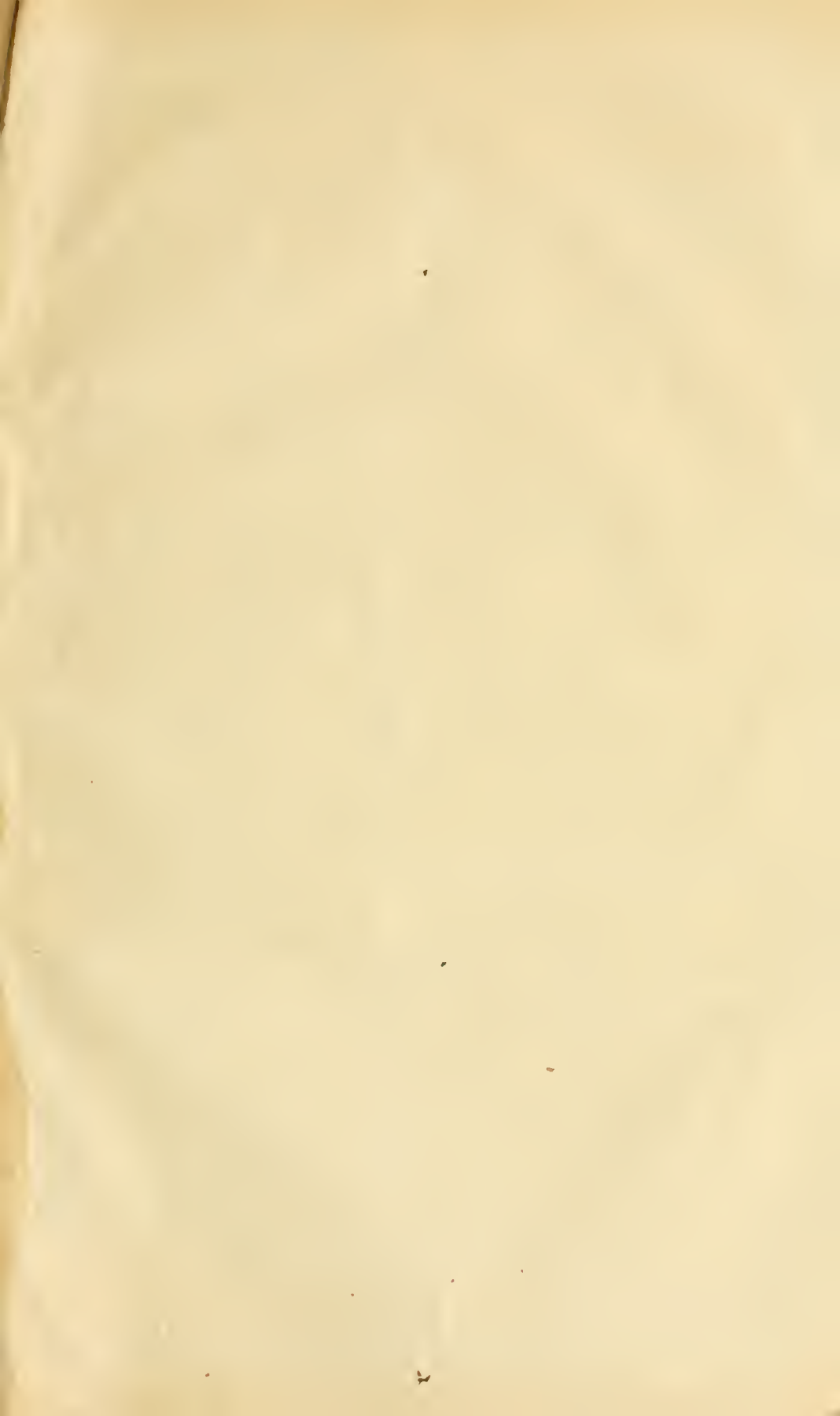
Here lies the danger. It must always be fatal to give to men unlimited power; for it has an intoxicating influence which turns the strongest heads and misleads nations not less than kings. Fifty years of peace on the ocean is the glory of the nineteenth century. This peace is due chiefly to the neutrality of the United States. History tells us how our fathers, how Louis XVI, how Napoleon, have agreed in strengthening this unsurpassable safeguard. Let us not destroy their patriotic work in a day. If we have no pity for slaves, let us at least have pity for our country, and let us preserve for her the friendship of the United States, and peace.

⁵ Thiers, *Histoire du Consulate*, t. III., liv. XVI., pp 320, 322.

⁶ The other American minister was Mr. Monroe, afterwards President of the United States.

⁷ Barbé-Marbois, page 334.

⁸ Barbé-Marbois page 403.





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