VARIOUS

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Содержание

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ENGLISH OPINION ON THE AMERICAN WAR

The great events which took place in the United States between the first election of President Lincoln and the accession of President Johnson excited an amount of party-spirit in England greater than I recollect in connection with any other non-English occurrences, and fairly proportionate even to that supreme form of party-spirit which the same events produced in the States themselves,—the party-spirit which, in hostile and closing ranks, clenches teeth and sets life at nought, seeing no alternative, no possibility, save this one only, to carry its point or die. "I am a Northerner," and "I am a Southerner," were, during the war, phrases as common on Englishmen's lips as "I am a Liberal" or "a Conservative," "I am a Protectionist" (this, indeed, has about become obsolete) or "a Free-Trader." It would be very far from correct to say that this party-spirit has yet subsided in England; highly important questions, personal and political, remain in ample abundance to keep it lively; but we have at any rate reached a point at which one may try to discuss the past phases of our partisanship, not in the temper of a partisan. My endeavor in the following pages will be to do this,—very imperfectly, beyond a doubt, but, as far as it goes, candidly and without disguise.

The writer must in the first instance, in order that his remarks may be accurately judged by the reader, essay to define his own position and the sphere within which his observations extend. He is a born and bred Englishman and Londoner, of parentage partly Italian. His professional employment is that of a Government clerk, of fair average standing; he is also occupied a good deal in writing for publication, chiefly upon subjects of fine art. His circle of personal intimacy and acquaintanceship is mainly made up of artists and literary men, including especially several of those who have made themselves most prominent in these classes within the last twenty years; and this acquaintanceship shades naturally off, in a minor and moderate degree, into those circles of good social standing which are rather liberally receptive than productive of literature and art. The writer cannot profess or affect to be "behind the scenes" of political parties, or to have dived into the minds of the peerage over their wine or of artisans in their workshops. He has conversed freely with many persons of culture and many fair representatives of the average British middle classes, and has read, in a less or more miscellaneous way, a good many opinions and statements, in books and newspapers, on both sides of the question. His own opinions are not strictly to the point, but may as well be stated at once, so that the reader, if he finds or fancies a bias in the views to be expressed in the sequel, may know to what to attribute it.

From the first symptoms of Secession to the surrender of the last Southern army, the writer has felt a vivid interest in the great struggle and its issues, and a thorough sympathy with the cause of the North and alienation from that of the South,—points on which he might, perhaps, be more inclined to dilate, were it not, that, at this late hour of the day, Northern adherency might read like the mere worship of success. So it is now, but so it was not, in many circles of English society at least, during the continuance of the war. Almost up to the very fall of Richmond, to express a decisive adherence to the Northern cause was often to be singular and solitary in a roomful of company; the timorous adherent would be minded to keep silence, and the outspoken one would be prepared for a stare and an embarrassed pause to ensue upon his avowal. At the same time that all his sympathies and hopes

were for the North, the writer entertained opinions which forbade him to condemn the South, so far as the mere fact of secession and armed insurrection was concerned. To take a wide view of the question, he apprehends, that, in every fully constituted community, there are two coextensive and countervailing rights: the right of the existent *de facto* government to maintain itself by all legal and honorable means, and, if requisite, by the arbitrament of the sword; and the right of any section of the community to reorganize itself as it may see fit for its own interests, and to establish its independence by force of arms, should nothing else serve,—the "sacred right of insurrection." The insurgent party is not to be decried for the mere act of resistance, nor the loyal and governmental party for the mere act of self-conservation and repression of its opponents; each stands the hazard of the die, and commits its cause to a supreme trial of strength. If the American colonies of Great Britain were not to be blamed for the mere act of resisting the constituted authorities, if the English Parliamentarians, the French Revolution, the Polish Insurrection, the Italian Wars of Independence, were justifiable,—and the writer thoroughly believes that they all were so,—he fails to see that the Southern States of the American Union were necessarily in the wrong simply because they revolted from the Federal authority. And in each case he recognizes the coextensive right, so far as that alone is concerned, of the existing government to assert itself, and stem the tide of revolt. It is the old question of the Rights of Man and the Mights of Man, concerning which Carlyle has had so much to say. A trial between the Mights often throws considerable light upon the question of the Rights; and, until at any rate the true Might has been ascertained by this crucial test, one may without half-heartedness admit that both of the opposing Rights, the conservative and the disruptive, are genuine rights, mutually antagonistic and internecine, but neither disproved by the other.

But this is only the most rudimentary view of the matter. An abstract and indefeasible right of insurrection may exist, maintainable in any and every case; and yet a particular instance of insurrection maybe foolish, wicked, and altogether worthy of ruin and extinction. And the writer believes that he is perfectly consistent with himself in thinking both that the abstract right of insurrection existed in the case of the Southern States of the Union and the abstract right of repression in the Federal Government, and also that this particular insurrection deserved condemnation and failure, and this particular repression deserved credit and triumph,—a triumph which, when the "Mights of Men" had been sufficiently tested, it very arduously and very conclusively managed to achieve.

As to the question of a *legal and constitutional* right of secession, the writer has not the impudence to express—and scarcely to entertain—an opinion. That is a question for American lawyers and publicists to discuss and determine; the obfuscated British mind being entitled to affirm only this: that there seems to have been something to say on the Southern side of the question, as well as a good deal on the Northern. The writer apprehends that the abstract right of insurrection on the one hand, and of self-conservation on the other, quite overbears, in so vast and momentous a debate, the narrow, technical, legal question: that which it does not overbear is the rightness or wrongness of the immediate motive, conduct, and aim of any particular insurrection and repression, considered individually. The abstract rights remain the same in all cases; the application of those rights differs immeasurably, according to the merits of each several case.

What were the merits of this particular case? The constitutional majority of the whole nation had elected a President whose election was held by both parties to be tantamount to the policy of non-extension of slavery into the Territories of the Republic, and into all States to be thereafter constructed; and before the President elect had entered upon his functions, before a single subsisting legal right (which might or might not be a moral wrong) had been interfered with, while there was yet no ground for affirming that any such right would ever be interfered with, the Southern States declared that their minority was of more weight than the nation's majority, that they would break up the nation rather than abide by its award, and would themselves constitute a new nation, founded on the maintenance of slavery within their own borders, and its extension and propagation as opportunity might offer. This, and not the mere fact that they were secessionists, insurgents, rebels, or whatever

harder term may be forthcoming, is the reason why the writer disliked the revolt of the Southern States, and wished it to come to nought; and corresponding facts regarding the Northern States,—that they were simply upholding a constitutional act performed by the nation at large, were contending for the majestic present and the magnificent future of a great and free republic, were arrayed against the extension of slavery, and might, by the force of circumstances and the growth of ideas, find themselves called up even to exterminate the existing slave-system,—these were the facts which commanded his homage to the Northern cause,—not merely that they were the assertors of authority against innovation. The case, as the writer understands it, amounts simply to this: that the South seceded before it had been in any degree damnified, and to maintain a system the scotching or killing of which, though not in fact then contemplated by the North to any extent contrary to existing laws, would have been a benefit to mankind and an atonement to human conscience. It may perhaps seem superfluous or impertinent to have given so many words to the statement of opinions so simple and obvious. But the English Liberal adherents of the Northern States were continually twitted with their assumed inconsistency in censuring the insurrection of the South, while they approved of (for instance) the insurrection of Lombardy against the Austrians; and it seemed impossible to get the objectors to understand, or at any rate to acknowledge, that motives, aims, and consequences have some bearing upon revolts, as upon other transactions, and that one may consistently abhor a revolt the motive and aim of which he believes to be bad, while he sympathizes with another the motive and aim of which he believes to be good. Of course, too, there were other objectors who denied, and will to this day not blush to deny, that the question of Slavery was the real substantial incentive to secession, and who paraded the minor questions of tariffs, the conflicting interests of the productive and the manufacturing States, and the like. These arguments the writer leaves unfingered; it is no business of his to fray their delicate texture. All he has to say of them here is, that, as he does not value them at a pin's fee as representing the main point at issue, they in no way affected the feelings which he entertained concerning the war. Again, there were remonstrants of a still more impracticable frame of mind, who could see the right, absolute or potential, of any despotic or constitutional monarchy, or any conquering power, to suppress secession and revolt, but could not conceive that any similar right pertained to the central government of a federative republic. To hear them, the will of a national majority was of no account in a national issue, provided the majority of any particular State of the federation took the contrary side. The national majority had no rights such as the strong arm of the law, or the armed force, ought to impose upon gainsayers; it was only the national minority which had such rights. The latter might break up the nation; the former must not enforce any veto upon the disruption. Why elect a President as your governmental chief, if you mean that government should be a reality? Why not be respectable, like us Europeans, and have a King at once? Such, briefly interpreted, appears to have been the quintessence of the wisdom of these political sages.

The writer has now done with the exposition of his own views,—of no consequence assuredly to his American readers, save for the clearer understanding of what he has to say concerning the views entertained by his British countryman at large. He has also done with the few specimens which it fell in his way to cite of objections urged against his colleagues in opinion, and which he was obtuse enough to imagine to be no objections at all. He proceeds to his main subject,—the varieties of English opinion on the American War.

These varieties may perhaps, with some approach to completeness, be defined under the following seven heads.

1st. The party which believed in the sincerity, the right, and the probable eventual success of the North.

2d. That which believed in the right of the North, but which doubted or disbelieved its sincerity, especially on the question of Slavery, or its eventual success, or both.

3d. That which cared only for the anti-slavery aspect of the contest.

4th. That which believed in the right and the probable eventual success of the South.

5th. That which believed in the right of the South, but which doubted or disbelieved its eventual success.

6th. That which, contrariwise, believed in the eventual success of the South, but doubted or disbelieved its right.

7th. That which covertly or avowedly justified slavery.

To each of these parties a few words of comment must be given.

1st. The party which believed in the sincerity, the right, and the probable eventual success of the North was, I think, extremely small during the greater part of the war,—say, between the first Battle of Bull Run and the capture of Atlanta. By sincerity I mean such points as these: that the Federal Government was honestly desirous of fulfilling its obligations towards the South; that the North, having to maintain the integrity of the country by force of arms, was ready to make all needful sacrifices for that object, and to lavish its blood and treasure; above all, that the professions of dislike to slavery, the offer of military emancipation to negroes, and, finally, the efforts to amend the Constitution so as to abolish slavery, root and branch, were sincere. Many, of course, believed in the right of the North, and in one of other of these items of sincerity; few, I think, in the right, in the sincerity throughout, and in the success as well. The delusion, that the North, after using up its Irish and German population and its incoming immigrants, would quail before the necessity of hazarding also a large proportion of its own settled Anglo-Saxon population, was extremely prevalent. Equally prevalent the notion that the North was fighting merely for a constitutional idea, or for national integrity, predominance, or (as Lord Russell phrased it) "for empire," without any real regard for the interests of the negro. And when all these demands upon one's faith had to be supplemented by a belief in the probable success of the North, few persons seemingly ventured to commit themselves to the whole of the proposition. Within my own personal circle of observation, I could name but one, or, at the utmost, two, besides myself, who, in the main, with some variations according to the changing current of events, clung to the cause of the North in its entirety. The first of these two persons is a painter of great distinction and a man, in other respects, of very thinking and serious mind, well known by name, and partially by his works, to such Americans as take an interest in fine art. The second of the two is one of our very greatest living poets.—As to the question of success, the following may perhaps be a tolerably fair account of the varying impressions of many, who, along with myself, hoped for the triumph of the North, and were disposed, though not with any overwhelming confidence, to believe in it. Up to the first Battle of Bull Run, opinion was suspended or fluctuating; but in the main one's sympathies conspired with one's information as to the comparative resources of the opponents to produce a considerable degree of confidence. That battle and some other Southern successes acted as a severe check; and discouragement prevailed up to the time when the capture of New Orleans, Grant's advance on the line of the Mississippi, and McClellan's "On to Richmond" march righted the balance. Great uncertainty, however, was still felt; and I should say that afterwards, between the repulse of McClellan and Pope and the Battle of Gettysburg, most of the adherents of the North were consciously "hoping against hope," and, especially at the time of the defeat at Chancellorsville and the Northern invasion by Lee in 1863, were almost ready to confess the case desperate.[1] Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Port Hudson altered the face of affairs, and revived a confidence which gradually strengthened almost into a conviction, such as not all the vast difficulties which afterwards beset Grant in his advance towards Richmond, nor all the nonsense of the Times and other Southern journals about "Johnston continuing to draw Sherman from his

[1] I remember meeting at dinner, just about this time, a near relative of the American ambassador, Mr. Adams. I expressed myself as anxious, but barely able, to believe that the Northerners would yet gain the day, and asked whether he candidly supposed they would. His emphatic "Certainly" surprised me at the time, and remained in my mind as an almost sublime instance of a true citizen's inability to "despair of the Republic." It soon turned out to be a deserved rebuke to any who desponded, along with myself, and finally prophetic. No doubt there were thousands of Americans who could, even in those dark days, with equal conviction have pronounced that "Certainly," and whose very certainty was the one thing needed and able to make the thing certain indeed.

base," or Hood cutting him off from his communications, and compelling him to retreat by that most singular of retreating processes, the triumphal march through Georgia from end to end, could ever avail substantially to becloud. Soon after the victory at Gettysburg, those who were not blinded by their wishes or preconceptions saw ground for thinking that the South had made its greatest efforts, and failed,—the North sustained its worst rebuffs, and surmounted them.

2d. The party which believed in the right of the North, but which doubted or disbelieved its sincerity, especially on the question of Slavery, or its eventual success, or both, was of necessity very large,—including, as it did, in a general way, all the Northern partisans whose strength and fulness of conviction were not great enough to enroll them in my first division. It is extremely difficult to form an opinion, or even a guess, on the question of relative numbers; but I have always fancied, that, could the whole nation have been polled on the subject, the number of Northern well-wishers would have been found sensibly to exceed that of the Southern. Generally, men of very grave, reflective, and unprejudiced minds, students in the philosophy of society and history, men known for their lofty ideal of liberty or of culture, appeared to be on the side of the North; and the calm, unfaltering attitude, free from petulance and invective, of those operative classes in Lancashire, whom the war ruined for a while, has often been pointed to as showing that the more informed and intelligent workingmen were also for the North. They endured a great calamity without murmuring, because they thought the cause just which had entailed that calamity upon them. Assuming this to be correct, as I believe it to be, the question remains, What was the opinion (or perhaps one should rather say the sentiment) of the class below this,—the great numerical bulk of the population, who would take sides according as their sympathies, imaginations, prejudices, or traditional conceptions of the right might be roused, irrespectively in the main of reasoning as to any antecedents or consequences? I incline to suppose that the most powerful impulsion to the feelings of this class must have been that strong anti-slavery sentiment which had undoubtedly for many years been bone of the bone of Englishmen,—more powerful even than that sympathy for an overmatched struggle on behalf of independence which would have pleaded for the South. If this is a correct view, it may be inferred that the majority of the poorer classes was for the North; as they, without refining over the question, would regard the contest as one between Slavery and Anti-slavery, the latter represented by the North and the former by the South. Short, however, of some decided majority for the North in these classes, whose views do not transpire much upon the surface of English opinion, I fear the majority of the whole nation would have been found to be with the South; and could I take my own sphere of society as the criterion, I should be compelled to say that so it was in overwhelming preponderance. A more diffused connection with America, through the emigration movement, and through community of interest and feeling with a democratic nation, may have combined with a truer instinct of right in the popular heart to rectify the balance; and in default of evidence to the contrary, I am fain to suppose it did.—A few words must be added as to one branch of our immediate subject,—the doubt or disbelief of the sincerity of the North on the question of Slavery. Had no prejudice or perversity of argument been imported into the subject, it would, I imagine, have been apparent to most of my countrymen that the dominant party at the North was genuinely antagonistic to slavery; that, as long as the South did not violate the Federal Constitution, the North was trammelled from interfering with slavery as already established by law in certain States; that the duty immediately imposed upon the North and the Government by the act of Secession was one and undivided,—the maintenance of the Constitution and of the Union; but that, in proportion to the obstinacy of Southern resistance, the antagonism to slavery would obtain free play in the North, the slavery question would assume greater and greater prominence as the *nexus* of the whole debate, and those who had at first been bound to make a stand for an extant Union and compromise would be impelled and more than willing to fight on for reunion and abolition. But this view of the matter was consistently distorted. The constitutionalism and nationalism of the North figured in argument as indifference to slavery, the steps taken towards, the emancipation of slaves as mere hypocritical stratagems of war, and the climax of disingenuousness was reached when the anti-

conscription and anti-negro riots of New York were fastened upon that very war-party against which they had been levelled. Systematic misrepresentations of this nature, invidious glosses and plausible misconstructions, did undoubtedly conspire with the really complicated conditions of the case and the undisputed fact of certain antipathies of race (predicable as truly of the Northern States as of any other part of the world) to persuade very many Englishmen that the North was not sincerely hostile to slavery, but used the Anti-slavery or the Abolition cry as a mere feint to disguise the lust of domination. Those who liked to be persuaded of this were persuaded with the utmost ease; and even among men who considered the subject without bias, many were confused and shaken.

3d. The party which cared only for the anti-slavery aspect of the contest was large. Their attitude is to a certain extent indicated in what has just been said. One and not an insignificant section of them would have sided frankly with the North, if satisfied that the Northern triumph would be an anti-slavery triumph; but, talked as they were, or talking themselves, into the belief that slavery had little more to fear from the North than the South, they remained, at least during the earlier part of the war, indifferent or indignant. Others, of course the great majority, watched eagerly every symptom and every step which proved the North to be in earnest in the work of abolition; they thrilled to the sounds which "proclaimed liberty to the captive,"—the tones of Northern manifestoes and legislation, the tread of Northern legions, and the volleys fired by negro soldiers. They got to feel a genuine veneration and even enthusiasm for President Lincoln, and formed probably the only section of men or women in this country who could speak of General Butler without bringing "railing accusations." The party was diffused over the length and breadth of the land. It numbered, I suppose, some adherents even in the aristocratic and governing classes,—thousands, no doubt, among the working and laboring millions; but its central strength was in that backbone of English philanthropic effort, the more plebeian section of the well-to-do middle class,—that section which gravitates towards Dissent, in religion, towards Radicalism in politics, towards Bible Societies, Temperance Movements, "Bands of Hope," and Exeter Hall. If this section of the British community had not remained true to anti-slavery ideas, the country would indeed have been turned "the seamy side without." That we were spared, in the severer crises of the war, the last uglinesses of tergiversation, is owing mainly to people of this class, the cheapest subjects for well-bred sneers and intellectual superiority in ordinary times.

4th. The party which believed in the right and the probable eventual success of the South was obviously, during the greater part of the war, a numerous one. In the earlier stages of Secession, when the chief question before one's thoughts was that of right, I think that comparatively few people sided with the South, though very many were lukewarm or frigid, or actually inimical towards the North. At that time party-spirit still respected the old-fashioned notions, that a self-governing nation must be ruled by its own majority, not minority; that a minority which cried out before it was hurt, and "cut the connection" rather than the balance in its own favor, was likely to be a factious and misguided minority; and that a new commonwealth, whose *raison d'être* was Slavery, had little claim to the sympathies of Englishmen or of civilization. Others laid greater stress from the first on the argument, that the States of the Union were all sovereign states, which had respectively entered into a voluntary bond, and could voluntarily withdraw from it without gainsaying; and that this ground of right on the side of the South remained unaffected by any accessory considerations. This view rapidly gained over the willing convictions of Southern sympathizers, when the impulse and determination, the courage and early successes of the South, had once roused strong feelings in its favor. The earlier argumentative view as to majorities and minorities, and the fundamental basis of all governments, sank into desuetude, while the right of a compact community to independent self-government at its own option occupied the field of vision. Vast numbers of people—I should think, during the greater part of the war, four fifths of the whole country—believed in the success of the South; considering it impossible that so determined a community, with so vast a territory, should ever be coerced into reunion, and not being prepared for an equal amount of determination on the part of the Northern Government and people, or for their capacity, even had the will been admitted, to meet the required

outlay in money and men. Another question, too, was prominent in men's minds, and indisposed them to contemplating a subjugated South. They would ask, "What is to be done with the South, on the unlikely supposition of its being conquered? Is it to become an American Poland?" All these considerations inclined the great majority of the nation to believe that the South would succeed; and, of those who so believed, a large proportion held the Southerners to be in the right, or sympathized with them to a degree which obscured the strict question of right in favor of preference.

5th. The party which believed in the right of the South, but which doubted or disbelieved its eventual success, appears to me to have been most inconsiderable up to the final stages of the war. I doubt whether I ever met two men, prior, let me say, to Sherman's march through Georgia, who would distinctly limit themselves to this: "I wish the South might succeed, but I don't think it will." When the impending catastrophe of the South was no longer disputable, the Saturday Review, the idol of our Club-men and University-men, of those who are at once highly cultivated and intensely English, and who fancy themselves freer from prejudice and more large-minded than others in proportion to their incapacity to perceive that their own prejudices *are* prejudices,—a paper which had "gone in for" the South with a vehemence only balanced by its virulence against the North,—found it convenient to turn tail, and retort upon those opponents with whom the laugh remained at last. The Saturday Review bleated pitifully, yet unconfessingly, to this effect:—"True it is that we have been backing up the South all the while; but we meant no more by it than the backer of any prize-fighter or any race-horse means, when he has made his choice, and staked his money, and shouts to adopted competitor, 'Go in and win!' That backer does not necessarily believe that his side *will* be the winner, but only signalizes that that side is his." The evasion came too late; persons who had inconvenient memories saw through the shuffling of a pseudo-prophet, who only managed to cast a retrospective gleam of insincerity over his fortune-telling, to convert blunder into bad faith, and to stultify his present along with his past position. The leek had to be eaten at last: why, after so many "prave 'ords" of superiority and defiance, confess that the eating of it had been more than half foreseen all along?

6th. The party which believed in the eventual success of the South, but doubted or disbelieved its right, must have been pretty considerable, if my previous estimates are true; for I have already advanced the conjecture that more than half the nation sided with the North, while four fifths believed for a long time in the success of the South. This fact alone, if correctly alleged, furnishes tolerable evidence of the persistency and influence of pro-Southern papers and partisans, and their ingenuity in so misreading the facts,

"Chè il no e il sì nel capo ci tenzona."

The event has proved that the chances of success were really very much on the side of the North. The superiority in material resources, and certain solid and undeniable successes obtained at and early stage of the war, such as the capture of New Orleans, were known to be on the same side. Slighter grounds would in most cases have sufficed to persuade minds predisposed by sympathy that this side would win; yet the Southern advocates shuffled and played the cards well enough to induce an opposite conclusion in numerous instances. And no doubt many who began by simply believing that the South would succeed went on to think that the North deserved to lose,—partly because, upon such an assumption, the personal superiority must have been very largely with the South, and partly because a combatant who has no fair chance of winning ought to give in, and not persist in shedding blood in vain. If a big man fights a little one, and turns out upon experiment to have next to no chance of beating him, one soon gets angry with the big one for "pegging away," even though one may at first have perceived him to be in the right. Such seemed to many English observers to be the condition of the case in America. They were mistaken, but excusable; but for the error in their premise, their deduction would have been correct, or at least not irrational.

7th. The party which covertly or avowedly, justified slavery was incomparably larger than any Englishman would have dreamed of a week before the secession took place. Till then, I doubt whether any writer of credit, except one, had ventured deliberately to affirm that American slavery is, under limitations, an allowable and advantageous thing. That exception is assuredly a most illustrious one, perhaps the strongest head and stoutest heart in the British dominions, and our living writer of the most exalted and durable fame,—Thomas Carlyle. His "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question," published some years ago, ruffled and outraged the anti-slavery mind, which then, and for some while before and since, might fairly be termed the mind of all England. That Discourse staggered some readers, and roused others,—roused them to contemplate the whole question from a more fundamental and actual, a less traditional and prejudged point of view, than had been in vogue since our own abolition movement gained the ascendency. It became apparent to various thinkers that the humanitarian view of the question was not its be-all and end-all; that some facts and considerations *per contra* had to be taken into account; and that what one train of thought and feeling denounced as a mere self-condemned wrong might, according to another, be even regarded as a higher right. Still, this "new light" upon slavery was received more or less fully by only a very few minds, as compared with the general mass of British conviction,—a few thorough-going believers in Carlyle, a few hardy and open-minded speculators; hardly more, perhaps, in all, than those who would join Mr. John Stuart Mill in saying that the right form of Parliamentary suffrage is universal suffrage, open to women as well as men. No ordinary English newspaper would have thought of professing at that time, nor any ordinary English reader of tolerating, the theory that slavery is right. (It is no part of my plan or business to discuss this question of slavery: I will simply say, to avoid misapprehension, that, while recognizing the profound good sense of much that Carlyle has said on this and cognate matters, my own instinct of right and habits of opinion rebel against the pro-slavery theory, and never allowed me to doubt which side I was on, when the question came to its supreme practical issue in the civil war.) Such, then, appears to me to have been the state of English opinion on this subject when the secession occurred. On one ground or another, a large proportion of our population and our writers sided with the South. At first I fancy that no journal and no average Englishman affirmed that slavery is justifiable; but, as events progressed, it became more and more difficult to say that the South was right, and yet that slavery was wrong. "No man can serve two masters," not even such a couple as Jefferson Davis and Wilberforce. The British sympathizers, who had determined to "hold to the one," were reduced to the logical necessity of "despising the other." It was a surprising spectacle. The dogmas and traditions of half a century snapped like threads, when it became their office to constrain a *penchant*. Ethnologists and politicians were equally ready to find out that the negro was fit for nothing but enforced servitude. Parsons, marchionesses, and maiden aunts received simultaneous enlightenment as to Christian truth, and discovered that slavery was not prohibited, but was even countenanced, in the Bible. The inference was inevitable: what Moses did not condemn in Jews thirty-three centuries ago must be the correct thing for Anglo-Americans to uphold at the present day. Did not St. Paul tell Onesimus to return to his master? etc., etc. Many Secessionist organs of public opinion, no doubt, declined to commit themselves to pro-slavery views: they started with the assumption that slavery is an evil and a crime, and they continued protesting the same creed. How far this creed was compatible with so rabid an advocacy of the Southern cause,—how far it was possible for genuine abominators of slavery to continue unfaltering their Southern palinodes and Northern anathemas, after such acts on the part of the South as the refusal to include colored troops among exchangeable prisoners of war, and the massacre at Fort Pillow, and such acts on the part of the North as the Emancipation Proclamation, and the introduction of the Constitutional Amendment for abolition,—these are questions which appear deserving of an answer; yet one may be quite prepared to find that the spirit of party, which made such an anomaly possible, is blind to the fact of its being anomalous, and has an answer pat. My own belief about the matter is this. When the Secession began, there were two sects among the English partisans of the South: the Carlylese apologists of slavery,—

a very small sect; and the political advocates of Secession, who, partly with full conviction, partly as a mere matter of unchallenged use and wont, repudiated slavery,—a very large sect. The Southern partisanship of the former sect was perfectly logical; that of the latter unable to stand the wear and tear of discussion, as the progress of events made it more and more manifest that slavery or abolition was the real issue. With this latter sect the political or other liking for the South was a much stronger and more active feeling than the humanitarian or other dislike of slavery; the first feeling, indeed, soon developed into a passion, the second into a self-reproachful obstruction. Thus the logical view, that slavery as well as the slaveholding interest was right, exercised a powerful centripetal attraction; and many minds were betrayed into adopting it as a truth, or using it for a purpose, without probing the depth of apostasy to their own more solid convictions, or of moral disingenuousness, which the practice involved. The South had to be justified, and here were at hand the means of justification. Now that the contest is over, I have no doubt that a large residuum of tolerance for slavery, much larger than seemed possible for Englishmen before the Secession, is left behind; but also that this tolerance was in most instances factitious and occasional, and is cleared or clearing away, and will leave the British reprobation of slavery, in a little while, pretty nearly where it used to be of old. The orange has been squeezed: what use can the rind be of? It rests with the re-United States, by a just and successful treatment of the still formidable negro question,[2] to persuade unreluctant minds in the Old Country that slavery is, in very deed, the unmitigated wrong and nuisance which they used to reckon it; and those who have sympathized with the North look confidently for this ultimate result.

As a corollary to all that I have been saying in this slight analysis of English opinion during the war, I should add,—what, indeed, American writers have abundantly observed,—that the knowledge of American affairs possessed by the great mass of English partisans was extremely superficial. I will not now speak of our newspapers and pamphleteers; but, within my own experience, among ordinary persons, who were quite ready to take sides, and stand stubbornly to their colors, I have often found that even such rudimentary points as the distinction between "States" and "Territories," the Northern resistance to the extension of slavery into Territories, the issue taken on that immediate question in the Presidential election of 1860, the relation between the three Federal Government and the States' governments, and the limits within which it would be possible for a President and his administration, however anti-slavery in principle, to interfere with slavery, were either not understood in theory, or not practically laid to heart. People would talk as if a Federal President were a Russian autocrat, who, if sincerely opposed to slavery, would have nothing in the world to do except to cancel the "peculiar institution" throughout the States, North and South, by a motion of his will and a stroke of his pen. They would demonstrate the half-heartedness on this matter of the North, as represented by its President Lincoln, and the hypocrisy or truckling of Lincoln himself, by the omission of such a sealing of their professed faith,—not caring to reflect how utterly subversive these notions must be of that favorite catchword of Southern partisans; "State rights." It may be objected, "These people can have been only the extremely ignorant." That, however, is my own conviction: but such childish assumptions were not the less prevalent for being preposterous, nor the less potent in leavening the mass of opinion, when the question was, which party to adopt.

Something—but necessarily very brief and imperfect—may be added concerning the particular organs of public opinion which sided with the North or with the South. I shall confine myself to London publications, not knowing enough of those in the country to treat that subject even with fairness, much less with command of the materials. I presume, however, that the tone of the London press furnishes a tolerable index to that of the provincial, taking the whole average.

The political color of the English press may be summarized as either Conservative, Liberal, or Liberal-Conservative. The Conservative daily papers are the "Standard" and the "Herald," both

[2] As some time may have elapsed, and some change in the state of facts occurred, before this article appears in print, I add that it was completed early in October.

rabidly Southern. The principal Liberal ones are the "Times," "Globe," "Telegraph," "Daily News," and "Star." Of these five journals, three were for the South, and only two for the North,—the two which I have named last. Two other Liberal daily papers are but little known to me,—the "Advertiser" and the "Sun": I believe the latter was at any rate not decidedly Southern. Everybody knows that the Times is the Englishman's paper *par excellence*; it would hardly be unfair to call us "a Times-led population," unless, indeed, one prefers the term, "a popularity-led Times." Converse with ten ordinary middle-class Englishmen,—men of business or position, receiving or imparting the current of opinion which is uppermost in their class,—probably nine of them will express views which you will find amplified in the columns of the Times. That journal is neither above their level nor below it; as matters strike them, so do they also strike the Times. Englishmen do not particularly respect the Times; it is like them, (or in especial like the bustling, energetic, money-making, money-spending classes of them,) and they are like it; but an Englishman of this sort will not feel bound to "look up to" the Times any more than to another Englishman of the same class. They reciprocally express each other, and with no obligation or claim to lofty regard on either side. When, therefore, one finds the Times abiding for a long while (which is not invariably its way) by one constant view of a question, one may be sure that it is supported in that view by an active, business-like, prominent, and probably even predominant body of its countrymen; but it by no means follows that the deeper convictions of the nation, its hearty sentiments of right, for which it would be prepared to do or die, are either represented or roused by the newspaper. The Times, during the American War, was cursed—or cursed its readers—with prophets, seers, and oracles, in its correspondents; and the prophecies turned out to be ridiculously wrong, the seeing to be purblindness, and the oracles to be gibberish. A more miserable exposure could not easily be cited; the most indignant American might afford to pity the Times, when, after four years of leonine roarings and lashings of tail, its roar sank into a whine, and its tail was clapped between its legs. The supremacy of the Times had already been sapped by the abolition of the British paper-duty, and the consequent starting of various penny-newspapers. If this *fiasco* does not gravely damage it, the reason can only, I suppose, be in the conformity of character and of impetus already pointed out between our average middle class and the Times. The Englishman whom the Times has misled for four years concerning the American struggle has a fellow-feeling for his Times even in the mortification of undeception; for this Englishman had never supposed that the Times, any more than himself, was actuated by profound political morality in the side it espoused—rather by personal proclivities, clamor, and "rule of thumb." And so, when the next great question arises, the Englishman may again make the Times his crony and confabulator, just as he would more likely, through general sympathy of notions and feelings, to take counsel with private acquaintances who had erred with him in predicting success to the South, rather than with those who had dissented from him in desire and expectation. Certainly, however, after all allowances made, the *prestige* of the Times must have received a perceptible shock. The other daily papers which I have named, along with the Times, as Southern partisans, represent divers sections of Liberalism; and there must be more than I am cognizant of to say in detail of their views of various phases and at various periods in the contest. The two Northerners, the Daily News and the Star, (the latter being specially connected with Mr. John Bright,) represent the more advanced section of Liberalism: no doubt their more thorough sympathy with the cause of the North was not unrelated to their more thorough sympathy with the political constitution and influences of the American Republic; and the same would be true of many private Northern adherents. In general, it may be said without much inexactness that the Northern advocates in the press belonged either to this section of Liberalism or to the "humanitarian" and "Evangelical" categories—those which distinctly uphold Abolitionism, "Aborigines-Protection," etc.; while the Southerners were recruited from all other classes,—Conservative, Liberal, and Liberal-Conservative. To this class one may perhaps assign the last two of the daily papers, the "Post" and the "Pall-Mall Gazette," the latter of which, however, was firmly on the side of the North; it only started during the final stages of the war,—a time when (be it said without any derogation from the sincerity

of the Pall-Mall Gazette) some other papers also would probably, from the aspect of the times, have been better inclined to take the same side, but for finding themselves already up to the armpits in Secessionism. Passing now to the weekly papers, of which we can name only two or three, we find the Conservative "Press," the Anglican-Clerical "Guardian" the "Examiner,"—a representative of a somewhat old-fashioned form of Liberalism or "Whiggery,"—and the caustic, Liberal-Conservative "Saturday Review," (already mentioned,) on the side of the South; the advanced Liberal "Spectator" on that of the North. It is a significant sign of the widespread Southernism in all grades of town-society, especially the young and exuberant, the man-about-town class, the club-men, the jolly young bachelors, the tavern-politicians, that *all* the "comic" papers were on that side,—not only the now almost "legitimated" "Punch,"[3] a staid grimalkin which has outgrown the petulances of kittenhood, or, as it has been well nicknamed erewhile, "The Jackall of the Times," but equally the more free-and-easy "Fun," the plebeian "Comic News," the fashionable "Owl," and the short-lived "Arrow." Among the magazines, the "Quarterly" and "Blackwood," with various others, not all of them colleagues of these two in strict Conservatism, were for the South; "Macmillan's Magazine," again an organ of the advanced and theoretic Liberalism, consistently for the North, so far as it could be considered to express aggregate, and not merely individual, views.

Of our leading writers, taken personally, Carlyle was of course against the North, and perhaps one may say on the side of the South, as shown by his epigram, "The American Iliad in a Nutshell,"—one of the few instances (if I may trust my own opinion concerning so great a genius) in which even his immense power of humor and pointed illustration has fallen flat and let off a firework which merely fizzed without flashing. Ruskin also would appear, from some occasional expressions in what he has published, to have adopted the same view; as, indeed, he very generally does "Carlylize" when Carlylean subject-matter engages his pen. For the North three of the most distinguished and resolute writers have been Mr. John Stuart Mill and Professors Cairnes and Goldwin Smith,—men on whose position and services in their own country to the Federal cause it is assuredly not for me to dilate.

Having thus far, to the best of my ability, sketched the varieties of English opinion concerning the great conflict, I must now endeavor to analyze somewhat more in detail the phases and motives of that large and powerful section of it which was hostile to the North. Something has been already said or implied on this matter as we proceeded; but it remains to be distinctly accounted for. If, at the time when England bestowed cheap tears upon the sorrows of Uncle Tom, cheap aristocratic homage upon Mrs. Stowe, and cheap or indeed gratis advice upon "American sisters," any American or Continental paper had prophesied (seeing farther into a millstone than Times prophets during the war) that the issues between Slavery and Abolition would, in a very few years, come to a tremendous crisis and not less tremendous arbitrament, and that the great majority of the most trained and influential British opinion would then be found on the side of the champions of Slavery, and against those of Abolition, the prediction would have been universally treated by Englishmen as an emanation and a proof of the most grovelling malignity, not less despicably silly than shamelessly calumnious. The time of trial came; and what no one would have ventured to suggest as conceivable proved to be the actual and positive truth. There must have been some deep-lying reason for this,—some reason which remained latent below the surface as long as the United States were regarded as one integral community, but which asserted itself as soon as Abolition and Slavery became identified, on the one hand, with national indivisibility, and, on the other, with disruption. It seems impossible to doubt, that, had the maintenance or the dissolution of slavery been the sole question, England would have continued true, without any noteworthy defection, to her traditions and professions reprobating slavery; and that, as

[3] Probably many of my American readers are aware that Punch, after doing its little best to make Lincoln ridiculous (which perhaps history will pronounce no easy job) throughout his administration, recanted as soon as he had been murdered, and made the *amende honorable* in terms as handsome as the case admitted of. It is one more instance of the mania which some writers have for saying ill-natured and unfair things, which they themselves must know to be not the real opinion which they would profess under circumstances when their *amour propre* becomes enlisted on the same side as candor.

she did not decisively so continue, other incentives must have intervened,—the cause being in fact tried upon a different issue. Wherefore? It is to that question that I now address myself.

Four motives appear to me to have been puissant in indisposing Englishmen to the Northerners. I speak generally of all such British men and women as sided with the South, and whom I imagine to have been not much less than half the whole number of those who took sides at all,—but more especially of the class in which Southern sympathy was the very prevalent rule, and Northern sympathy the scanty exception. This class comprehended the members of the leading professions, army, navy, church, and bar, the writers upon events of the day in newspapers and elsewhere, and, broadly speaking, the moneyed and leading social circles,—in short, "the upper classes"; and, to trust my own experience, not only these, but the great bulk of, at any rate, the professional middle class as well. For instance, in the Government office to which I belong, comprising some hundreds of *employés*, of whom a tolerable percentage are known to me, I can recollect only one person, besides myself, whom I knew to be decidedly for the North,—and he, by the by, is an Irishman. I have used above the term "the upper classes"; but I believe that the aristocracy, properly so called, was by no means so Southern as the society next below it. The first of the four motives in question is one in whose potency it gives me no pleasure to believe, but it was, I think, by far the most powerful of all. The English,[4] as a nation, dislike the Americans as a nation. This is a broad statement, which I make, because, as far as my powers and opportunities of observation extend, I believe it to be true; but I am quite prepared to find it contested, or summarily denied, by many of my countrymen,—the more, the better. The dislike, be it greater or less in fact, appears to me to rest upon two main foundations.

In the first place, the Englishman is a born Conservative, or, to use the old phrase, a Tory. Toryism is of two kinds,—political and social. The majority of the nation is certainly not, at the present day, Tory in political preferences, though there is still a large leaven of that feeling also. But very many persons who are political Liberals are social Tories: they venerate the aristocracy; they batten daily upon the "Court Circular"; they cling to class distinctions in theory, and still more in practice; they strain towards "good society" and social conformity; their ideal is "respectability." Indeed, it appears to me that comparatively very few English people are free from some tincture of Toryism in either political or social sentiment, or both: one knows many Radicals, some Democrats, and even a few theoretic Republicans; but it by no means follows that all or most of these are not Tories in grain, in some part of their mental or personal anatomy. A total revulsion in public and popular feeling would have to take place, before, for instance, such an institution as our House of Lords could be in any practical danger: no such revulsion appears to be within the purview of any one now living, even as a matter of opinion, much less of practical performance. I believe, that, if universal suffrage were to become the law of the land to-morrow, not much difference would ensue in the *personnel* or the tone of the House of Commons. It could hardly help ensuing, in the long run, by the inevitable reaction Of institutions upon the people who exercise or undergo them, and, with a changed House of Commons, much else would, no doubt, be changed; but there seems strong reason to doubt whether a democratic constituency would, in the earlier stages, produce a decisively democratic body of representatives. As regards English opinion upon the American dispute, nothing was commoner than the remark, that the Southerners were "the better gentlemen," or "represented the aristocratic element," and therefore commanded the speaker's good wishes in their struggle; and this not necessarily from members of the landed gentry, or from political anti-liberals, but equally from Liverpool merchants, or others of the middle class. The remark may have been true or incorrect,

[4] Of course I very often employ the term "English," as meaning "the natives of all or any parts of the United Kingdom," without making nice distinctions between English, Scotch, and Irish. Such is the case here. As a matter of fact, however, I presume that America and the Federal Government have found and find somewhat more sympathy in Scotland and Ireland than in England: the Scotch, spite of their "clannish" tendencies, have a certain democratic bias as well (chiefly, perhaps, evidenced and fostered by their religious organization); and the Irish, disaffected as they are towards England having so numerous and so close ties, through the emigration movement, with the United States.

—with that I have nothing to do; but it was very generally accepted in England as accurate, and represented a large body of consequent sympathy. In like manner, people were slow to believe in the possibility of Lincoln's competence for his post; because he rose from the populace to his great elevation, they inferred that he was a boor and a bungler, not (as might have seemed equally fair and rather more logical) that he was a capable man; and, with a foregone conclusion, they were quite ready to construe as blundering and grotesque that line of policy and conduct on his part, which, after a war of no immoderate length, resulted in the surmounting of obstacles which they had dubbed insurmountable.

This innate British temper—aristocratic, conservative, or Tory, whichever one may term it—is the first of the two foundations whereon English dislike of Americans appears to me to rest. The second is a natural, though assuredly not a laudable feeling,—the residual soreness left by our defeat in the old American War of Independence. Far be it from me to say that the English nation at large, or Englishmen individually, brood gloomily over that defeat, or, with active and conscious malignity, long for the desolation of their brothers in blood, language, and a common history. To say that would be as strained and exaggerated, and as contrary to British practicality and freedom from vengefulness, as to deny that some degree of soreness and distance remains would seem to me uncandid. Englishmen are quite ready to believe, and to light upon the casual evidences, that Frenchmen remember Waterloo, and would have no objection to wipe out the reminiscence upon occasion; and Frenchmen and Americans may probably perceive that like causes lead to like results in the Englishmen's own case, although the latter are less quick-sighted regarding that. There is, I apprehend, quite enough soreness on the subject to lead us to watch the career of the United States with jealousy, to take offence easily where the relative interests of both countries are concerned, to put the less favorable of two possible constructions upon American doings, and to feel as if, in any reverse which may happen to the States, a certain long-standing score of our own, which we did not clear off quite satisfactorily to ourselves, were in a round-about course of settlement.

It may perhaps be rejoined, "Even admitting what you have said as to British conservatism and soreness, and consequent dislike of Americans, this furnishes no reason why the more influential classes in England should have sided with Southern rather than Northern Americans." But I cannot acknowledge the force of the rejoinder. The United States are, like any other nation, represented by their Government, with which the Northern and Union section was in harmony, the Southern and Disunion section in conflict; indeed, the very fact of secession divided the South from the obnoxious entity, the United States, and so far ranged the South under the same banner with all other antagonists of the States and their Government. The anti-American might with perfect consistency plead for his Southernism, "Not that I disliked Carolina less, but that I disliked Massachusetts more." Besides, there was a very prevalent impression that the Southern Confederacy would be an essentially aristocratic commonwealth, as contrasted with the democratic Northern Union,—an impression which the peculiar conditions of society in the South would hardly have failed to justify to the full, had a cessation of the war allowed the Confederacy to develop internally, according to its own bias. Rumors were even rife of a possible monarchy; and leading Southerners were credited with the statement, that the best upshot of all, would popular prejudice in the South but allow of it, would be to import a king from the English royal family. Such rumors may have been fallacious, but they were not unacceptable to the British Tory. On the other hand, the disruption of the United States by the secession of the South was continually spoken of as "the breakdown of Democracy," or "the bubble of Democracy has burst." The experiment of a great federative republic—or, one might say, of a great republic, whether federative or otherwise—was held to have been tried, and to have broken down. The fact that there would be two republics, jointly coextensive with the original one, went for little, inasmuch as neither of the two could be as powerful as that one, and they would be divided by conflicting policy and interests, even if not engaged in active hostilities. All these considerations were not only powerful determinants to Southernism, but in themselves balm to the

conservative heart, and hardly less so to that overwhelming section of educated liberal opinion in this country, which, genuinely liberal though its politics may be according to the English standard, abhors all approach towards what is termed "Americanizing our institutions," and is fully as eager as the strictly conservative class to lay hold of any facts which may make monarchy appear a stable, and republicanism an unstable system. It was but a very short time before the fall of Richmond that I heard an Englishman, so far from anticipating the catastrophe of the South, repeat the threadbare augury of the Times and other journals, that the remaining Federal States would yet split up into a Western and an Eastern aggregation. The Cerberus of Democracy was to start his three heads off on three different roads, by that process common in many of the lower animal organisms, known to zoölogists as "fission"; and monarchists were fain to augur that very little of either bite or bark would be thereafter native to his jaws.

Such are the grounds on which I think that British conservatism and soreness produce a widely diffused feeling of national dislike to Americans, and that this dislike, beyond all other motives, indisposed multitudes to the Northern cause. Three other motives conducing to the same result remain to be analyzed.

Many Englishmen believe—as will have been abundantly apparent to Americans during the vicissitudes of the last few years—that the greatness of the United States involves a serious danger to England, whether in the projects upon Canada which are attributed to the States, or in other directions, such as that of naval power. It is no business of mine to discuss the validity of this belief, but simply to record it as one important motive why the success of the Federal Government was not desired. It is a substantial and a reasoned motive; and very few persons, whether in England or out of it, are so cosmopolite or calm-minded as to assume that the growth and aggrandizement of a foreign power, in its proportional relation to one's own nation, are matter for brotherly satisfaction and congratulation without *arrière pensée*, provided always that growth proceeds from internal conditions honorable to the foreigner, and not in themselves derogatory or offensive to the home-power. Few will heartily say, "Let our neighbors and competitors develop to their uttermost, and welcome; be it our sole care that we also develop to *our* uttermost. They shall run us as close as they like, and shall find that we do not mean to be run down." To say this might be an act of national Christianity; but it is not one which has ever been in very active exercise or popular repute. It may be observed, too, that, besides all other causes of national vigilance or jealousy, the Trent affair, at an early date in the war, brought the whole practical question very forcibly home to us; and though Englishmen almost unanimously, within the limits of my reading and hearing, protested that a rupture with the United States would be formidable and disabling only to that belligerent, (a point on which I ventured to fancy that British self-confidence might not have fathomed all the possibilities of Providence,) the crisis did not the less tend to rouse all our defensive and some of our aggressive instincts, and to weight the scales of public feeling against the North. The question of perils from American power then passed out of the region of mere theory, and became practical and imminent. The danger itself dispersed, indeed, as suddenly as it had come, but the impression remained.

Another motive for siding against the North was the abstract hatred of war, which has grown to be a very widespread and genuine feeling in England,—and, in my humble opinion, a most befitting and praiseworthy one,—active whenever we are in the position of outsiders, and overborne only when our own passions and real or supposed interests are involved. The great majority of the nation plunged headlong into the Russian War, and the grip of the British bull-dog's teeth upon his opponent was not easily loosed, even when good cause for loosing it appeared. We had no more notion of retiring from India in 1857, when the Indian mutineers used some cogency of material argument to make us do so, than we should have of retiring from Ireland, if a new Irish rebellion occurred; but when the question was merely that of breaking up a vast republic beyond the Atlantic in the interests of negro slavery, the horrors and wickedness of war were obvious and impressive to us. That historical phrase of General Scott's, "Wayward sisters, go in peace!" was very generally, and I think rightly, regarded

as expressing one of the points of view which might with honor, caution, and consistency have been acted upon, when the tremendous decision between peace and war had to be made. The opposite point of view was also tenable: it was adopted with overwhelming impulse by the Federal Government and the loyal States; and, having been carried out to a triumphant conclusion, may be admitted to have been the wisest and most patriotic, even by persons who (and I will not deny having been one of them from time to time during the war) were induced to doubt whether any cause, however equitable, and any object, however righteous and great, sufficed to justify the frightful devastation and carnage which their prosecution involved. If such doubts beset the adherents of the North, of course the view of the matter entertained by opponents of war in the abstract, who were also on the side of the South, was incomparably stronger in reprobation of this particular war. True, it might be urged, that the South, and not the North, both furnished the *casus belli*, and began the actual hostilities by the assault upon Fort Sumter; but it was not the cue of Southern partisans to admit that this internal action of certain sovereign States of the Union was of a nature to justify coercive war on the part of the North, while the fact that it rested with the North to decline or accept the challenge was patent to the friends of both belligerents. Thus, when the enormous magnitude and horrors of the war startled English onlookers, the odium, in the opinion of many, attached to the North: a view which, though it might not stand the test of strict investigation, or of a severe discussion of principles and provocations, was superficially maintainable, and not to be anyhow argued out of all plausibility. "The South is defensive, and the North aggressive," one disputant might say. "Yes," would be the reply, "at this stage of the contest; but ascend a step higher, and it is the South which made an aggression on the Union, and the North is defending that." "Still, the North might have abstained from defending it, and might have said, 'Wayward sisters, go in peace!'" "It might; but it saw good reason for saying the reverse." "Still, it might." This seems a fair enough statement of the case between North and South, so far as the mere question of fact as to responsibility for the war is concerned. Beyond this, one must go to the larger questions, whether any causes justify war, and whether this individual cause was one of them,—questions, as I have said, to which the English mind tends to return a negative answer, save when England herself is affected. The very men who could least see a pretext for a war by the Federal people against the seceded States were those who would most eagerly have rushed into a war to sustain the British claim in the Trent affair.

Lastly, there was a generous and an especially English motive for anti-Northern partisanship,—the feeling of sympathy with the weaker side, which was unmistakably the Southern; a generous motive, but not to be trusted too far in deciding between any two litigants. Besides the mere inferiority of strength, the splendid valor and enterprising spirit of the South stirred the British heart and blood, and commanded numberless good wishes; while, for some time after the first battle of Bull Run, a prejudice, not readily amenable to reasoning, clung around the Northern arms, and impeded many from doing full relative justice to the military temper and prowess of the Unionists. There was, moreover, a very widespread impression that the North was carrying on the war chiefly by means of mercenaries,—Germans, Irishmen, and "the offscourings of Europe," as the uncomplimentary phrase ran,—who enlisted for the sake of the bounty, and were equally prompt at exhibiting their indifferentism to the grave issues at stake and their blackguardism in dealing with the hostile populations. The Southerners, on the contrary, figured as a chivalrous territorial body driven to fight "for their hearths and homes," (I have even seen "their altars" in print,) waging a noble defensive war against preconcerted spoliation and despotism. To this moment, many people have phrases of the above sort upon their lips.

Then there were certain personal feelings which told powerfully in the same direction,—personal partly to the English as a nation, and partly to the more prominent actors in the war. The contrast between the American colonies of Great Britain throwing off their allegiance to the Old Country because they saw fit to do so for their own interests, and the government of the Federation of these same ex-colonies insisting that some of them, which in their turn see fit to break loose from

the Federal pact, shall not do so, under the alternative of war and the pains of treason,—this contrast is assuredly a glaring one; many people considered that it amounted to a positive anomaly,—not a few to a barefaced act of tyrannic apostasy. The personal feeling of the English people, their national *amour propre*, conspired to lead towards this harshest construction of the facts: it was so tempting to convict our old adversaries out of their own mouths, and make them, by the logic of events, read out either their recantation of the Colonial Revolution, or their self-condemnation for the Anti-Secession War. I have already explained to what extent these views appear to me to be tenable, and where their weak point lies: that both the insurrection of the colonies against England, and that of the South against the Federation,—both the repressive measures of England against the colonies, and of the Federation against the South,—were in themselves founded on an indefeasible right, and abstractly defensible; and that the "casting vote," (so to speak,) in both cases, depends, not upon any wordy denial of the right, but upon a thorough estimate of all the attendant conditions, and prominently of the "mights of man."

So far for one phase of the personal question. The other phase pertained to the character and the deeds of some leading actors in the war-drama. To most English apprehensions, *the* hero of the war, from an early stage of it up to his tragic death, was Stonewall Jackson, whose place was afterwards taken, in popular esteem, though not in coequal enthusiasm, by General Lee, both of them Southerners; while the *bête noire* of the story was General Butler, the Northerner. It would be futile to expound the reasons of this, patent as they are to everybody; or to inquire what deductions from the renown of Jackson and Lee, or what allowances for the position of Butler, a judicial review of the whole case would proclaim to be equitable. I will only remark here, that, as far as my observation extended, no one complained of Jackson, when it transpired that he had been resolutely in favor of refusing all quarter to Northern soldiers: a severity, not to say barbarism, which, be it right or wrong in itself, would undoubtedly have appeared to many atrocious enough, had it been the doctrine of any Northern general, and beside which the sternest measures of Butler look lax and conciliatory. In like manner, the terrible treatment of Northern prisoners, and the most savage act of war in the whole contest, the massacre at Fort Pillow,[5] seemed hardly to graze that delicate susceptibility of Southern partisans which was lashed into a white rage by a few words of printed proclamation from Butler's hand; the facts were either ignored, or dismissed as of secondary importance in the general conduct of the war. Of two other prime actors in the contest, President Davis and President Lincoln, the popular judgment seemed equally arbitrary. Of course each had his admirers among professed Southern or Northern adherents: it is not in that aspect that I speak of them for the moment, but rather as figures in the popular imagination. As such, Davis was credited with all the qualities of a powerful statesman; while Lincoln showed as a not ill-meaning, but grotesquely inadequate and misplaced oddity, a sort of mere accident of mob-favor, and made abundant mirth for the mirthful: how justly the event has perhaps demonstrated. Among the Northern generals, I think that the only one who became to some extent generally popular, though bitterly denounced in adverse quarters, was Sherman,—not only for the splendor and originality of his practical achievements, but for a certain incisive and peremptory realism in his administrative proceedings, which almost marked him with a touch of grim humor.

I have thus sought to account for the anti-Northern bias in a large number of my countrymen, by their dislike of the American nation and polity, arising partly from the remains of soreness left by past defeat,—by the jealousy of American power, as a practical danger,—by the hatred of war,—and by the sympathy for the gallant weaker combatant. I am compelled reluctantly to add, that the particular operation of these various influences reflects no credit upon British consistency of farsightedness. The conservative temper which stiffens Englishmen towards America was the very

[5] For American readers any confirmatory testimony as to this massacre is no doubt superfluous. But, in case these pages should obtain any English readers, I may perhaps be allowed to say that the fact of the massacre of the vanquished colored garrison has been attested to me. *vivâ voce*, by a Confederate, and still Secessionist, army surgeon, who witnessed it with his own eyes.

same which, in the interests of the moment, led them to justify violent revolutionary measures, and armed resistance to the constitutional and national majority. The greater the conservative, the greater the advocate of insurrection. In like manner, the English detestation of slavery was overwhelmed by sympathy for an "oppressed" community, whose oppression (apart from the much-paraded tariff and other such questions) consisted in a definite intimation that they would not henceforward be allowed to enlarge the area of slavery, and in a suspicion present to their own minds that even the existing area of that cherished institution would be narrowed, and finally reduced to nought,—expunged "as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down." The friends among us of constitutional liberty and of legality, the enemies of anarchy, the unseduced execrators of slavery, the upholders of the tie of brotherhood across the Atlantic, may well look back with shame to the time—and it was no matter of days or weeks, but a period of about four years together—when the loudest and most accepted voices in England exulted over the now ludicrously delusive proposition that the United States were a burst bubble, and slavery the irremovable corner-stone of an empire. It may be a lesson to nations against the indulgence in rancor, the abnegation of the national conscience, and the dear delight of prophesying one's own likings. "Now, therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee."

The collapse of the South came at last; and nearly at the same moment came the murder of a man whose modesty, integrity, firmness, single-minded persistency, unresentfulness, and substantial truth of judgment have been invested by his fate with an almost sacred depth of interest and significance,—President Lincoln. Amid the many momentous bearings of these events, it is for me to note only one of comparative unimportance,—the effect which they produced upon English public opinion. There was, I think, a certain good-fortune for Southern sympathizers, in the fact that the announcement of Lincoln's death almost synchronized with that of the surrender of the Confederate armies. After so many confident anticipations and loud predictions of a Southern triumph, so many denunciations of the policy, acts, and leaders of the North, these sympathizers found themselves in a sort of cul-de-sac when Richmond had been taken. Lee had yielded, Johnston was yielding, and the very same "butcher" Grant, "ruthless" Sherman, and "Yahoo" Lincoln, whose savageries and imbecilities had been the theme of annual moral-pointing, were reading the world a lesson of moderation and self-forgetfulness in victory, such as almost seemed to shrink from the plentitude of a triumph which was a humiliation to some of their countrymen. The sympathizers found that they were and had long been of the party in evil odor with that modern "Providence which sides with the stronger battalions," not to speak of the older "God of Battles." They were pulled up sharp in the direction they had been going in, and the alternative of turning right round and retracing their steps was a very awkward and unwelcome one. The assassination of Lincoln came to their relief. They could join, without insincerity, in the burst of public feeling which that terrible deed excited; could merge their protests against Lincoln in the established unwillingness to say evil of the dead; could give momentary pause to national and political considerations, beside the grave of one preëminent citizen; and could start afresh afterwards, with a new situation, and a new chief figure in it to contemplate. President Johnson had taken the place of President Lincoln, and had, at the hands of many of Lincoln's vituperators, succeeded to an inheritance of the abuse lavished upon him. Neither caution nor moderation had been learned by some, suitable as were the circumstances of Lincoln's death for teaching the lesson. Of late, however, I have observed symptoms of a decided change in this respect: the policy of President Johnson being recognized as broad, generous, resolute, and auspicious of the best results. I think this feeling, and a general sentiment of respect and good-will for the United States, promise to grow rapidly and powerfully among my countrymen,—who, true once again to their conservative instincts, will look with a certain regard upon a nation which can show those elements of solidity and "respectability," a tremendous past war, and a heavy national debt, with augmented authority in the central government. John Bull's ill-humor against the "Yankees" has been in vigorous exercise these four years, and has assumed fair latitude for growling itself out: it has been palpably

wrong in some of its inferences; for the bubble of Democracy has *not* burst, nor the Republic been split up into two or three federations, nor the abolition of slavery been a mere pretext and hypocrisy. Englishmen, with their practical turn, and candid frankness towards those to whom they have done less than right, may be expected in the future to look upon the States with a degree of confidence and cordiality long deplorably absent. The events of the war have, in the long run, compelled even the hostile party to respect the Unionists and their government: the plague of slavery is fast going, and, with its disappearance, will relieve Englishmen from either (as they used to do) reprobating the Americans as abettors of and trucklers to the barbaric institution, or else (as they have been doing of late) from inventing half-sincere excuses for that same institution, to subserve partisan feelings. As matters stand at present in the United States, there appears to be only one contingency which would again rouse into a fierce flame the glowing embers of pro-Southern sentiment among Englishmen, and restore Southerners to the position of angels of light, and Northerners to that of angels of darkness, in British imaginations. This contingency is harshness in the treatment and trial of ex-President Davis, and more especially his execution as a traitor. Southern sympathizers declare that such a proceeding would be an abominable crime: the steadiest, most thorough, and most confiding adherents of the North believe, that, whatever else it might be, it would, at any rate, be most deplorable,—an ugly blight-spot upon laurels won arduously and gloriously, and as yet nobly worn.

I have now, in however cursory or limping a mode, gone over the ground I proposed to cover. The main conclusion of all may be summarized in the briefest terms thus. A slight majority of the whole British nation probably sided with the North, and that chiefly on anti-slavery grounds: a great majority of the more influential classes, certainly, sided with the South, and that chiefly on general grounds of antagonism to the United States. For anything I have said which may possibly sound egotistic or intrusive,—still more for anything erroneous or unfair in my statements or point of view,—I must commit myself to the candid construction of my reader, be he American or English, be he on the same side of the question as myself, or on the opposite one.

W. M. Rosetti.

TWO PICTURES

In sky and wave the white clouds swam,
And the blue hills of Nottingham
Through gaps of leafy green
Across the lake were seen,—

When, in the shadow of the ash
That dreams its dream in Attitash,
In the warm summer weather,
Two maidens sat together.

They sat and watched in idle mood
The gleam and shade of lake and wood,—
The beach the keen light smote,
The white sail of a boat,—

Swan flocks of lilies shoreward lying,
In sweetness, not in music, dying,—
Hardhack and virgin's-bower,
And white-spiked clethra-flower.

With careless ears they heard the plash
And breezy wash of Attitash,
The wood-bird's plaintive cry,
The locust's sharp reply.

And teased the while, with playful hand,
The shaggy dog of Newfoundland,
Whose uncouth frolic spilled
Their baskets berry-filled.

Then one, the beauty of whose eyes
Was evermore a great surprise,
Tossed back her queenly head,
And, lightly laughing, said,—

"No bridegroom's hand be mine to hold
That is not lined with yellow gold;
I tread no cottage-floor;
I own no lover poor.

"My love must come on silken wings,
With bridal lights of diamond rings,—
Not foul with kitchen smirch,
With tallow-dip for torch."

The other, on whose modest head
Was lesser dower of beauty shed,
With look for home-hearths meet,
And voice exceeding sweet,

Answered,—"We will not rivals be;
Take thou the gold, leave love to me;
Mine be the cottage small,
And thine the rich man's hall.

"I know, indeed, that wealth is good;
But lowly roof and simple food,
With love that hath no doubt,
Are more than gold without."

Behind the wild grape's tangled screen,
Beholding them, himself unseen,
A young man, straying near,
The maidens chanced to hear.

He saw the pride of beauty born,
He heard the red lips' words of scorn;
And, like a silver bell,
That sweet voice answering well.

"Why trust," he said, "my foolish eyes?
My ear has pierced the fair disguise;
Who seeks my gold, not me,
My bride shall never be."

The supreme hours unnoted come;
Unfelt the turning tides of doom;
And so the maids laughed on,
Nor dreamed what Fate had done:

Nor knew the step was Destiny's
That rustled in the birchen trees,
As, with his life forecast
Anew, the listener passed.

Erelong by lake and rivulet side
The summer roses paled and died,
And Autumn's fingers shed
The maple's leaves of red.

Through the long gold-hazed afternoon,
Alone, but for the diving loon,
The partridge in the brake,
The black duck on the lake,

Beneath the shadow of the ash
Sat man and maid by Attitash;
And earth and air made room
For human hearts to bloom.

Soft spread the carpets of the sod,
And scarlet-oak and golden-rod
With blushes and with smiles
Lit up the forest aisles.

The mellow light the lake aslant,
The pebbled margin's ripple-chant
Attempered and low-toned,
The tender mystery owned.

And through the dream the lovers dreamed
Sweet sounds stole in and soft lights streamed;
The sunshine seemed to bless,
The air was a caress.

Not she who lightly scoffed was there,
With jewels in her midnight hair,
Her dark, disdainful eyes,
And proud lips worldly-wise;

But she who could for love dispense
With all its gilded accidents,
And trust her heart alone,
Found love and gold her own.

THE FREEDMAN'S STORY

IN TWO PARTS

PART I

The manuscript of the following pages has been handed to me with the request that I would revise it for publication, or weave its facts into a story which should show the fitness of the Southern black for the exercise of the right of suffrage.

It is written in a fair, legible hand; its words are correctly spelled; its facts are clearly stated, and—in most instances—its sentences are properly constructed. Therefore it needs no revision. On reading it over carefully, I also discover that it is in itself a stronger argument for the manhood of the negro than any which could be adduced by one not himself a freedman; for it is the argument of facts, and facts are the most powerful logic. Therefore, if I were to imbed these facts in the mud of fiction, I should simply oblige the reader to dredge for the oyster, which in this narrative he has without the trouble of dredging, fresh and juicy as it came from the hand of Nature,—or rather, from the hand of one of Nature's noblemen,—and who, until he was thirty years of age, had never put two letters together.

The narrative is a plain and unpretending account of the life of a man whose own right arm —to use his own expression—won his rights as a freeman. It is written with the utmost simplicity, and has about it the verisimilitude which belongs to truth, and to truth only when told by one who has been a doer of the deeds and an actor in the scenes which he describes. It has the further rare merit of being written by one of the "despised race"; for none but a negro can fully and correctly depict negro life and character.

General Thomas—a Southern man, and a friend of the Southern negro—was once in conversation with a gentleman who has attained some reputation as a delineator of the black man, when a long, lean, "poor white man," then a scout in the Union army, approached the latter, and, giving his shoulder a familiar slap, accosted him with,—

"How are you, ole feller?"

The gentleman turned about, and forgetting, in his joy at meeting an old friend, the presence of this most dignified of our military men, responded to the salutation of the scout in an equally familiar and boisterous manner. General Thomas "smiled wickedly," and quietly remarked,—

"You seem to know each other."

"Know *him*!" exclaimed the scout. "Why, Gin'ral, I ha'n't seed him fur fourteen year; but I sh'u'd know him, ef his face war as black as it war one night when we went ter a nigger shindy tergether!"

The gentleman colored up to the roots of his hair, and stammered out,—

"That was in my boy days, General, when I was sowing my wild oats."

"Don't apologize, Sir," answered the General, "don't apologize; for I see that to your youthful habit of going to negro shindies we owe your truthful pictures of negro life."

And the General was right. Every man and woman who has essayed to depict the slave character has miserably failed, unless inoculated with the genuine spirit of the negro; and even those who have succeeded best have done only moderately well, because they have not had the negro nature. It is reserved to some black Shakspeare or Dickens to lay open the wonderful humor, pathos, poetry, and power which slumber in the negro's soul, and which now and then flash out like the fire from a thunder-cloud.

I do not mean to say that this black prophet has come in this narrative. He has not. This man is a doer, not a writer; though he gives us—particularly in the second part—touches of Nature, and little bits of description, which are perfectly inimitable. The prophet is still to come; and he *will* come. God never gives great events without great historians; and for all the patience and valor and heroic fortitude and self-sacrifice and long-suffering of the black man in this war, there will come a singer—and a black singer—who shall set his deeds to a music that will thrill the nations.

But I am holding the reader at the threshold.

The author of this narrative—of every line in it—is William Parker. He was an escaped slave, and the principal actor in the Christiana riot,—an occurrence which cost the Government of the United States fifty thousand dollars, embittered the relations of two "Sovereign States," aroused the North to the danger of the Fugitive-Slave Law, and, more than any other event, except the raid of John Brown, helped to precipitate the two sections into the mighty conflict which has just been decided on the battle-field.

Surely the man who aided towards such results must be a man, even if his complexion be that of the ace of spades; and what he says in relation to the events in which he was an actor, even if it have no romantic interest,—which, however, it has to an eminent degree,—must be an important contribution to the history of the time.

With these few remarks, I submit the evidence which he gives of the manhood of his race to that impartial grand-jury, the American people. E. K.

EARLY PLANTATION LIFE

I was born opposite to Queen Anne, in Anne Arundel County, in the State of Maryland, on a plantation called Rowdown. My master was Major William Brogdon, one of the wealthy men of that region. He had two sons,—William, a doctor, and David, who held some office at Annapolis, and for some years was a member of the Legislature.

My old master died when I was very young; so I know little about him, except from statements received from my fellow-slaves, or casual remarks made in my hearing from time to time by white persons. From those I conclude that he was in no way peculiar, but should be classed with those slaveholders who are not remarkable either for the severity or the indulgence they extend to their people.

My mother, who was named Louisa Simms, died when I was very young; and to my grandmother I am indebted for the very little kindness I received in my early childhood; and this kindness could only be shown me at long intervals, and in a hurried way, as I shall presently show.

Like every Southern plantation of respectable extent and pretensions, our place had what is called the "Quarter," or place where the slaves of both sexes are lodged and fed. With us the Quarter was composed of a number of low buildings, with an additional building for single people and such of the children as were either orphans or had parents sold away or otherwise disposed of. This building was a hundred feet long by thirty wide, and had a large fireplace at either end, and small rooms arranged along the sides. In these rooms the children were huddled from day to day, the smaller and weaker subject to the whims and caprices of the larger and stronger. The largest children would always seize upon the warmest and best places, and say to us who were smaller, "Stand back, little chap, out of my way"; and we had to stand back or get a thrashing.

When my grandmother, who was cook at the "great house," came to look after me, she always brought me a morsel privately; and at such times I was entirely free from annoyance by the older ones. But as she could visit me only once in twenty-four hours, my juvenile days enjoyed but little rest from my domineering superiors in years and strength.

When my grandmother would inquire of the others how her "little boy" was getting on, they would tell her that I was doing well, and kindly invite me to the fire to warm myself. I was afraid to

complain to her of their treatment, as, for so doing, they would have beaten me, after she had gone to the "great house" again. I was thus compelled to submit to their misrepresentation, as well as to their abuse and indifference, until I grew older, when, by fighting first with one and then with another, I became "too many" for them, and could have a seat at the fire as well as the best. This experience of my boyhood has since been repeated in my manhood. My rights at the fireplace were won by my child-fists; my rights as a freeman were, under God, secured by my own right arm.

Old master had seventy slaves, mostly field-hands. My mother was a field-hand. He finally died; but after that everything went on as usual for about six years, at the end of which time the brothers, David and William, divided the land and the slaves. Then, with many others, including my brother and uncle, it fell to my lot to go with Master David, who built a house on the southeast part of the farm and called it Nearo.

Over the hands at Nearo an overseer name Robert Brown was placed; but as he was liked by neither master nor slaves, he was soon discharged. The following circumstance led to his dismissal sooner, perhaps, than it would otherwise have happened.

While master was at Annapolis, my mistress, who was hard to please, fell out with one of the house-servants, and sent for Mr. Brown to come and whip her. When he came, the girl refused to be whipped, which angered Brown, and he beat her so badly that she was nearly killed before she gave up. When Master David came home, and saw the girl's condition, he became very angry, and turned Brown away at once.

Master David owned a colored man named Bob Wallace. He was a trusty man; and as he understood farming thoroughly, he was installed foreman in place of Brown. Everything went on very well for a while under Wallace, and the slaves were as contented as it is possible for slaves to be.

Neither of our young masters would allow his hands to be beaten or abused, as many slaveholders would; but every year they sold one or more of them,—sometimes as many as six or seven at a time. One morning word was brought to the Quarter that we should not work that day, but group to the "great house." As we were about obeying the summons, a number of strange white men rode up to the mansion. They were Negro-traders. Taking alarm, I ran away to the woods with a boy of about my own age, name Levi Storax; and there we remained until the selections for the sale were made, and the traders drove away. It was a serious time while they remained. Men, women, and children, all were crying, and general confusion prevailed. For years they had associated together in their rude way,—the old counseling the young, recounting their experience, and sympathizing in their trials; and now, without a word of warning, and for no fault of their own, parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, were separated to meet no more on earth. A slave sale of this sort is always as solemn as a funeral, and partakes of its nature in one important particular,—the meeting no more in the flesh.

Levi and I climbed a pine-tree, when we got to the woods, and had this conversation together.

"Le," I said to him, "our turn will come next; let us run away, and not be sold like the rest."

"If we can only get clear this time," replied Le, "may-be they won't sell us. I will go to Master William, and ask him not to do it."

"What will you get by going to Master William?" I asked him. "If we see him, and ask him not to sell us, he will do as he pleases. For my part, I think the best thing is to run away to the Free States."

"But," replied Levi, "see how many start for the Free States, and are brought back, and sold away down South. We could not be safe this side of Canada, and we should freeze to death before we got there."

So ended our conversation. I must have been about ten or eleven years old then; yet, young as I was, I had heard of Canada as the land far away in the North, where the runaway was safe from pursuit; but, to my imagination, it was a vast and cheerless waste of ice and snow. So the reader can readily conceive of the effect of Levi's remarks. They were a damper upon our flight for the time being.

When night came, Levi wanted to go home and see if they had sold his mother; but I did not care about going back, as I had no mother to sell. How desolate I was! No home, no protector, no mother, no attachments. As we turned our faces toward the Quarter,—where we might at any moment be sold to satisfy a debt or replenish a failing purse,—I felt myself to be what I really was, a poor, friendless slave-boy. Levi was equally sad. His mother was not sold, but she could afford him no protection.

To the question, "Where had we been?" we answered, "Walking around." Then followed inquiries and replies as to who were sold, who remained, and what transpired at the sale.

Said Levi,—

"Mother, were you sold?"

"No, child; but a good many were sold; among them, your Uncles Anthony and Dennis."

I said,—

"Aunt Ruthy, did they sell Uncle Sammy?"

"No, child."

"Where, then, is Uncle Sammy?"

I thought, if I could be with Uncle Sammy, may-be I would be safe. My Aunt Rachel, and her two children, Jacob and Priscilla, were among the sold, who altogether comprised a large number of the servants.

The apologist for slavery at the North, and the owner of his fellow-man at the South, have steadily denied that the separation of families, except for punishment, was perpetrated by Southern masters; but my experience of slavery was, that separation by sale was a part of the system. Not only was it resorted to by severe masters, but, as in my own case, by those generally regarded as mild. No punishment was so much dreaded by the refractory slave as selling. The atrocities known to be committed on plantations in the Far South, tidings of which reached the slave's ears in various ways, his utter helplessness upon the best farms and under the most humane masters and overseers, in Maryland and other Northern Slave States, together with the impression that the journey was of great extent, and comfortless even to a slave, all combined to make a voyage down the river or down South an era in the life of the poor slave to which he looked forward with the most intense and bitter apprehension and anxiety.

This slave sale was the first I had ever seen. The next did not occur until I was thirteen years old; but every year, during the interval, one or more poor souls were disposed of privately.

Levi, my comrade, was one of those sold in this interval. Well may the good John Wesley speak of slavery as the sum of all villanies; for no resort is too despicable, no subterfuge too vile, for its supporters. Is a slave intractable, the most wicked punishment is not too severe; is he timid, obedient, attached to his birthplace and kindred, no lie is so base that it may not be used to entrap him into a change of place or of owners. Levi was made the victim of a stratagem so peculiarly Southern, and so thoroughly the outgrowth of an institution which holds the bodies and souls of men as of no more account, for all moral purposes, than the unreasoning brutes, that I cannot refrain from relating it. He was a likely lad, and, to all appearance, fully in the confidence of his master. Prompt and obedient, he seemed to some of us to enjoy high favor at the "great house." One morning he was told to take a letter to Mr. Henry Hall, an acquaintance of the family; and it being a part of his usual employment to bring and carry such missives, off he started, in blind confidence, to learn at the end of his journey that he had parted with parents, friends, and all, to find in Mr. Hall a new master. Thus, in a moment, his dearest ties were severed.

I met him about two months afterwards at the Cross-Road Meeting-House, on West River; and, after mutual recognition, I said to him,—

"Levi, why don't you come home?"

"I am at home," said he; "I was sold by Master William to Mr. Henry Hall."

He then told me about the deception practised upon him. I thought that a suitable opportunity to remind him of our conversation when up the pine-tree, years before, and said,—

"You told me, that, if you could escape the big sale, Master William would not sell you. Now you see how it was: the big sale was over, and yet you were sold to a worse master than you had before. I told you this would be so. The next time I hear from you, you will be sold again. Master Mack will be selling me one of these days, no doubt; but if he does, he will have to do it running."

Here ended our conversation and our association, as it was not in our power to meet afterward.

The neighbors generally called Master David, Mack, which was one of his Christian names; and the slaves called him Master Mack; so the reader will understand, that, whenever that name occurs, Master David is meant.

After the sale of Levi, I became greatly attached to Alexander Brown, another slave. Though not permitted to learn to read and write, and kept in profound ignorance of everything, save what belonged strictly to our plantation duties, we were not without crude perceptions of the dignity and independence belonging to freedom; and often, when out of hearing of the white people, or certain ones among our fellow-servants, Alexander and I would talk the subject over in our simple way.

Master Mack had a very likely young house-servant named Ann. She was between sixteen and eighteen years old; every one praised her intelligence and industry; but these commendable characteristics did not save her. She was sold next after Levi. Master told the foreman, Bob Wallace, to go to Annapolis, and take Ann with him. When Wallace told me he was going, I had a presentiment that the purpose was to sell the girl, and I told him so; but, man as he was, he had no fear about it. Wallace and Ann started for the city on horseback, and journeyed along pleasantly until they reached the town and were near the market-place, when a man came up to them, took Ann off the horse without ceremony, and put her into jail. Wallace, not suspecting the man[oe]uvre, attacked the man, and came well-nigh getting into difficulty. When Wallace returned, he said to Master Mack, "Why did you not tell me that Ann was sold, and not have me fighting for her? They might have put me in jail." But his master did not appear to hear him.

Poor Uncle Henry followed Ann. His wife lived in Annapolis, and belonged to a Mr. George McNear, residing there. Uncle Henry went one Saturday night to see her, when Master William put him into jail for sale; and that was the last we saw or heard of him.

Alex Brown's mother followed next. After the poor woman was gone, I said to Alex,—

"Now that your mother has been sold, it is time that you and I studied out a plan to run away and be free."

But so thoroughly had his humanity been crushed by the foul spirit of Slavery, so apathetic had he—though in the vigor of youth—become from long oppression, that he would not agree to my suggestion.

"No," he said, "'t is no use for you and I to run away. It is too far to the Free States. We could not get there. They would take us up and sell us; so we had better not go. Master Mack can't sell any more of his hands; there are no more than can carry on his farm."

"Very well," said I, "trust to that, and you will see what will come of it."

After that I said no more to him, but determined to be free. My brother Charles was of like mind; but we kept our thoughts to ourselves. How old I was then I do not know; but from what the neighbors told me, I must have been about seventeen. Slaveholders are particular to keep the pedigree and age of favorite horses and dogs, but are quite indifferent about the age of their servants, until they want to purchase. Then they are careful to select young persons, though not one in twenty can tell year, month, or day. Speaking of births,—it is the time of "corn-planting," "corn-husking," "Christmas," "New Year," "Easter," "the Fourth of July," or some similar indefinite date. My own time of birth was no more exact; so that to this day I am uncertain how old I am.

About the time of the conversation last narrated, Jefferson Dorsey, a planter near by, had a butchering. One of Dorsey's men met me, and said that they wanted more help, and that Master Mack said I might go and lend a hand. Thinking that he spoke truth, I did not ask permission, but went, and stayed until noon. I soon learned, however, that the man had deceived me.

Master Mack, when told by some of the people where I was, sent my brother John after me, with the threat of a whipping. On reaching home, the women also told me that master would almost kill me. This excited me greatly, and I replied,—

"Master Mack is 'most done whipping me."

When I went in to see him, I saw plainly enough that his face foretold a storm.

"Boy," said he, "yoke up the oxen, and haul a load of wood."

I went at once, and did the task; but, to my dismay, there he stood at the stable. I had to drive near to him; and as he evidently intended to catch me, I was all vigilance.

"When you unload that wood, come to me, Sir," he said.

I made no reply, but unloaded the wood, left the oxen standing, and stole away to Dorsey's, where I staid until the next day. Then I prevailed upon Samuel Dorsey to go home with me. Master Mack told me to go to my work, and he would forgive me; but the next time he would pay me for "the new and the old." To work I went; but I determined not to be paid for "the new and the old."

This all occurred in the month of May. Everything went on well until June, when the long-sought-for opportunity presented itself. I had been making preparations to leave ever since Master Mack had threatened me; yet I did not like to go without first having a difficulty with him. Much as I disliked my condition, I was ignorant enough to think that something besides the fact that I was a slave was necessary to exonerate me from blame in running away. A cross word, a blow, a good fright, anything, would do, it mattered not whence nor how it came. I told my brother Charles, who shared my confidence, to be ready; for the time was at hand when we should leave Old Maryland forever. I was only waiting for the first crooked word from my master.

A few days afterwards all hands were ordered to the fields to work; but I stayed behind, lurking about the house. I was tired of working without pay. Master Mack saw me, and wanted to know why I did not go out. I answered, that it was raining, that I was tired, and did not want to work. He then picked up a stick used for an ox-gad, and said, if I did not go to work, he would whip me as sure as there was a God in heaven. Then he struck at me; but I caught the stick, and we grappled, and handled each other roughly for a time, when he called for assistance. He was badly hurt. I let go my hold, bade him good-bye, and ran for the woods. As I went by the field, I beckoned to my brother, who left work, and joined me at a rapid pace.

I was now at the beginning of a new and important era in my life. Although upon the threshold of manhood, I had, until the relation with my master was sundered, only dim perceptions of the responsibilities of a more independent position. I longed to cast off the chains of servitude, because they chafed my free spirit, and because I had a notion that my position was founded in injustice; but it has only been since a struggle of many years, and, indeed, since I settled upon British soil, that I have realized fully the grandeur of my position as a free man.

One fact, when I was a slave, often filled me with indignation. There were many poor white lads of about my own age, belonging to families scattered around, who were as poor in personal effects as we were; and yet, though our companions, (when we chose to tolerate them,) they did not have to be controlled by a master, to go and come at his command, to be sold for his debts, or whenever he wanted extra pocket-money. The preachers of a slave-trading gospel frequently told us, in their sermons, that we should be "good boys," and not break into master's hen-roost, nor steal his bacon; but they never told this to these poor white people, although they knew very well that they encouraged the slaves to steal, trafficked in stolen goods, and stole themselves.

Why this difference? I felt I was the equal of these poor whites, and naturally I concluded that we were greatly wronged, and that all this talk about obedience, duty, humility, and honesty was, in the phrase of my companions, "all gammon."

But I was now on the high-road to liberty. I had broken the bonds that held me so firmly; and now, instead of fears of recapture, that before had haunted my imagination whenever I thought of running away, I felt as light as a feather, and seemed to be helped onward by an irresistible force.

Some time before this, I had been able, through the instrumentality of a friend, to procure a pass, for which I paid five dollars,—all the money I had saved in a long time; but as my brother determined to go with me, and as we could not both use it safely, I destroyed it.

On the day I ceased working for master, after gaining the woods, we lurked about and discussed our plans until after dark. Then we stole back to the Quarter, made up our bundles, bade some of our friends farewell, and at about nine o'clock of the night set out for Baltimore. How shall I describe my first experience of free life? Nothing can be greater than the contrast it affords to a plantation experience, under the suspicious and vigilant eye of a mercenary overseer or a watchful master. Day and night are not more unlike. The mandates of Slavery are like leaden sounds, sinking with dead weight into the very soul, only to deaden and destroy. The impulse of freedom lends wings to the feet, buoys up the spirit within, and the fugitive catches glorious glimpses of light through rifts and seams in the accumulated ignorance of his years of oppression. How briskly we travelled on that eventful night and the next day!

We reached Baltimore on the following evening, between seven and eight o'clock. When we neared the city, the patrols were out, and the difficulty was to pass them unseen or unsuspected. I learned of a brick-yard at the entrance to the city; and thither we went at once, took brick-dust and threw it upon our clothes, hats, and boots, and then walked on. Whenever we met a passer-by, we would brush off some of the dust, and say aloud, "Boss gave us such big tasks, we would leave him. We ought to have been in a long time before." By this ruse we reached quiet quarters without arrest or suspicion.

We remained in Baltimore a week, and then set out for Pennsylvania.

We started with the brightest visions of future independence; but soon they were suddenly dimmed by one of those unpleasant incidents which annoy the fugitive at every step of his onward journey.

The first place at which we stopped to rest was a village on the old York road, called New Market. There nothing occurred to cause us alarm; so, after taking some refreshments, we proceeded towards York; but when near Logansville, we were interrupted by three white men, one of whom, a very large man, cried,—

"Hallo!"

I answered,—

"Hallo to you!"

"Which way are you travelling?" he asked.

We replied,—

"To Little York."

"Why are you travelling so late?"

"We are not later than you are," I answered.

"Your business must be of consequence," he said.

"It is. We want to go to York to attend to it; and if you have any business, please attend to it, and don't be meddling with ours on the public highway. We have no business with you, and I am sure you have none with us."

"See here!" said he; "you are the fellows that this advertisement calls for," at the same time taking the paper out of his pocket, and reading it to us.

Sure enough, there we were, described exactly. He came closely to us, and said,—

"You must go back."

I replied,—

"If I must, I must, and you must take me."

"Oh, you need not make any big talk about it," he answered; "for I have taken back many a runaway, and I can take you. What's that you have in your hand?"

"A stick."

He put his hand into his pocket, as if to draw a pistol, and said,—

"Come! give up your weapons."

I said again,—

"'Tis only a stick."

He then reached for it, when I stepped back and struck him a heavy blow on the arm. It fell as if broken; I think it was. Then he turned and ran, and I after him. As he ran, he would look back over his shoulder, see me coming, and then run faster, and halloo with all his might. I could not catch him, and it seemed, that, the longer he ran, the faster he went. The other two took to their heels at the first alarm,—thus illustrating the valor of the chivalry!

At last I gave up the chase. The whole neighborhood by that time was aroused, and we thought best to retrace our steps to the place whence we started. Then we took a roundabout course until we reached the railroad, along which we travelled. For a long distance there was unusual stir and commotion. Every house was lighted up; and we heard people talking and horses galloping this way and that way, with other evidences of unusual excitement. This was between one and two o'clock in the morning. We walked on a long distance before we lost the sounds; but about four o'clock the same morning, entered York, where we remained during the day.

Once in York, we thought we should be safe, but were mistaken. A similar mistake is often made by fugitives. Not accustomed to travelling, and unacquainted with the facilities for communication, they think that a few hours' walk is a long journey, and foolishly suppose, that, if they have few opportunities of knowledge, their masters can have none at all at such great distances. But our ideas of security were materially lessened when we met with a friend during the day, who advised us to proceed farther, as we were not out of imminent danger.

According to this advice we started that night for Columbia. Going along in the dark, we heard persons following. We went very near to the fence, that they might pass without observing us. There were two, apparently in earnest conversation. The one who spoke so as to be distinctly heard we discovered to be Master Mack's brother-in-law. He remarked to his companion that they must hurry and get to the bridge before we crossed. He knew that we had not gone over yet. We were then near enough to have killed them, concealed as we were by the darkness; but we permitted them to pass unmolested, and went on to Wrightsville that night.

The next morning we arrived at Columbia before it was light, and fortunately without crossing the bridge, for we were taken over in a boat. At Wrightsville we met a woman with whom we were before acquainted, and our meeting was very gratifying. We there inclined to halt for a time.

I was not used to living in town, and preferred a home in the country; so to the country we decided to go. After resting for four days, we started towards Lancaster to try to procure work. I got a place about five miles from Lancaster, and then set to work in earnest.

While a slave, I was, as it were, groping in the dark, no ray of light penetrating the intense gloom surrounding me. My scanty garments felt too tight for me, my very respiration seemed to be restrained by some supernatural power. Now, free as I supposed, I felt like a bird on a pleasant May morning. Instead of the darkness of slavery, my eyes were almost blinded by the light of freedom.

Those were memorable days, and yet much of this was boyish fancy. After a few years of life in a Free State, the enthusiasm of the lad materially sobered down, and I found, by bitter experience, that to preserve my stolen liberty I must pay, unremittingly, an almost sleepless vigilance; yet to this day I have never looked back regretfully to Old Maryland, nor yearned for her flesh-pots.

I have said I engaged to work; I hired my services for three months for the round sum of three dollars per month. I thought this an immense sum. Fast work was no trouble to me; for when the work was done, the money was mine. That was a great consideration. I could go out on Saturdays and Sundays, and home when I pleased, without being whipped. I thought of my fellow-servants left behind, bound in the chains of slavery,—and I was free! I thought, that, if I had the power, they

should soon be as free as I was; and I formed a resolution that I would assist in liberating every one within my reach at the risk of my life, and that I would devise some plan for their entire liberation.

My brother went about fifteen miles farther on, and also got employment. I "put in" three months with my employer, "lifted" my wages, and then went to visit my brother. He lived in Bart Township, near Smyrna; and after my visit was over, I engaged to work for a Dr. Dengy, living nearby. I remained with him thirteen months. I never have been better treated than by the Doctor; I liked him and the family, and they seemed to think well of me.

While living with Dr. Dengy, I had, for the first time, the great privilege of seeing that true friend of the slave, William Lloyd Garrison, who came into the neighborhood, accompanied by Frederick Douglass. They were holding anti-slavery meetings. I shall never forget the impression that Garrison's glowing words made upon me. I had formerly known Mr. Douglass as a slave in Maryland; I was therefore not prepared for the progress he then showed,—neither for his free-spoken and manly language against slavery. I listened with the intense satisfaction that only a refugee could feel, when hearing, embodied in earnest, well-chosen, and strong speech, his own crude ideas of freedom, and his own hearty censure of the man-stealer. I believed, I knew, every word he said was true. It was the whole truth,—nothing kept back,—no trifling with human rights, no trading in the blood of the slave extenuated, nothing against the slaveholder said in malice. I have never listened to words from the lips of mortal man which were more acceptable to me; and although privileged since then to hear many able and good men speak on slavery, no doctrine has seemed to me so pure, so unworldly, as his. I may here say, and without offence, I trust, that, since that time, I have had a long experience of Garrisonian Abolitionists, and have always found them men and women with hearts in their bodies. They are, indeed and in truth, the poor slave's friend. To shelter him, to feed and clothe him, to help him on to freedom, I have ever found them ready; and I should be wanting in gratitude, if I neglected this opportunity—the only one I may ever have—to say thus much of them, and to declare for myself and for the many colored men in this free country whom I know they have aided in their journey to freedom, our humble confidence in them. Yes, the good spirit with which he is imbued constrained William Lloyd Garrison to plead for the dumb; and for his earnest pleadings all these years, I say, God bless him! By agitation, by example, by suffering, men and women of like spirit have been led to adopt his views, as the great necessity, and to carry them out into actions. They, too, have my heartfelt gratitude. They, like Gideon's band, though few, will yet rout the enemy Slavery, make him flee his own camp, and eventually fall upon his own sword.[6]

[6] This sentence was written before the beginning of our civil war. Viewed in the light of subsequent events, it is somewhat remarkable.—E. K.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.