

LETTER FROM REV. DR. BELLOWS.

New York, January 6th, 1857.

My Dear Sir: Your invitation to me to participate in the Convention at Worcester, on Thursday, January 15th, called to consider the practicability, probability, and expediency of a separation between the free and slave States, and to take such measures as the condition of the times may require, has been received, and is respectfully declined.

As you are kind enough to ask some communication from me, I seize the privilege of stating very frankly the reasons why I cannot participate in it, and I am the more anxious to do this, because you have your invitation, not merely on my general position, but upon the fearless treatment of the subject of the Union in my published sermon of November 24. As I took no ground then not carefully measured, or from which I wish to recede a hair, it seems important, when my opinions attract the notice of a conscientious and intelligent body like yours, to have it distinctly understood what they are, and how entirely they differ from those of Disunionists.

For among those, if I mistake not, your Convention deliberately places itself. This might not appear from the closing paragraph of your call already quoted; but it is plainly intimated in the third paragraph, in which you declare yourselves as believing the existing Union to be a failure, as being a hopeless attempt to unite under one government two antagonistic systems of society, which diverge more widely every year.

Your Convention, then, meets to consider the practicability, probability, and expediency of a separation between the free and slave States, with its mind made up that the Union is a failure, and its coherence an impossibility. Of course, then, you are Disunionists, and your only question can be, how is the safest and shortest manner to cut our Northern vessel of State loose from her Southern consort, condemned by you as smitten with God's curse, and looking for her final doom, but at present lashed to our side and badly intermingled with our rigging.

You have a right to consider and debate this question of separation, and with your views I see not how you can avoid it. Certainly, I will lend no countenance to the political superstition which makes this topic too sacred for light or touch. I protest against the Atheism which sets the Union above Reason, Morality, Religion, Honor, on the other hand, and a few words of faith in the Union, as if we were to debate about its worth and durability, or to imagine that it has suffered from the hands of so-called fanatics, or will crumble under the resolutions of all the intelligent and conscientious men you can unite in Massachusetts, in pronouncing it a failure.

But I am not a Disunionist. I do not think the Union a failure. I do not think the effort hopeless, to unite the North and the South. I do not think the country on the way to a rapid increase of hostility between the two sections of the Union. I do not think that the Union is on the verge of a final drawback and mortification of slavery. I think the Union a great and admirable success. Notwithstanding the injury which slavery has done the political, economic, and moral interests of the nation, who can deny that the general prosperity, growth, intelligence, worth, and power of the Confederacy, have immensely exceeded the best hopes of our federal founders? Whatever it might be under the very different circumstances in which locomotive arts now place us, I see no reason to suppose that the South, by her territory, climate, industry, rivers, state-manship, patriotism, has contributed her fair share—though in a different line from the North—to this common prosperity; and is entitled to our fraternal consideration for her past services in the general interest.

If now she seem socially enfeebled, and threatened with internal convulsion by her peculiar institution, I see no reason for deserting her, even should she long resist our moral and economic appeals, touching the sources of her wealth, as derived from a nation, and blessings from her statesman, her industry, her very errors and misfortunes; and it would be ungrateful and selfish in us to abandon her at a moment when local pride and blinded self-interest madden her to propose separation from us.

The integrity of our National area is a just source of patriotic pride and devotion. To behold thirty millions of people speaking one language over three hundred millions of square of earth; to see the East in the West, and the West in the East, and the regions of perpetual snow from those of eternal summer—yet meeting at one centre for their laws, owning one flag, and honoring one Constitution—is too rare, too promising, too glorious a spectacle, to allow any patriot to see the faintest chalk-mark of division drawn through it, hinting the line which custom, houses, soldiers, and legalized jealousies may afterwards engrave—without bitter tears of sorrow and deprecation.

But what is left to those who are shut up in a fortress against which the world is combined? who defy the policy of the age, the sentiments of Christendom, the fundamental principles of economy, justice and humanity? The only step left for them to take is to send in a flag of truce, and propose conditions of surrender. She has shot the last ball in her arsenal, and her last biscuit, and may now honorably confess that her position is desperate, and throw herself upon the mercy of the country, and the world. In these circumstances, I do not see a rapid increase in the hostility between the two sections of the Union. On the contrary, I think the hostility reached its height in the late campaign, and has begun to decline as the movement of the Government in Kansas and in Congress appear to indicate—and is never again likely to do anything but diminish.

To make this certain, nothing is necessary but the maintenance of an absolute determination on the part of the free States, to deny, and resist, and prevent the extension of slavery—Union or no Union. Let our overwhelming strength, supported by the public opinion of the world, be seen and felt, and the South will not venture to prolong the contest, and yield to any humiliating necessity. It is only as rivals, as equals in rights and powers, as members of one political globe, that we have maintained mutual hatred and jealousy. Let it be declared that we are not mere equals, or rivals, but the free States are the national policy and destiny, and this hatred will cease. The free States are, by the spirit and letter of the Constitution, by vast superiority in population, by representative rights and legislative powers, the legitimate controllers both of the foreign and domestic policy of the country. Mistake, as you fully, fear in the use of this right and duty, but place us in this balance, in which slavery and freedom, slave soil and free soil, slaveholders and free men seem in a perfect equipoise of rights and powers, until the turning of the scale has unhappily come to be regarded as a matter of accident and uncertainty, of nice manoeuvre, or of bargain and compromise.

To meet this state of things within my own limited sphere of influence and responsibility, I maintained in the last campaign, and in my own pulp in the sermon to which you refer, the duty of resisting the extension of slavery at the risk of the Union; and to embolden those who regarded this consequence as a disaster, I gave some reasons for thinking disunion, if forced upon us by the withdrawal of the South, a more supportable calamity to the North, than those who were trying to frighten us into a policy of compromise. I do not regret what I said. It was as a threat from the South, that I braved disunion; not as a proposition from the North, that I espoused it.

What I desire now and always to maintain is this: That our conscientious opposition to the extension of slavery is not to be abated or colored by fear; and that, so far as we are concerned, we are on the North, we are to stay its extension, let the consequences to the Union—to the North or the South—be what they will. This ground I believe to be the safe ground—the Christian, humane, patriotic, constitutional, unsectarian, Union-saving ground. I take it as a lover of the North and a lover of the South; as a believer in the future of the United States. I take it as a hater of slavery, an undying foe to its extension, and a laborer for its overthrow and extinction in the speediest manner and on the most consistent with our whole duty as American citizens.

And here my letter might fully end, having said all that strictly belongs to the occasion. But I will venture to add some general observations in support of its main object. If there ever was a country in which extreme measures and desperate strokes of policy were forbidden, it is one in which the principle of life is as young and vigorous as in our own. In youth, medicine and surgery are more salutary than in the decrepitude of age; and we have no more reason to depend on the strength of our constitution, and the rapidity with which we make new and wholesome blood, than any political patient ever before had, as seriously sick as we are.

The eight hundred thousand new people which every year is adding to our population; the fluid and changing character of our national life; the surprises and variations which our novel political state is ever springing upon us; the close relationship which exists between our present and our future; the substantial and practical character of our agricultural and mechanical classes, with their growing jealousy of cities—the centres of corrupt politics; the enormous power and intelligence which the West is acquiring; the manifold division of the South into as many schools of pro-slavery feeling as there are at the North of anti-slavery feeling—all these considerations suggest the wisdom of doing nothing more than our absolute duty and safety require, and waiting the developments of Providence and the future, which press upon us powerfully, and with such promise of relief. The masterly inactivity recommended by Mr. Calhoun, and so heedlessly forgotten by the South, is prescribed now for the North. As a nation, our future has always been unpredictable, because our circumstances are purely original. Nothing has happened since we were founded to justify our prophesies and hopes. We have been borne forward on a tide of irresistible force; and we have been sustained by enormous energies, passions and opportunities which a new world has afforded us.

But our common people have aroused or presented. But our growth, our education, our philanthropy, our religion, our trade and commerce, have astonished the world and ourselves. They have been very different from the programme; but have they not been very much better? It is not because of the manifest destiny; but because of the mysterious proleptic of the nation, that I account any interference, not clearly demanded by duty, with the forces now at work in the world. The horoscope of the race is partly illegible. The fate of the world can be read in hieroglyphic. Three millions and a half of people are not to be handled by contrivance; they gravitate with a providential tendency, as yet not clearly indicated. The Southern States, producing the great staples wanted by all the world—cotton, rice, tobacco, sugar, corn, wheat—and by a system as old as themselves, are not likely, under any mere political stress, or any aspects of the subject yet presented, to abandon their constitutional rights and their sacred usage. Even should we succeed, internal necessities now unguessed, new discoveries at home or abroad, the rise of prophets, or the awakening of conscience among the slaveholders, the starting up of a true political genius, or great leader, among the blacks—it is in the womb of these possibilities that the real cure for slavery is now maturing. It is neither cowardice, sloth nor fatalism which prompts such a dependence; but awe in the presence of forces which are as irresistible as the descent of the Northern barbarians upon the Roman empire, and with the purpose as mysterious and as fraught with good.

It is in a mood of apology for the gigantic evil of slavery, and in no blindness to its sinfulness in the light of this age, that I venture for a moment to look at the good which Providence is educating from it. Men's errors and crimes do not thwart God's benevolence; and it is among the greatest triumphs of divine goodness that the wrath of an institution like American Slavery has been made to praise Him. Its existence has kept alive a discussion of human rights which has been highly important to the general education of the nation; and has had a salutary and elevating effect on the country, so unfavorable to the influence of a disunionist. The agitation and the enthusiasm connected with the Anti-Slavery movement. Furthermore, the barrier of black labor has confined the stream of emigration within the healthy, invigorating, but less natural, parallels of latitude which now confine the belt of Northern industry, habits, and feelings, to the Pacific ocean. It is not too much to say that the whole destiny of the Nation depended upon the rapid extension of New England capital and influence westward, instead of southward; while our foreign emigration owes its beneficent character and prospects to the connection it has formed with the Northern soil, climate, and ideas. The vast extent to which our territory has thus been opened, and the forced but healthy growth of the North-West, have created an area of Freedom, and a population worthy of it, which will diminish the present ratio of blacks to the whites in the country at large, so that, at the present rate, their relative importance, whether in political, economic, or social respects, will, in twenty years, present a far less serious problem than now. The call for domestic service, in a country developing so rapidly independence and equality among the white race, would, perhaps safely and beneficially, absorb the blacks, even if they sustained to the whites the ratio of ten millions to a hundred millions, should

a peaceful emancipation be allowed them. This is at least one method of disposing of them, favored by their fitness, and the tendencies of Northern civilization. I am aware that such speculations are open to the charge of optimism; and may be deemed relating to the sense of moral responsibility in regard to the evil of Slavery. I deprecate very earnestly such mistaken criticisms, but willingly risk for the sake of my convictions.

I should be more deeply pained to add anything to the effect the recent campaign has already produced in diverting attention from the moral and spiritual enormity of slavery, as an offence against the human soul, a trampling on God's image, a contempt of man, in favor of the sectional and political aims which have necessarily expressed the interest of the whole subject through this period. The moral and spiritual perversion which the politics and the religion of the nation have received from slavery cannot be too anxiously deplored; and that is the view of it which most commonly and most deeply occupies my attention. But the specific object of this communication is the consideration, from a statesman's view, of what is to be gained or lost by Disunion, considered as a moral, social and economic question for the National Slavery. Not overlooking the value of the protest against slavery which such a step, taken on moral grounds, would afford, I must still think the proposition of separation between the free and slave States a direct flying in the face of Divine Providence.

Meanwhile, the rights and duties given to the North by the Constitution are a part of God's mighty Providence in the development of our future. We can resist and control the extension of slavery, and this is our great, our immediate, our plain and our sole duty. Doing that, we do all we know, and all we can. Less than that is imbecility, disloyalty and eternal disgrace.

With these sentiments, I cannot join your Convention, for I profess to see the utility of faith upon which your call is founded. But as a friend of free debate, and a respecter of conscientious convictions, however unpopular or unwise, I wish you unhindered liberty of discussion, and anticipate no harm from your conference to the Republic.

With the highest personal respect, yours truly,
HENRY W. BELLOWS.
Rev. Mr. Higginson of the Worcester Convention.

EDITORIAL ABSENCE. We shall be absent from our editorial post for two or three weeks—attending Anti-Slavery Conventions in Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Albany, &c. During that time, THE LIBERATOR will be under the care and supervision of our esteemed and faithful coadjutor, Mr. CHARLES K. WHITTLE.

Such a 'Refuge of Oppression' as we lay before our readers this week—covering the whole of our first page, and representing every political phase—Whig, Democratic, Know-Nothing, Republican, 'Radical Political Abolition,'—the Boston Courier and Frederick Douglass's Paper fraternizing, and pronouncing the same objections,—and all professing devotion and loyalty to 'our glorious Union,' though ready enough to tear out each other's eyes!

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY. The twenty-fifth annual meeting of the MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY was held in this city on Thursday and Friday, Jan. 29th and 30th, commencing at the Melancon, Tremont street, at 104 A. M. of Thursday.

D. A. WASSON, WM. L. GARRISON, and ABY K. FOSTER. Adjourned to quarter before 3 o'clock.

FRIDAY. The President in the chair. The resolutions, under discussion at the time of adjournment, were read again.

PARKER PILLBURY addressed the meeting in support of the resolutions in a speech of much force and eloquence.

Rev. D. A. WASSON spoke, partly in criticism and partly in defence of the Republican party. He said he was not a disunionist, and never had been, but didn't know how soon he should be obliged to take that ground to preserve his own self-respect.

Mrs. FOSTER and Dr. KNOX severally asked of Mr. WASSON if he would still hold to his opinion, namely, that the slaves should patiently remain in slavery twenty-five years longer, if necessary, rather than resort to violence to effect their freedom.

Mr. WASSON replied that he thought it would be the highest heroism, even then, to stand by his position, though he made no professions for himself how far he might possess that heroism.

Mr. MAY, on behalf of the Committee of Arrangements, offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:— Resolved, That each member of the Society, and each friend of the Anti-Slavery cause now present, be requested to contribute the sum of one dollar, or such other sum as they shall please, towards defraying the necessary expenses of this annual meeting.

W. L. GARRISON addressed the meeting in reply to some points advanced by Mr. WASSON. He defended the Abolitionists from the imputation of intolerance. He showed the inconsistency and wrong of the Republican party in upholding the union with slaveholders.

ABY K. FOSTER again spoke on the same subject. The discussion on the resolutions was then continued by W. L. GARRISON, W. PHILLIPS, H. C. WRIGHT, J. N. BUTTUM, and LEUCY STONE.

Resolved, That the present American Government has proved a curse and calamity to the cause of Human Freedom throughout the world; and, therefore, it is the right and duty of the people at once to alter or forever to abolish that government.

Resolved, That the people of the non-slave States owe it to themselves and to their posterity, and to justice, liberty and humanity, to call town, county and State Conventions to consider the expediency and duty of forming a Northern Republic on the principle of No Union with Slaveholders.

Resolved, That the fundamental organic law of Massachusetts is that 'all men are born free and equal, and endowed by their Creator with an unalienable right to liberty'; therefore,

Resolved, That to allow a man to be arraigned and tried before any tribunal, on the issue, is he a freeman or a slave—is he a man or a chattel? is an atrocious violation of the fundamental law of the State.

Resolved, That it is the duty of Massachusetts to execute this fundamental law of her government, and to forbid, by such laws as shall be deemed just and necessary, the arrest and trial of any persons living under her jurisdiction, on an issue so insulting to God and so derogatory to man.

Resolved, That we recognize it, as a fixed law of our being, that 'Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God'; and that, under this law, it is the right and duty of the slave to deny the authority and resist the power of the slaveholder.

Resolved, That in every effort of the slave to obtain his freedom, whether by flight or insurrection, our sympathies are, and ever must be, with him, and against his oppressor; and we pledge ourselves that we will do all in our power which we, as individuals, deem right and most fitting, to aid the enslaved in their struggle for liberty.

those alarmed and suffering slaveholders had been expressed in the Northern papers, not even in the Northern religious press. Neither in the New York Tribune, nor in the New York Observer, and if not in these, said Mr. Pillsbury, 'where should we look for such sympathy this side of Pandemonium?' Not even in the files of slaveholders been uttered. Mr. Pillsbury referred to an 'old opponent of his, the American Church relation to slavery. He particularly noticed Albert Barnes's recent book on slavery—the book of a man now he knew not why Mr. Barnes's book should be classed with Dr. Nehemiah Adams's 'South Side View.' In 1840, Mr. Barnes declared that it was the supineness of the Church, and its connection with slaveholders, that the continuance of slavery was owing.

In 1856 he declares the Church is not responsible for slavery, and is not the apologist for it. Mr. Pillsbury, by reference to the cases of Thomas Sims in Massachusetts, and Margaret Garner in Ohio, her powerless to defend the slave from our largest and most influential States be, while in this gully.

Mr. GARRISON, from the Business Committee, reported the following resolutions:— Resolved, That the awful criminality of the American Church, in regard to the millions who are held in bondage at the South, is still clearly demonstrated in the fact, that while she professes to believe in the Bible as the inspired word of God, and in the duty of giving it to every human being, she not only consents but conspires to rob these millions of that 'sacred volume'; that while she holds up Christ as the redeemer of the world, she propagates a gospel which is at peace with a widely extended system of darkness and heathenism; that while she affirms the divinity of the institution of marriage, she helps to enforce wholesale concubinage and adulterous amalgamation on a frightful scale; that while she teaches that God has made of one blood all nations of men, and that all souls are his, she sanctifies the act of selling men, women and children along with merchandise and cattle.

Resolved, That no severer condemnation has ever been pronounced against the American Church by the Abolitionists, than is contained in the recent work of Rev. Albert Barnes, with reference to that Church and Slavery, when he says, 'The outward progress of liberty among the nations will depend on the churches, if they will save the world from infidelity, to detach themselves from slavery—thus declaring these churches to be lower than even the outside world in their sense of justice and humanity, and, therefore, thoroughly corrupt and apostate.'

Resolved, That in the flattering recollection every where given in New England to Thomas H. Benton, the proud and incorrigible slaveholder of Missouri, in the delivery of his lecture in defence of the blood-stained Union, which he acknowledges is essential to the existence of the Southern slave system, and advising the suppression of all anti-slavery discussion in the North, we have fresh evidence of the general loss of self-respect and manhood, of genuine sympathy for the outraged slave, of a true appreciation of present and civil liberty, on the part of the New England people.

Resolved, That Massachusetts has been degraded and outraged, as her Representatives in Congress, by their pusillanimously allowing a unanimous vote to be passed in the House, in reference to the sudden death of the Carolina refugee, Preston S. Brooks, tending to the family of the deceased the sympathy of the House, and resolving that the members, in token of respect, wear crepe on the left arm for thirty days; and especially, by allowing a Seneca, from Tennessee, to say, respecting the deadly assault upon Charles Sumner, without one word of horror or rebuke coming from their lips—Brutus stabbed Caesar in the Capitol, and whatever may be thought of the justice and wisdom of the deed, the world has since since approved and applauded the act; so shall the scene in the Senate Chamber carry the name of the deceased to all future generations, long to be remembered after all are forgotten, and when those walls shall have crumbled into ruins.' (!!!)

Mr. Garrison proceeded to comment on the last reported resolutions. The Southern fact and slanders respecting a dissolution of the Union, he said, were shown by the mission of Thomas H. Benton, the incorrigible slaveholder of Missouri, to New England. The cry of these Union-saving politicians, that the Union must be saved, is proof that they deem it to be in great hazard. People who live by Wachuset or Monadnock are not perpetually buying themselves to keep the mountain in its place.

WENDELL PHILLIPS followed in a speech full of interest and instruction. His view of the policy of the incoming administration, meekly seeking at first to conciliate the opposing sections of the Union, only at last to yield every point to slaveholding impetuosity and arrogance, was set forth with great keenness, and elicited much applause. He ridiculed the idea that there is any value for the North in the existing Union, or that anybody here really cared for it, save the selfish, pensioned men who live upon its fat.

has also raised it against us. This proceeding has at least the merit of being frank. But Sumner had offered a still greater indignity to the callers of the Worcester Convention. He had dodged, and sent no reply whatever to his letter of invitation.

TRUTH AGAIN FALLEN IN THE STREETS. We have always had a sublime sympathy for men who have suffered for the truth's sake. The noble army of martyrs is a memory precious and inspiring. The thought is most touching of those who were compelled to wander about in sheep-skins and goat-skins of whom the world was not worthy. From the heroic age, when the stones of the highway drank the blood of martyred Stephen, and when the Apostles who were commissioned to go forth and bear witness to the truth, went to the altar of sacrifice and laid down their lives as their testimony; and since those days of the cross and the stake, down through the long years of inquisition and persecution, until now, the world has witnessed—and God has rewarded—the sufferings and the death of men and women who, not shrinking from the costliest sacrifices which they could make for the truth, have offered up their lives for its sake. Along the highways of time, for the space of two centuries, martyr-fires have blazed,—like the signal lights in the Highlands of Scotland, which the clans once kindled on every hill-top, the light of the flag and the stake has reddened every page of history. And a thoughtful recollection of these things, when it creeps in an hour of meditation upon the mind, will stir the heart and quicken the blood of every generous and noble man.

And yet, the reflection forces itself upon us, that if it were possible, the truth suffers more itself, than the martyrs who suffer for its sake; for they endure trials which, though signal and terrible, are soon ended. Condemned to the fire, they walk into it, and then are quickly consumed. Even in the days of the inquisition, when the most ingenious devices were practised for prolonging life for the sake of prolonging torture, nature would kindly fall, and death would come quickly to relieve the rack and the serew-bolt of their victims, long before persecution had wrought out of its full cruelty. But the truth is cast into the fiery furnace, or bound to the stake, or pressed with the rack, and must endure its tortures until they mock at its calamity shall take pity, and relieve it from the trial,—for the truth is immortal, and can suffer only pain, and not harm. It can be bruised against the stone, but cannot be broken. It can be cast down, but cannot be destroyed. It can be smitten, but cannot be slain. It is like Milton's angel, vital in every part, and cannot but by annihilation die. And so, when it suffers, it must suffer to the end, for there is no giving up of its life in the trial.

It seems to have been ordained that the sun should every day look down from the heavens, and behold the truth suffering violence. It seems to us that a day never passes when the truth does not receive the stab of a dagger or the stripe of a lash,—either from its known foes or its false friends. At least, men who, in the service of the truth, are ever on the watch, with a hopeful solicitude for tokens of its progress in the earth, seem to expect that, with every day of their lives, it is somewhere to be insulted and outraged, somewhere stricken down and trodden under foot.

As for the truth as it is manifested in the great cause of Human Freedom, we have long since ceased to be surprised at any indignity which might be offered to it. It has been so often put to open shame, where it should have received honor and allegiance; it has been so often denied by the Church and the States, as well as by men who neither fear God nor regard man, that we have given up wondering at any new form of insult, even though that be 'cruel mockings and scourgings.'

The State clings to that property which it supposes it may lawfully hold in human flesh and human hearts; and the Church has made her altar a sacred refuge for the monstrous doctrine. We are no longer surprised, therefore, at any thing, whether in the spirit or the working of civil government, or in the teaching and the example of that Church which professes to be of Christ,—at any thing in either of these which denies, directly or indirectly, that a man who is born black is not a man, or, what amounts to the same thing, which refuses to say that, having once been deprived of his most inviolable rights, he is henceforth nevermore entitled to them!

But we at last confess to a surprise. Our youthful wonder at the denials of the claims of the truth, by men who profess to be followers of Him whose name is Truth, has been revived, after long slumber. Having years since almost given up our expectation that the Church, as such, would at any time side of a far distant future come to a proper position of witness-bearing on the subject of slavery, we have for some time past, perhaps as a kind of refuge from this thought, indulged a hope that in a recently-organized movement, in some measure connected with the Church, begun almost simultaneously in this country and in Europe, and whose progress and success we have noticed with no little attentiveness,—the cause of Freedom would at last find, at least in some degree, the friend which the Church has long refused and still refuses to be. We have observed the movement with the greater interest, because, while in its character it is religious, it is not denominational, and while in its organization it is of the Church, it is not ecclesiastical; and also, because it is a movement on the part of young men, who, having been born into the world at a later stage of its progress than their conservative fathers and teachers, and having opened their eyes in the morn of life to the light of the sublime principles of Christianity, might be naturally expected, from their generous impulses, to take sides with the cause of truth and justice, and to utter their testimony for the right, with that enthusiasm which is common to young blood.

Among the various institutions of the present age, by which Christianity is struggling to give force to the world a practical expression of itself, additional to that which finds utterance through the Church, is the institution of the Young Men's Christian Association, which, in a comparatively arid period of time—like a quick ripening fruit—has grown to be a great moral power in the world. This institution has now its representatives in all the chief cities of the United States, and in the Protestant countries of Europe; and is gathering to itself an army of young men, who, with the right banner at their front, might go forth conquering and to conquer. The membership of some of these associations numbers often more than a thousand persons, and sometimes even two or three thousand; that is, in a single city. These bodies are formed on a broad and liberal basis. Though it is to be regretted that some of them practice the exclusiveness of admitting to active membership only persons whose faith is of the order termed 'evangelical,' yet persons who are not so fortunate as to have been born and bred 'orthodox' may enjoy a limited prerogative as associate members, who exercise every other privilege except that of holding an office, and of casting a vote. And if it be true, as an eminent New England clergyman once avowed, that if he was allowed to speak in a public meeting, he would not care to be allowed to vote, the difference as to equality between the orthodox and the heterodox, in those associations which insist on these distinctions, is not so great as might at first appear.

The specified object of these organizations is to combine and increase the Christian influence of the young men in the various cities in which they are formed. To this end, they establish a library and reading-room, as a nucleus and centre of attraction; and they hold public monthly meetings, the chief feature of which is an essay—with a discussion following it—on some moral or religious subject. And as the Christian Association stands between the Church and the world, it takes hold with one hand of the questions which the Church discusses, and with the other reaches out and grasps those other and equally important questions which the Church seeks to exclude from her sanctified sphere. Accordingly, while Uni-

versalism, and Universalism, and Romanism, and various other theological questions without sectarian name, have been considered, these bodies have discussed the question of Temperance—the question of intemperance in favor of prohibition—the question of the theatrical amusement, of pernicious literature, of the licentiousness in the fine arts, of immigration and the increase of paupers, of prison discipline, of shop-keeping on the Sabbath, of street-preaching, of the publication of Sunday newspapers, of dancing, of negro minstrels, of cigar-smoking, of tobacco-chewing, and even of tea-drinking. It has therefore been expected, by many of the members and other observers of these associations, that when, among other questions which come up naturally and legitimately, the solemn question of Human Rights should be introduced, it would at least receive an equal degree of attention and respect with the last-named—and perhaps equally important—subject of tea, whether Old Hyson, or Oolong, or Souchong!

But already, in spite of a considerable degree of stoicism, we have confessed to a surprise; and that surprise is this, that the Christian Associations, unlike the 'noble people of this venerable city, who on a well-known occasion threw overboard the tea to preserve their individual rights, have just now, as we learn from the public prints, determined to retain the tea, but to cast out entirely and throw overboard the rights of men!

The largest and most prominent Christian Association in this country, that in the city of New York, having been disturbed by the introduction of the slavery question, recently voted, after a midnight debate, that the subject should be promptly then excluded, and henceforth 'forbidden.'

Thus the truth is again refused a hearing; and we are stricken down and made to suffer another wound, which comes this time by the hand of one on whom it counted as a friend. We had been looking to the Christian Associations, ever since this question was introduced among them about two months ago, to have a noble witness in behalf of freedom. We had a hope in them which we had not in the Church. We had already seen how the Church and the States have combined against the truth,—like Cassius and Casca with Trebonius, Ligarius, and the rest, against Caesar; but we have now seen that even Brutus lifts up his dagger and strikes a blow; so that truth is made to bleed from the steel of a friend turned an assassin!

Such an act, from such a hand, 'casts down truth to the ground.' The old prophet's prediction has again been fulfilled,—and when does a day pass that is not verified anew?—'Truth is fallen in the streets.' And yet, while we may and do despair of the Church, and of the various institutions which the Church sends out like colonies into the world, we cannot and do not despair of the truth. We have sympathy for its manifold reverses; but we know that it shall finally triumph. We have faith in the future, or rather, we have faith in God; and we know that the truth, being immortal, shall outlive its enemies, and shall even triumph before they die. Our vision is clear that they who plot against it shall be put to open shame; for it is true, as the Apostle says, 'We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth;' only it sometimes tries our present patience when we foresee how long it must still struggle against principalities and powers!

LETTER FROM JOSEPH BARKER. TO HENRY C. WRIGHT: My DEAR FRIEND—I wish to say a few words to you about the meaning of a vote. When I vote for such men as Fremont, Charles Sumner and Joshua R. Giddings, the meaning of my vote is simply this: 'I had rather Fremont were President than Buchanan or Fillmore. I had rather Charles Sumner were Senator than G. S. Hillard. And I had rather J. R. Giddings were Representative than Smith Cantwell.' For any one to tell me that this is not my meaning, but that something else is, seems foolish and unjust. It is absurd to pretend to know a man's meaning better than himself. And to attempt to make him answerable for a meaning which never entered his mind, is something worse than absurd.

DEATH OF PRESTON B. BROOKS. In the terrible and sudden death of the assailant of Charles Sumner, the truly philosophical and reflective, as well as the profoundly religious, will read a lesson of most solemn import.

The former cannot fail to observe in the culmination, so far as this life is concerned, of the inevitable law of retribution, or, in other words, effect following its cause; while the latter will generally be led to the conclusion, that it is one of those special visitations with which Divine Providence oftentimes overwhelms the perpetrator of a glaring crime.

Several individuals who have observed the appearance of Brooks since his most outrageous assault on Sumner, unite in declaring that his spirits had lost much of their usual vivacity; that what of cheerfulness he manifested seemed rather forced than natural; that his whole deportment was such as to indicate clearly that he was sustaining a weight of mental suffering. It is perfectly natural that it should be so. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, without an entire change of the human constitution. Grief, regret or remorse, arising from the ever-present consciousness of a flagrant wrong done to a fellow-man, affects the whole frame, especially the internal organs, and more particularly those of the chest and neck.

Who that has ever felt deep grief, or other severe mental anguish, that has not at the same time experienced a sort of choking sensation in the throat; showing that there is a strong sympathy between that part and the brain; hence we hear it said, that such a person was choked with grief, rage, or other violent passion, as the case may be.

Taking, then, these mental and physiological facts along with the observations of persons above referred to, as to the altered appearance of Brooks since the outrage on Sumner, and applying them to the case that has just terminated so fearfully at Washington, the conclusion is, that the mental torture suffered by Brooks, in consequence of his vile abuse of Sumner, so affected the organs of the throat and chest as to predispose them to take on the disease that afflicted him; and aggravated his action afterwards, until it terminated in the fearful manner as reported. How sudden and terrible the retribution!

The miserable assailant passing through the mortal agony at the time he assailed just declared himself as nearly recovered from the dreadful prostration consequent upon the assault, forcibly reminds one of what the gifted bard of freedom says of Truth and Error, in one of his happiest efforts:— 'Truth crushed to earth shall rise again, The eternal years of God are hers; While Error wounded whirs in pain, And dies amid her worshippers.'

Verily 'the way of the transgressor is hard.' May a guilty nation profit by this terrible example! Springfield, Feb. 1, 1857. E. W. TWING.

DEATH OF PRESTON B. BROOKS. In the U. S. Senate, last week, official notification of the death of Mr. Brooks having been made, eulogies were pronounced upon him by Messrs. Evans, Hunter and Toombs, of the South. In the House, by Keitt, Quitman, Gillingham, and Savage of Tennessee.

Mr. Savage did not approve of much talking at any time; but he would do injustice, to his feelings and those of his constituents by remaining silent on this occasion. History records but one Thermopylae; but there ought to have been a second for Preston B. Brooks. Brutus stabbed Caesar in the Capitol; and an answer may be thought of the deed, the world has ever since approved and applauded the act. So shall the scene in the Senate chamber carry the name of the deceased to all future generations, long to be remembered after all are forgotten, and when these walls shall have crumbled into ruins. Had he been permitted to choose his own death, he (Savage) was convinced he would have fallen in some great battle for the public of South Carolina. He has been Mr. Brooks bearing the trials of the siege of Vera Cruz, as an officer of the Palmetto Regiment, ever exhibiting all the characteristics of a true man and a soldier. Under all circumstances, never a morning came here but he made his salute to his old commander.

This brutal speech, it is said, excited considerable indignation and disgust in the House, but elicited no rebuke from any quarter. A Springfield paper says: 'SAVAGE, member of Congress from Tennessee, is truly named. None but a genuine savage could have made the speech that he did, on Thursday, as a tribute to his deceased friend. His ruffianly words must have produced a shudder of horror in the most hardened, on such an occasion.'

L. D. Campbell, of Ohio, notorious for his two-facedness as a pretended Republican, spoke in a characteristic manner:— 'Mr. Campbell said Mr. Brooks merited the confidence of his constituents, because he was the faithful advocate of their policy and sentiments, and the zealous guardian of their rights, interest and honor. His relations with the deceased were such as enabled him to know and appreciate his virtues.'

The President, Heads of Department, and Mr. Buchanan, were all present at the funeral obsequies.

KIDNAPPED NEW YORKERS.—Gov. Kirk, of New York, has brought to the attention of the Legislature two cases of kidnaping. One is the case of Henry Dixon, a free citizen of Rochester. None of his family were ever alive until he was kidnaped. While on his way home from Washington, where he had been employed, he stopped at a hotel between Washington and Baltimore, where he was seized by two men, who took him to the city, and kept him in a place of confinement for two or three days. He was then taken to a slave pen, and sold to a man named Dean, of Mason, Ga., where he still remained in slavery at the date of his last letter. Gov. Clark appointed an agent to go to his case. The agent ascertained that Dean had sold him, but was unable to obtain any further information concerning him. Messrs. Poe & Greig of Mason, who were employed by Gov. Clark's agent, say that Dean offers to surrender him for \$700.

Charles Grady, also of Rochester, is the other kidnaped person. We last saw him when he was at work on the dock in front of the residence of Mr. Hill, in the parish of Hayville, Louisiana, on the Mississippi. Mr. Joseph Cochran, of Rochester, went in search of him, but was not able to find him at the place described.

ANOTHER OF THE DEATHS OF SLAVERY.—Joseph L. Blodgett, of Charleston, furnishes the Greenfield Gazette the particulars of his expulsion from the State of Florida, after being cruelly whipped. Mr. Blodgett had lived at Jacksonville, and in its vicinity, since 1852. He says that in June last, a company of 'regulators,' numbering about seventy men, was formed for the purpose of punishing such offenders as they saw fit. This band, Mr. Blodgett says, has already killed several men—one was whipped to death, one was shot dead, and others have been whipped and sent out of the State. On the 26th of December, Mr. B. was seized, taken to the woods, stripped of his clothes, and receiving eighty lashes from a raw hide on his back. He was then forwarded to Savannah, and thence made his way to New York. Several citizens of Charleston certify that the sores and scars on Mr. Blodgett's back are sufficient evidence of his having received a severe whipping, and other cruelties, before he was sent to his present place of banishment for the South. The offence charged against Mr. Blodgett by the 'Regulators' was, that he had said he had taught negroes to read.—Journal.

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POETRY.

For the Liberator. THE SLAVE'S HOPE. Brother, hush those cries of sorrow!

For the Liberator. BE STRONG. Lulled by a promise, A sun-lighted promise That beckons before thee—

SATIRE ON DOUGLASSES. Such are the men who, with insidious dread, Whenever Freedom lifts her drooping head,

COMPLAINT AND REPROOF. How seldom, friend, a good great man inherits Honor and wealth, with all his worth and pains!

The Liberator.

SPEECH OF REV. T. W. HIGGINSON, At the Disunion Convention held in the City Hall, Worcester, January 15, 1857.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REPORT BY MR. TREMONT.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I heard almost every word that was spoken in this hall this morning with pleasure, until Mr. Garrison stood here to thank anybody for coming to this platform, or to say to anybody that it should be recognized and honored as an act of courage.

Mr. Chairman, I do not care how small the beginnings, or how trifling the aspect of a movement. We have lived to see a movement that began in an obscure corner, gradually rising until it fills the whole horizon; and are we to be disturbed by a few timid doubters or a few flippant critics now?

Mr. Chairman, if I had felt careless or heedless upon this matter—if I had distrusted the instinct—if I had doubted the policy—if I had ignored the facts, that drive us to this position, they would all have been driven back into my soul, revived there forever by one hour that I spent last week in the Athenæum Hall, in Boston, with the wreck of what was once Charles Sumner.

Has it come? The contingency was this—When all political efforts fail—when the North loses its power, when the government is delivered over, bound hand and foot, to the slaveholders—then at last comes the period of disunion. How is it then? Take the confessions of these very men—their statements, public and private, their explanations, their predictions—and we have all we need for the other premises of our argument.

tell him that his leaders are shrewder men than their Republican patriots give them credit for being. About the time of the election of General Pierce, I happened to be in conversation with a gentleman who is now a Senator of the United States.

We have got to go deeper and deeper yet, before we get hold of the principle that rules the statesmanship of America. Mr. Chairman, I do not care how small the beginnings, or how trifling the aspect of a movement.

Mr. Chairman, if I had felt careless or heedless upon this matter—if I had distrusted the instinct—if I had doubted the policy—if I had ignored the facts, that drive us to this position, they would all have been driven back into my soul, revived there forever by one hour that I spent last week in the Athenæum Hall, in Boston, with the wreck of what was once Charles Sumner.

Has it come? The contingency was this—When all political efforts fail—when the North loses its power, when the government is delivered over, bound hand and foot, to the slaveholders—then at last comes the period of disunion. How is it then? Take the confessions of these very men—their statements, public and private, their explanations, their predictions—and we have all we need for the other premises of our argument.

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and all we disunionists say is—if it is coming, in God's name let it come quickly! (Applause.)

SPEECH OF FRANCIS W. BIRD, ESQ. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I read this morning, in the New York Tribune, an extract from the Worcester Spy, which, as it illustrates the present condition of things about us, I will read—

'The truth is, that venom and passion have so dispossessed the New England heart of its natural delicacy, that it requires more moral courage in a son of old Massachusetts, or of the Granite State, to stand up, even upon his own acres, and express his own sentiments upon public policy, if they do not accord with the whisperings of political demagogues and partisan agents in the popular ear, than it would for Foster or Garrison to address a meeting under the very nose of Henry A. Wise. The time is coming, we patriotically trust, when the circumstance will not so exist; but at present there is no denying its presence and vitality.'

Of course, my friends, no man who has been in politics as long as I have, no man who has been engaged in business as long as I have, is unaware of the fact, that it is as much as a man's political prospects and business prosperity are worth, (unless his position as a business man is perfectly assured), and as much as his social position is worth, to differ from his neighbors upon any question in this community.

Mr. Wilson converts the whole Republican party into hangmen, in the following extract from his speech in the Senate:—In the public press, and before the people everywhere, the doctrine was maintained that we were for the Union; and if any man, North or South, laid their hands upon it, they should die, if we had the power, traitor deaths, and leave traitor names in the history of the Republic.

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that our duty, as Republicans, is to prepare for the future. The verdict of the country has been rendered in favor of the pretended principles of the Nebraska Bill. Slavery goes wherever the people choose to carry it. The decision of the Supreme Court, in the Scott case, is soon to be given, affirming the extreme Southern doctrine, that slavery goes everywhere under the Federal flag. These are the issues we have got to meet, in the ballot-box or out of it, under the Constitution or over it, in the Union or out of it; and it is of no use for politicians at Washington to attempt to disguise that fact, or keep back the rising public sentiment of the country, or repress the popular indignation against slavery. The battle is between freedom and slavery, and we must meet it. Of course, I need not remind our friends that we are to be denounced as traitors, and treated as traitors, if we are to believe representative Republicans at Washington. There is no reason why every one of us should not be arrested as traitors, under the construction put upon the Constitution by the Federal authorities; and it would be no greater outrage upon any of our rights to imprison us to-night in Boston as traitors, than was the arrest of the members of the Topeka Legislature in Kansas. Of course, I do not refer to the policy of that movement. It was a sad mistake; but they had a perfect right to meet, if they would. But our right to assemble peacefully to discuss grievances is not only denied by the administration, but by Republican presses and Republican leaders. The Providence Journal says—

'The Northern Disunionists will hold their Convention at Worcester on the 15th inst., to consider the practicability, probability and expediency of a separation between the free and slave States, and to take such other measures as the condition of the times may require. It is neither practicable, probable, nor expedient. It cannot be done, and it ought not to be done; and those who try to do it, only add treason to folly, reducing themselves to the level of the nullifiers of the South, and unlike them, wanting the sympathy of any considerable portion of their own section of the country.'

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the foundations of society, ought not to receive your official and public endorsement, as a fit and proper inducement to spread his skepticism. We urge another and even more decided reason: Mr. Parker is bold and unscrupulous. By frequent implications or lectures-room. One of the last lectures by him before you—his lecture on progress—contained sentiments distinctly in conflict with the fact of a Revelation from God, and with its contents.

Whatever may be his qualifications in other respects, we think that such a man has forfeited his claim to be employed as a lecturer by the chief literary organization of a Christian city. And we believe that if such a selection has been made, for the sake of increasing the revenues of the Lyceum, you may yet see that pecuniary gain can be purchased at too dear a rate.

Gentlemen, we beg leave to present this subject to your most serious attention, with the hope that if may still be changed. We are yours, most respectfully. (Signed) C. W. Wallace, H. H. Hartwell, R. C. Bartlett, J. M. Coburn, J. G. Hubbard, C. W. H. Clark. Manchester, Dec. 25, 1856.

The Mirror publishes the reply of the Executive Committee of the Lyceum, through Mr. Joseph Kidder, their President. They have unanimously agreed that they cannot adopt the course suggested in the protest. In this reply they say—

'Our association is composed of men holding a great variety of opinions, and it is with the largest liberty of thought and of speech. As a society we endorse no lecturer's opinion, but are content to give all men whom the literary public of Manchester desire to hear, and whom we can induce for a reasonable compensation to appear before us, a fair field and a candid hearing, having confidence in that public that it is able to discriminate between truth and error, and that any unscrupulous violation of the neutral ground of the lecture room, so far from advancing, will only injure the cause it is meant to promote.'

While there is, perhaps, no member of our committee who can be considered as endorsing Mr. Parker's peculiar views, but, on the contrary, there are many who are equally decided with ourselves in the condemnation of those views, we yet believe that truth is mighty, and will prevail; that it can, occasionally, afford to be generous, and to give a candid hearing on neutral subjects, even to the advocate of error; and if, as many sometimes occur, a bold and unscrupulous man, by implication or otherwise, advances sentiments at war with the Christian religion, we recollect that that religion has in our city able and fearless champions.

We recollect that, on every Sabbath day, you come before our people, standing on no neutral ground, but, on the contrary, having the utmost liberty, may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, be invited to lecture, and we are content to give all men whom the literary public of Manchester desire to hear, and whom we can induce for a reasonable compensation to appear before us, a fair field and a candid hearing, having confidence in that public that it is able to discriminate between truth and error, and that any unscrupulous violation of the neutral ground of the lecture room, so far from advancing, will only injure the cause it is meant to promote.'

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