WASHINGTON CITY.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 1859.

SLAVERY IN AMERICAN POLITICS.

Though opposed to the eternal discussion of slavery, we shall make no apology for publishing the remarkable letter on the subject which occupies a portion of our paper this morning. It is the production of a man who has evidently boxed the compass of northern fanaticisms and follies, and has returned, a weary and repentant prodigal, to the paternal roof of the constitution of his country, to the conservative measures of the founders of our political system. We have not read, for many months, a piece of composition so pithy, so sententious, so able, so sound, catholic, or conservative in its sentiments and conclusions as this letter of Mr. Lovejoy. The production is the more remarkable, as the expression of the sentiments, not alone of the individual author of it, but of an immense class of honest men at the North who are sick to disgust of the abominable fallacies of anti-slavery fanaticism. It is the production of a "representative" mind, and the conclusions which it enforces are those, we doubt not, of an immense majority of honest, candid men in the northern States. But, although publishing this strong document on this subject, we must not fail to reiterate our reprobation of the habit the whole circle of our American politicians have fallen into of making slavery the chief topic of partisan debate and gladiation.

It is quite as necessary to understand who is specially interested in the extension of slavery as to know who it is that would overthrow that institution of society in the States where it exists. There is a sad misapprehension all over the country about the character of slavery—how it lives—by whom it is maintained, and for what ends. It has been so long denounced in the free States that the South has come to regard it as the chief object of rational existence, not only to support it, but make it the very corner-stone and foundation of civil government. It has been thrust into the foreground of every representation of the southern States. When the subject of federal revenues is discussed, slavery is sure to crowd itself into the very heart of the discussion. If the interests of this government in Central America comes under examination, slavery is certain to creep into the inquiry, and the subject must take on the lights and shades of that omnicient institution. If the question of maintaining the army and navy is under advisement, slavery is brought up again, and the claims of both are measured by the bearing they happen to have upon that everlasting interest. Certain it is that American politics have some how got sadly mixed up with slavery. It is in every man's mouth—on every tongue; and promises to become, in an early future, quite equal to the employment of all the spare intellect of American representatives in the national legislature. It is very proper, therefore, that the public should understand distinctly what is this wonderful institution of slavery.

We do not underrate its importance in connection with the industry of the States where it exists; but we are convinced its nature and character are not very well appreciated there. It is not, and never ought to have been, the subject of political controversy at all. Its very importance is enough to prove this. We doubt exceedingly whether the actual owners of slaves have been foremost, or are now foremost, in investing their property into national politics. There is not another kind of property in the Union that could bear such an ordeal. When slave tenures are subjected to the caprice of politicians and the value of that species of property is made to ebb and flow with the success or defeat of this or that party at elections, that will be the time when slaveholders will have discovered that partisan controversy is a poor reliance for the protection of slavery. It is beneath the dignity of a sovereign State of this Union to send representatives to Congress to discuss the character of its domestic institutions. The national legislature should be the scene of appropriate investigation into subjects over which that body has at least a color of jurisdiction. And the question of the extension of slavery in this or that direction is one which is equally foreign to the two representative bodies. Speeches can no more extend slavery than propagate slaves. Nobody goes to this or that place with slaves on the advice of members of Congress. Nobody in this wise, practical age of ours, is foolish enough to invest his property in a Utopian scheme for colonizing territory with slaves to effect great political ends. Those who talk such nonsense are worthless agitators without means or responsibility. They get enlisted as partisans, they talk as partisans, they make partisans, and they are purely partisan representatives. Precisely so it is with the abolitionists right at the other end of the Union. They see in a congressional speech a formidable and pregnant scheme for extending slavery. They are alive to the subject and to the necessity of resistance. It is God's service to meet and overwhelm the "slave oligarchy." The country is full of these miserable political trickers; these frothy, wordy philanthropists on the one side, and these chivalrous slave propagandists on the other. The two classes are really utterly worthless. There is no value in them. They do nothing but excite animosities where there should be cordial friendships. They are mere bill-stickers, advertising affairs in which they have no possible interest. They talk loudly of freedom and independence, when, in truth, they are the slaves of passion and prejudice. They dicuss learnedly the question of rights, when they know nothing of such matters in practical life. They devote themselves to the liquidation of abstract accounts. They are hypothetical politicians, with intellect just enough to discern a principle, but not sense enough to apply it. It is the right of any man to walk across the ocean; and if he can overcome physical laws or induce their suspension, he may undertake the work. Nothing could be more absurd, at all events, than to question his right thus to navigate the waters of the sea. The truth is, there is no such thing as an abstract right, and there never can be in civil society, which, in its very nature, presupposes a surrender of all abstract rights, and the substitution of relative principles adapted to the ends of government. A man, for instance, has the abstract right, as it is called, to seize his property wherever he finds it; but the peace of the community requires that he shall resort to its legal tribunals for remedies; and hence the law decides that he may exercise his individual power over his estate, without the intervention of civil officers, only when it has been taken from him by fraud. This principle, applied to slaves enticed away from their owners, would confer upon the latter the right to retake them and carry them back to their homes. Justice and fair dealing would fully sanction this practice; for no right of an individual ought to be impaired by the fraudulent and illegal conduct of another. The right is unquestionable to take slaves to the common Territories. The question whether any given Territory can be successfully colonized by slaves and their owners is quite another affair. It is not at all a legal problem. It is a question of profit and loss. It is a question of dollars and cents; and there is no necessity or justification for quarrelling about it. It has not one shade of politics in it. Congress has within twenty years imposed a tax upon the country, in wrangling on this subject, of more than twenty millions of dollars. It has largely occupied the press. It has engrossed the pulpit. It has sundered long-established religious organizations. It has arrayed one great section of the Union against the other in deadly strife. It has occupied the time of Congress to the neglect of the public interests and the dishonor of the government. All this has been the result of a difference upon a purely abstract question. There is not in it a single element of practical life. The worst feature of the whole case is to be found in the fact that the country has gained no wisdom by experience. Men charged with high public trusts rise and proclaim, on the one hand, a purpose to extend slavery; and, on the other, an equally deluded class talk as valiantly of their purpose to prevent such extension, and often to strike it down where it exists. Neither of these classes have the least interest or control over the subject. The constitution has fixed the general principles of intercourse between the States; the latter, under it, having reserved the right of sovereign control over their own domestic affairs, including slavery, of course. Within the States, if at all, slavery exists. They are able to take care of it. They are responsible for it. They know its uses and how to manage it. If it is wrong, it is theirs; if it is a benefit to the negroes, they are entitled to the credit of its existence. It has no business in national politics.

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Hon. Charles J. Faulkner was re-nominated as a candidate for congress from the Winchester district of Virginia on Wednesday last.

The democrats of Clinton county, Kentucky, have passed a resolution recommending the convention in that district to nominate J. S. Chrisman, of Wayne county, as their candidate for Congress.

The convention to nominate a candidate for Congress in the seventh congressional district of Kentucky will be held on the 26th instant.

In view of the fact that there are several democractic aspirants for the nominations for Congress in the sixth congressional district of Kentucky, the central committee have called a convention for the third Monday in April next.

The democrats of Harnett county have adopted resolutions approving of the course of Hon. Warren Winslow, and recommending him as their first choice in the convention

The Warrenten (North Carolina) News, speaking of Virginia politics, says:

All our Virginian "opposition" exchanges are terribly afflicted with the *Botts*. It is really distressing to see how they are almost eaten up with that fatal disease. We are no veterinary surgeon, but we think, in a case of necessity, we would prescribe a good Democrat cathartic. It works wonders, and when followed by a Letcher vermifuge, would cleanse out all the *Botts* that ever afflicted men or cattle in Virginia.

The Elmira (N. Y.) Gazette, referring to the announcement in 1838 that the treasury of that State was overflowing, says:

"Such was the language of the celebrated Ruggles report in 1838, when the democratic administration of Marcy was succeeded by the whig administration of Wm. H. Seward. In the interval of twenty years which have elapsed, the government has been, a large share of the time, in the hands of the opposition; with what result let facts answer.

"Instead of an overflowing treasury, we now have a debt of $35,000,000 which is constantly increasing, notwithstanding the burdensome taxation imposed upon the people from year to year."

The Hartford (Conn.) Daily Times thus speaks of the extravagance of the republican party in that State:

"The Press is floundering about to get away from the State debt—the half million squandered by its party—the disappearance of the surplus left by the democrats; and it has the impudence to charge measures of the past four years upon the democrats! This same Press has sustained every 'opposition' administration in this State since its existence. This opposition party has had two-thirds of the legislature and State officers regularly. They have carried their measures in *caucuses*, and then pushed them through the legislature. The New Haven Journal, rather more honest than the Press, acknowledges this."

The Tenth Legion, published at Woodstock, Va., speaking of the renomination of Hon. Charles J. Faulkner for Congress, says:

"Whilst we harbor no unkind feeling toward any of the gentlemen named, we must be permitted to say that, in our judgment, the convention acted wisely in renominating Mr. Faulkner for Congress. He has served his district—we should rather say the country—with distinguished ability in the national legislature, and his course upon all important questions has been that of an enlightened and judicious statesman. He is, besides, the man to canvass the district against Mr. Boteler, or any other gentleman who may be nominated by the opposition."

The Harrisburg Patriot and Union thus speaks of the nominees of the democratic convention which recently met in that city:

"The candidates nominated by the democratic convention are men of the most unexceptionable character and standing. Richardson L. Wright, who was nominated for auditor general,, upon the first ballet, is well known to the democracy of Pennsylvania. He has represented the city of Philadelphia in the House of Representatives, during several sessions, and is n. w a member of the Senate. As a legislator he has earned a high reputation by strict attention to business, vigilance in the discharge of his duties, and unbending integrity. He belongs to the radical democratic school, and has upon all occasions raised his voice against grantng excessive corporate privileges, without being awed by the sneers and threats of those who pursue a contrary policy. He would make an excellent auditor general, and prove a worthy successor of Jacob Fry, Jr.

"John Rowe is our candidate for surveyor general. He now fills that office, and so much to the satisfaction of the democracy, that they have determined to continue him for another term. He was nominated by acclamation, and will stand in this contest with the democratic party, upon the democratic platform, maintaining the democratic organization."

The democracy of Rhode Island held their convention in Providence on Thursday. Mr. Elisha R. Potter, of South Kingstown, one of the most prominent men of the State, was nominated for governor, and Mr. Fenner Brown, of Cumberland, for lieutenant governor. Mr. Olney Arnold, of North Providence, was nominated for the eastern, and Mr. Alfred Anthony, of Johnston, for the western congressional districts.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

The Philadelphia Bulletin states that Judge Douglas arrived in that city on the 17th, and had taken rooms at the Girard House.

Second Lieut. John Bennett, of the fourth artillery, U. S. A., died on the 4th ult. at Fort Brown, Texas, of consumption.

THE POSTAL REVENUES.

To the Editors of the Union:

Your correspondent M. P. and I agree that, no money can be drawn from the treasury without appropriation by law, and I agree that if the statutes, when all taken together, peremptorily require the postages to be paid into the treasury before being applied to meet the expenses of the service, that they must go there undiminished for any cause whatever. I contend that when all the laws are construed together they do not require the actual payment of the postage receipts into the treasury. Mr. P. does not deny my assumption that the act of 1825 is in full force, and that it provides: "He [the Postmaster General] shall pay all expenses which shall arise in conducting the Post Office, and in the conveyance of the mail, and all other necessary expenses arising on collection of the revenue and management of the General Post Office. * * * He shall once in three months render to the Secretary of the Treasury a quarterly account of the receipts and expenditures of said department." If in force, the Postmaster General can now act under this provision.

It is not questioned that under this act the balances in the hands of postmasters were drawn through drafts, mostly in favor of mail contractors; nor is it denied that the business, except at a limited number of offices, is now actually transacted in the same manner.

It is not controverted that, under this system, there were quarterly accountings at the treasury, though it was merely formal, and that not a dollar of postage money ever went into or was drawn from the Treasury Department to pay for mail service.

It is not pretended that there is any law expressly prohibiting the use of postage receipts to discharge the expenses of the mail service.

But it is claimed that under these words, found in the first section of the act of 1836, "that the revenues arising in the Post Office Department, and all debts due to the same, shall, when collected, be paid, under the direction of the Postmaster General, into the treasury of the United States," requires all the Post Office revenues to be paid into the treasury. If this provision stood alone, and there had been no practical construction under it, the argument would be plausible, though not conclusive. But there are several other provisions of law, and twenty-two years of practical construction to be considered with it. The following clause, found in the fourth section, shows that it was contemplated that postage money would be used without going into the treasury and being drawn out by appropriation: "That all charges against the department by postmasters, on account of such expenses, (compensation of postmasters, the expenses of their offices, &c.,) shall be submitted for examination and settlement to the Auditor herein provided for; and no such deductions shall be valid unless the expenditure so deducted be found to be made in conformity to law." Under the theory contended for, the postmasters could neither be allowed their commissions nor their expenses unless there was an appropriation for their payment, because appropriations are required for the compensation of postmasters, and for their office expenses, just as emphatically as for mail transportation. If *all* the revenues must go into the treasury, and must remain there until appropriated, then postmasters' commissions (which constitute a portion of this all) must go there also.

The 5th section provides for the appointment of an Auditor, whose duty it is to audit and settle all accounts arising in the department. The following provision shows how the Treasury Department is informed of the receipts and expenditures of the Post Office Establishment, without the money ever actually, or fairly, constructively going into the treasury: "He shall close the accounts of the department quarterly, and *transmit to the Secretary of the Treasury quarterly statements of its receipts and expenditures.*"

These "quarterly statements" lay the foundation for "covering warrants," which constitute the only paying into and drawing out of the treasury. The 9th section directs, among other things, the Postmaster General "to *superintend the disposition of the proceeds of post offices and other moneys of the department; to prescribe the manner in which postmasters shall pay over their balances*, to grant warrants for money to be paid into the treasury and out of the same in pursuance of appropriations by law to persons to whom the same shall be certified to be due by the auditor." Under this authority, the Postmaster General, long since, made the following regulations, which have the force and effect of law, and are found in the Post Office Regulations:

"SEC. 236. No moneys are to be paid directly into the department, neither are any to be paid out directly by it. The proceeds of postage, or moneys received for postage stamps, or stamped envelopes sold, will, therefore, never be remitted by postmasters to the department, nor be paid to any of its officers or agents without due authority from the Postmaster General.

"SEC. 237. For the purpose of paying over the funds of the department, all the post offices, except special offices, are classed either as *deposite* offices, *draft* offices, or *collection* offices. Offices are transferred, from time to time, from one to another of these classes, to suit the convenience of the service, and when such changes are necessary, they are notified to the postmasters, respectively, by a circular letter.

"SEC. 238. Deposite offices are such as are ordered to place, quarterly or oftener, their funds in deposit in some depository.

SEC. 239. Draft offices are such as are ordered to retain their funds in hand to meet drafts drawn by the Postmaster General and countersigned by the Auditor of the Post Office Department.

"SEC. 240. Collection offices are such as are required to pay over their net proceeds quarterly to the mail contractor named in their special instructions upon the production by him, from time to time, of the proper orders and receipts sent to him by the department. In these quarterly payments must be included all moneys received for postage stamps and stamped envelopes sold."

Under these regulations, which make no reference to paying into the treasury, the revenues from postages are collected and expended in defraying the expenses of the service. Except at the six places designated by the subtreasury law, it is not probable that one out of the over 27,000 postmasters ever paid a dollar into the treasury. Nor has the Postmaster General, or any one else, done it for them. Mr. P. does not allege that any money has ever actually been paid into the treasury. The mere constructive payment is shown to be limited to the rendition of quarterly statements, a thing that was done, in effect, if not in form, under the act of 1825.

If the opposite theory is correct, then the Post Office Department has been substantially violating the law of 1836 for more than twenty-two years, because it has not in substance, nor really in form, complied with the first section of that act. It has, in fact, conformed to the law of 1825, and the subsequent and controlling provisions of the act of 1836, which modify and fix the practical meaning of the first section. If the first section is to prevail over the subsequent provisions now quoted, (and which I formerly admitted by mistake,) then every postmaster must collect and send his entire receipts to the treasury, and apparently at his own expense, and there let the same remain until appropriated, and then obtain warrants and draw out the amount to which he may be entitled. Such difficulties and delays would be ruinous to the service. The 10th section of the act of 1836 shows that nothing of the kind was contemplated, and that the object was to establish a suitable system of book-keeping. That section reads:

"That the auditor of the Post Office Department shall state and certify *quarterly* to the Postmaster General accounts of moneys paid, pursuant to appropriations in each year, by postmasters, out of the proceeds of their offices towards the expenses of the department, under each of the heads of said expenses specified in the second section of this act; upon which the Postmaster General shall issue warrants to the treasurer of the United States, *as in the case of the receipt and payment of said moneys into and out of the treasury, in order that the same may be carried to the credit and debit of the appropriation for the service of the Post Office Department on the books of the auditor of said department.*"

This shows the form which is gone through, and that its whole object is a clear and intelligible system of book-keeping, and that the direction to pay all the revenues into the treasury was not intended to be a reality. Still, we are now advised that a compliance with these mere forms, which are fictions in fact, must control and cripple a great branch of the public service. If this is so, then, from 1836 to this day, there has been a continued violation of law in simply conforming to its substance, and carrying out its spirit and intention.

Thus the law stood when Judge Woodbury said that the act of 1836 did "not refer to each individual collection or payment, but the aggregate quarterly and yearly collections and expenditures. This is in order to make them appear on the exhibit of the annual receipts and expenditures of the country, and also in the annual appropriations, which was not the case formerly. This is effected by large 'covering warrants,' quarterly or otherwise, and not by a deposite and warrant in each individual case over the Union." This shows that, in his opinion, the law of 1836 did not require the money to be paid in and drawn out of the treasury, but that all that was contemplated was a formal ceremony to be performed at some subsequent period for the purpose of systematic book-keeping.

Prior to 1849 the revenues from customs, public lands, and other sources, were managed much like those derived rived from the mail service. The expenses of collections were paid out of the receipts before they went into the treasury. The expenses of those collection districts where the revenues were not equal to their expenses were paid by drafts, authorized by the department, upon those offices having a surplus. The expenses of collection were under the sole control of the Secretary, except there were limitations upon the number of some classes of officers. Even expensive revenue cutters were built at his will. A practice sprung up of officers holding on to large amounts collected, under pretence of claims for commissions, &c. To prevent this abuse, the act of March 3, 1849, was passed, the first section of which says:

"That from and after the 30th of June, 1849, the gross amount of all duties received from customs, from the sales of public lands, and from all miscellaneous sources, for the use of the United States shall be paid by the officer or agent receiving the same into the treasury of the United States, at as early a day as practicable, without any abatement or deduction on account of salary, fees, costs, charges, expenses, or claim of any description whatever: *Provided, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to alter the existing laws regulating the collection of the revenues of the Post Office Department.*"

This is the first law requiring these revenues to be paid into the treasury. Since that time Congress has exercised its control over the expenses by making appropriations for their payment. Why was the Post Office Department excepted from this act? Simply because it had a peculiar system of its own, and it was substantially impossible for that department to comply with the provision which was for the first time applied to the collectors of the customs and receivers at the land offices. Here Congress put a legislative construction upon the act so far as to indicate that they thought it was not then required and ought not to be compelled to pay its revenues into the treasury before they could be applied in discharge of debts due for mail service.

The opposite construction would bring the whole mail service to a stand-still when the present appropriations are exhausted. The rent of post offices, when allowed to be paid out of the postage receipts, the fuel to keep them warm, the clerks to transact the business, where allowed, could not be paid, nor could wrapping paper and twine be procured to wrap up letters to go by mail. Neither could bags, locks, or keys be purchased, nor blanks or advertising be paid for, because all these expenses stand upon the same footing as the expense of mail carrying. If any of the postage money must go into the treasury all must go there, because the provision referred to, in words and effect, includes all alike. But for the peculiarity of the provisions of the act of 1851, even stamps could not be supplied, without which no letter can now be sent by mail. If it is conceded that a postmaster can retain his commissions and pay the expenses of his office, then the whole argument is yielded, because they all stand upon the same ground. If one branch of the service for which appropriations have heretofore been made can be paid, then every other branch may also be paid, because if there is a real prohibition in the act of 1836 it extends to each and every branch. I have endeavored to show that the subsequent provisions of that act clearly contemplated that all the money collected could be used and applied without going into the treasury at all, and that the act only contemplated a subsequent formality for a particular purpose. This view has been sanctioned by a practical construction for twenty-two years, and has led to no hazard or abuses, and is in reality in conformity with the provisions of the act of 1825, which is still in force, and under which the department has been acting since the day of its enactment.

The construction for which I contend is a plain, rational one, and does not yield to, or sacrifice the substance of things, to conform to a legal fiction, which the whole act, taken together, does not impose upon the department. I cannot yield to a construction which requires what was designed as a self-sustaining department, should it be crippled and destroyed, and its whole usefulness lost to the public, in order to conform to the supposed mandates of a legal fiction, appearing in the first part of the act, when its subsequent provisions clearly show that book-keeping and mere "covering warrants" were all that was intended, and when such has been its practical interpretation for near a quarter of a century, and when any other construction would render the Post Office establishment substantially an impracticable machine? If the law requires all moneys to go into the treasury, and is to be complied with, over twenty-seven thousand postmasters must transmit the whole proceeds of their offices four times a year to the treasury, and then draw out again so much as shall be allowed to them by the Auditor on settlement. This would make over 108,000 payments into the treasury, and as many out, every year. The law thus construed could hardly be executed.

The authority of the late Attorney General Butler is invoked against my construction, (3 O. Atty. Gen., 13.) This opinion was given to Mr. Kendall in Stockton and Stokes' case; and, although acted upon by the latter, the material point in it has been overruled by the Supreme Court. It has nothing to do with the present issue. It clearly is no authority for construing the act of 1836, because it is dated and was actually given in 1835!

There is another view which may be taken of this law.

It is conceded that the money does not, in fact, go into the treasury, but all that is done is to issue a warrant to cover it into the treasury after it is actually used and applied. It is used before it goes into the treasury, and is not in fact drawn out to be used, but is first applied, and then the ceremony of a covering warrant to draw out is resorted to, to get it out. Now if the act of 1836 requires all the moneys collected to be covered into the treasury, then all that is to be done to comply with the act is to issue a covering warrant to carry the money in. This is a paper ceremony which is easily gone through with, and will be a technical compliance with the law. True, there being no appropriation, it cannot be legally drawn out, but if there was one, nothing could be drawn out, and for the good reason that the warrant was a fiction, and there was nothing to be drawn out. But it would be a compliance in words with the law. Without a warrant to draw it out, the treasurer's accounts would show an amount of money on hand which he never received. But that would be no violation of law. He could not be made liable for what he never received. It would simply be leaving on record an uncancelled fiction to illustrate the absurdity of resorting to fictions, where real practical facts would answer a better purpose. No Postmaster General will ever be impeached or even censured by good and true men for carrying on his department in an honest and fair way, if he omitted to issue a fiction, a mere covering warrant to create one side of an account, or for issuing one, when he had no authority to issue another to create a set off, by another fictitious proceeding for the mere purpose of balancing on the books the first fiction.

MARCH 19, 1859. R. H. G.

DECAY OF ABOLITIONISM IN NEW ENGLAND.

[For the Washington Union.]

BOSTON, March 16, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER: I have read your speech of the 21st ultimo, delivered in the House of Representatives. It has points of considerable smartness, and will be praised by your partisans as a very clever effort; but I see no other effect that it can produce but to irritate the South, and alienate one section of the Union still more from the other. Have we not at the North stimulated our own self-righteousness, in contrast with the sins of the South, quite up to, or beyond the healthy point? Would it not be well for us, for a time, to look more at our own failings and at the virtues of our brethren at the South?

You speak of the change of tone and sentiment that has taken place during the last twenty-five years on the subject of slavery. I plead guilty to the truth of this charge. It was one of the dreams of my early life, that the condition of mankind might be greatly improved by sudden political changes. The cry of the slave came to my youthful ear, wafted by the eloquent breath of eye-witnesses, from Virginia and New Jersey. Almost every man at the South, at that time, admitted that slavery was an evil, moral, social, and political; the horrors of the middle passage, the barbarian cruelties of Jamaica, came to us across the ocean: Wilberforce and Clarkson had acquired a world-wide fame by their singular devotion to the abolition of the slave trade; the assault was soon made upon slavery itself in the British West Indies, and the first of August, 1838, was entered in the calender as one of the holy days of the year.

Campbell painted the wild chieftain on his native plains, so noble, so free, so happy—caught, chained, doomed, suffering, till the hurricanes in the West Indies were commissioned to avenge his wrongs. The plaintive Cowper wept out his compassion in the touching lines, "I would not have a slave for all the gold that sinews bought and sold have ever earned;" and these tones of suffering, of compassion, of pity, were echoed by every harp, and re-echoed by orator and preacher, till the whole atmosphere of New England was vocal with the cries of the slave. I have done my full share of it; but greater men have been mistaken, and have in riper years been compelled to revise and revoke the opinions of earlier days. Burke once was enraptured with the voice of Liberty, as she cried from across the channel; but in the full strength of his manhood, he was compelled to denounce the crimes committed in her name. Sir James McIntosh wrote his "Vindicial Gallicæ;" but was compelled, by a longer experience and a wider observation, to cancel the opinions of early life by those of maturer years. I am compelled to cancel many things that I have said on the subject of slavery, and substitute for them the opinions of riper age. I might have once said what, or nearly what, you have said in your late speech in Congress; though I think I should have left out those portions which serve no other end than simply to irritate, without convincing. But my convictions at the present time are, not only that the slaveholders have a complete vindication of their present position, but they are entitled to be looked upon as benefactors to the country and to the human race.

The only ground on which I can claim their patience and forbearance toward us meddling with their affairs, and for abusing them as much as we have, and as some still continue to do, is this: They gave us the false premises on which we reasoned correctly to false conclusions. They gave away their case by concession; for if slavery be a sin, a wrong, or an evil, no fair mind can resist the conclusion that efforts ought to be made as soon as possible to do it away. This philosophy, that slavery is wrong, sprang up in Virginia, and was adopted and encouraged in nearly all the slave States; and the seed was thence, in connexion with the correct and grand principles of human government, scattered wide over the free States. They have had their growth, and now it is not a little difficult to pull them up; but they shall take the wheat with them also.

The South are impregnable. The constitution protects them, the Bible protects them, and the experience of mankind protects them. Our fathers made a covenant with their fathers. They came into the Union with their African slaves on terms of equality with us, and with all the rights and privileges that we can claim under the same instrument. They would make no covenant except upon terms of equality. We accepted those terms; we could get no better to-day; and yet we should be glad to make it, if it were not made, or to renew it, if broken, and on the same conditions we now have. The South claim the right to go into new territory, and try the new land with their slaves, till the territory becomes a sovereign State, and then bow to its will, as before all other sovereigns. This is a just and equitable claim, founded on a fair interpretation of the constitution. Slavery should be permitted to flow by natural laws to regions for which it is best adapted. It will go nowhere else. You could not force it into New Hampshire, nor keep it there if introduced. The experiment has been tried and failed. Slavery was given up in the northern States not by the force of *moral*, but *natural* laws.

It is true the discussions of the last twenty-five years have produced a great deal of sentiment on the subject of slavery in the northern States; but you know how utterly barren of any good results it has been to the African. In *words*—and because their number is small, and will continue to be small—we have in the extreme North given them the rights of citizenship and equality; but in *works* we deny them. The most respectable colored men in Boston would not be permitted to hire or to own and quietly enjoy a pew in the broad aisle of any fashionable church. In the West, where your soil is more fertile, and where more free colored men would be likely to go, you are more stringent; and the black laws of Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, and Oregon, and the still more expulsive Topeka constitution of Kansas—for which, I believe, you and all your republican associates voted—proclaim, as with trumpet-tongue, the innate and ineradicable prejudice against the African, lurking, as it still does, in the bosom of those whose tongues are eloquent for his rights.

I am not a little surprised at the manner in which you speak of Noah. The Bible calls him a "just man, and perfect in his generation;" and yet because he, by Divine inspiration and by Divine command, foretold the slavery of the children of Ham, you give him some very hard thrusts, and leave him on the pages of your speech with a character by no means so fair as that given him by the sacred historian. Was Noah in the way of your theory, that you strike at him so vigorously, as though you would hew him down? You say he mistook Canaan for Ham. Suppose he did, the prediction and the curse rest somewhere—on some nation. The principle is the same in the Divine administration. Who are the children of Canaan? Tradition and history unite in the belief that they inhabit the continent of Africa. Their condition fulfils, with remarkable fidelity, the prophecy of that "righteous man and preacher of righteousness," Noah. "A servant of servants" was the double curse, which has rested on that continent and race for many centuries. It is covered with a net-work of double slavery—every chief having his retinue of slaves, while he pays tribute to some higher chief or petty king.

You seem to lay great stress upon the fact that the Canaanites were not black. How do you know? Dr. Thompson, who has written, perhaps, the most thorough work on Syria and Palestine that has ever been published, says the ancient inhabitants of that country came from Africa. The great painting of Samson grinding in the mill shows his Philistine drivers very dark, if not black. But you miss the point of the Scriptural precedent and example for slavery. You prove, as you think, that the Canaanites were not black, and then jump at once to the conclusion that, if they were not black, they must have been enslaved because they were *laboring* men. This does very well to stir up prejudice at the North; but is it the truth? The Israelites were permitted to enslave the Canaanites not because they were laboring men, but because they were *heathen*, and thereby so degraded that a transfer to the Hebrew Commonwealth, where the true God was worshipped, was a privilege and a blessing.

This furnishes the parallel point on which American slaveholders rely with great confidence. The Africans were taken from the most degraded heathenism, and are here taught to worship the true God; and, in the opinion of every Bible man, more of them have been fitted for and gone to heaven from the thousands in America than from the millions in Africa. Dr. Dwight said, after long experience and wide observation, that he never knew but one lazy man converted. And as God had some chosen people in Africa, it was necessary that they should be taught to work in order to their conversion. But in the South they are not allowed to read the Bible. Well, in Africa, they neither read it, hear of it, nor from it. Faith cometh by hearing; and is it not better to hear the truth than to live entirely destitute of it?

You quote the eighth commandment as a prohibition of slavery. This is singular. Were your ancestors thieves? They brought, or assented to the bringing of slaves to this country. It is a singular fact, that while we boast of our Puritan ancestry, the laws of the present day would hang half the men that lived a hundred years ago, as engaged in the slave traffic, directly or indirectly; and another law would imprison all the men who lived forty years since. The eighth commandment was given on the way out of Egypt. It was the charter, the constitution of the Hebrew nation. All their other laws were controlled by the Decalogue. Well, now what? Why, they had slaves by Divine permission under this charter. How could they, if the eighth commandment forbids it? But are the slaves stolen? Certainly not by Americans. They buy them, pay for them, transfer them, and provide for them, in the only and most benevolent manner in which it can be done. As to the metaphysical abstraction, that man cannot have property in man, it has been contradicted from the foundation of the world to the present time. Holding, use, and transfer, are the elements of property; and this has been done by men to men in all ages; and yet you say that there is no word in the good old Hebrew tongue that conveys the idea of property in man. When a master inadvertently killed his slave, no blood was to be shed, for "*he was his money.*" Does not that mean property?

It cannot be denied that the idea of slavery runs all through the Bible; it was stamped upon the entire history of the Jewish nation, and upon the history of every vigorous nation upon the face of the earth; indeed I strongly suspect this is the normal condition of large portions of a depraved race, and I can readily believe that a man may sustain the relation of slaveholder, in all good conscience, and with the entire Divine approbation. *There are visible footprints of God's disapprobation of the abolitionism of this country.* Look at the flocks of unclean beasts and birds that have come up out of its train. Infidels that curse God, abuse every man of good character, and then praise humanity in general to counterbalance their malignity and blasphemy. Out of the abstract rights of man have grown the more abstract rights of woman; and once respectable wives call St. Paul a crusty old bachelor, and Abraham a tyrant, because Sarah obeyed him, and Paul makes mention of the fact. The second edition of the rights of woman is divorce, "affinity," and universal concubinage. We have far more of these immoral tendencies in the northern States than they have at the South. Is it not time to look at home?

The truth is, we have been wont to contemplate the condition of the slaves at the South from a wrong point of view. We compare them with races or nations more highly civilized, and their condition seems a harsh and degraded one; but what were they when the Christian nations took them by the hand and led them across the ocean? American slavery has produced and cultivated more African intellect, more social affection, more Christian emotion in two hundred years than all Africa (Central and Southern) for two thousand years. American slavery is a redemption, a deliverance from African heathenism. "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty;" and no part of the earth is more dark or more filled with cruelty than Africa. Treading beneath their feet one of the most fertile soils, they cultivate almost nothing—live on fruits and nuts, with few cattle, and little commerce. They are in the first place lazy beyond all hope of self improvement. They will not work. Now, God has ordained the law of labor so surely, and so universally, that if barbarians will not work, civilization will yoke them up and drive them to it. This is fixed, sure as light and gravity. Why not? Why should one quarter of the globe, one section of the human family do nothing for the race? If Ham will not bring timber for the ark, Shem and Japheth will drive him to it.

But Africa is not only a great wilderness of loungers, but out of this idleness grow all manner of vices. Work is salvation. Work regenerates the earth and man. Work is progress, and without it nothing. The title deed of the earth to man had this proviso: that he should subdue it and multiply upon it. Now, if he only multiplies and does not subdue, he has only a *squatter sovereignty*—no certified title till he builds his house and tills his farm. Hence the Indian must be driven out; he will not work on any condition, neither self-moved nor driven by the hand of another, and, therefore, the last tomahawk of the red man will soon hang as a trophy in the halls of the conqueror. Now, the African works patiently and well when driven to it; he will work on no other condition. His climate is a terrible protection from white invasion, therefore he must be transported and taught to work, thereby civilized, thereby christianized, thereby improved every way, and perhaps by-and-by sent back to yoke up and subdue his whole continent, according to the pattern that has been shown him in this working bee-hive of America.

You touch in no very fraternal manner some of the social vices of your brethren at the South. Perhaps if they deserved the stone, it should hardly come from a northern hand; the garments of our cities are dripping with the waters of Sodom, and some of the western States sunder the marriage covenant with as little consideration as the most ruthless slaveholder. Sensuality is not at this hour producing as much social degradation nor destroying as many lives at the South as at the North; but this is not the point. What were the blacks socially when taken from Africa? The King of Dahomey has four hundred wives, whom he employs in carrying palm oil to the coast, and thence new rum and tobacco back to the palace for their husband and king. This rum and tobacco are the joint production of slavery and freedom. Slavery produces the tobacco and molasses, and then we Yankees make the rum and send them both in our vessels to the coast of Africa to buy oil gathered by women and carried on their heads in jars from fifty to two hundred miles. They are driven along by a herd of lazy men, and stepping carefully every minute under the express condition that if one pot of oil is spilled, one head of a woman and a wife must be cut off to atone for it.

Now, is it any great sin to catch a set of these lazy fellows, that live on the earnings of their wives, learn them to work, make them work, teach them to love one another and to love their children, so that their highest ambition shall no longer be to buy an extra number of wives that they may have a few "pickaninnies" (children) to sell? A wild African recently brought to Boston by a merchant begged for an old gun which he saw. When asked what he wanted of it, he replied, "to buy a wife and have pickaninnies to sell." Is it any harm to yoke up such men and work the laziness and the brutality out of them? Yes, but you say there is a better way to do it. There may be, but it wants the evidence of a successful experiment. The Moravians once kindled their altars of devotion all around the African coast, but the waves of barbarism have extinguished them. Jamaica, in spite of devoted missionaries, British philanthropy, and American sympathy is fast receding through idleness to barbarism. Half a million of people there in twenty years have not lifted as many spades of earth as twenty thousand Yankees in California in one-third of the time. If this half million had the twenty thousand to lead them and guide them and plan for them, then that island, which was once a fruitful field, would not be going back to a wilderness. The best thing that could be done for Africa, if they could live there, would be to send them a hundred thousand American slaveholders, to work them up to some degree of civilization.

It is charged that the life of the slave at the South is sometimes at the mercy of the master. In Africa the immediate body servants of every chief, at his death, are at once beheaded and hurried forward to attend the new wants of their old master. Is it wicked to buy these devoted victims of heathenism and put them under the protection of civilized, and often of Christian masters? Just in proportion as the price of these slaves is raised in Africa, just to that degree is there a motive to the heirs to spare their lives. So far as Africa is concerned, the slave trade was and is humane in its operations; its abolition was the result of sentiment, and not the determination of calm and deliberate statesmanship. That it was not called for by the condition of the world nor by any deep-seated moral sentiment, is proved from the fact, that the nation foremost in its abrogation has now revived it on other shores and under another name, adding to whatever sin there is in the direct open slave trade, the other sin of hypocrisy and false pretence.

Jamaica wants laborers, not because there are not plenty of them on the island, but because they will not work; and the same British philanthropy which stands guard over the stalwart and immensely lazy son of Ham, brings in the feebler children of Shem, and dooms them to the same bondage under another name.

Honor to the sagacious and far-seeing statesmen of Georgia and South Carolina, almost the only consistent slave States in the Union; for they breasted the united streams of British and American fanaticism, claimed and maintained their rights, and saved the South from barrenness and desolation, the North from a civil war, and the negroes from barbarism. If more laborers are needed for Texas, Central America, parts of Mexico and Cuba, they ought to be brought, without objections, under such humane regulations as are made in other cases for the comfort of passengers. These laborers should come from Africa, because they are stronger and make better slaves than any of the copper-colored races, because they are more susceptible of transformation, and their improvement will be greater, and, lastly, because they are the most degraded.

As to the influence of slavery on the character of the whites, that is quite another question; but so far as the political history of our country is concerned, it is not easy to see how we could do without the slaveholders. See how their names shine along and adorn the past history of our country: Washington, Jefferson, the Randolphs, Bayard, Pinckney, Madison, Monroe, Crawford, Rutledge, Jackson, Calhoun, Clay, Benton—blot out these names, and a countless host of others, from the slave States, and what a blank is left in our history. And do you not find men from these States now in Congress, fully the peers of any that you can name from the North in statesmanship, honor, integrity, patriotism, and high moral and religious character? Do you not see some bright and shining lights around you from the South? I have read no speeches that give more entire