A Defence

of

NEGRO SLAVERY,

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OF COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI.

MONTGOMERY:

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1846.
the climate was not adapted to the constitution of the Negro—hence one of the causes of the great mortality among the blacks at the North. Nor is the North adapted to the growth of those products, in the cultivation of which Slave labor is most profitable. From this it appears that our Northern friends are entitled to no particular credit for abolishing Slavery; they almost invariably sold their Negroes, before the law could take effect which they had passed abolishing Slavery.

But let us now proceed to other considerations: there are obstacles to abolition not yet mentioned. Even if our abolition friends could convince us that Slavery was an evil that we should get clear of as soon as possible, there would still be several insuperable obstacles to abolition. Our Slave population at this time numbers about three millions of souls, estimated to be worth one thousand millions of dollars. This is a vast amount of property, which no five millions of people in the world will voluntarily give up for the sake of conscience. But as large as this amount is, it is only one item: the depreciation in value of our land, and other property, as the result of abolition, would equal the value of the Negroes—that is, one thousand millions of dollars.

In a word, the abolition of Slavery at the
South, would impoverish every Slave State in the Union, with probably one or two exceptions; and the result would not be much different in the non-slaveholding States. The South furnishes the raw material to the North, for most of their manufactures, and likewise their only customers. England, France—in fact, the whole world, would feel the shock of abolition. As strange as may seem the assertion, it is nevertheless true, that most of the navigation, commerce, manufactures, wealth, and power of the civilized nations of the world are dependent on the Slave labor of this, and a few other countries. Abolish Slavery, and you throw back society into a state of barbarism—you dry up its resources—the means of its prosperity—and check civilization for centuries to come. Without wealth, there can be no civilization—no refinement—no progress: and this wealth is dependent on the Slave labor in southern countries.

But let us suppose all difficulties overcome, and Slavery abolished throughout the South. I will for a moment trace the consequences of such a step. I will assume a fact which I presume none will deny: that the Slaves, if emancipated, would have to remain on this continent, and among the whites; as it would be utterly impos-
sible to remove them. The Negroes would be too poor to remove themselves, even if they were disposed to leave; and the whites, impoverished, as they would be, could not help them. Such being the fact, I will now proceed to state some of the consequences of abolition.

One of the most obvious of these consequences would be, an increase of distance between the two races. Nature has marked broad lines of distinction between them, which will ever, in this country at least, keep them widely separated, and it must be acknowledged that this is a wise and salutary provision of nature, to keep the two races distinct and separate. It is a principle similar to that which separates the different races of animals, but operating, of course, with less intensity. This principle of repulsion, whilst operating with sufficient force to keep the two races separate in the Slaveholding States, does not proceed to that violent extent that it does at the North. At the North, bitter and deep-rooted prejudices exist against the colored race: whilst there is a legal equality, there is the most striking practical inequality, in all the departments of life. The two races are kept apart in every relation of life.

A man, then, who would even temporarily put
himself upon an equality with the Negroes, would be forever disgraced.

At the South, the black race stands much nearer the white, than at the North. The white man knows that the Negro is not, and never can be his equal, nor even desires to be. There is not, then, between the two races, that spirit of jealousy and rivalry that exists at the North. An acknowledged inferior is always treated with more respect and kindness in his subordinate, dependent position, than when he aspires to an equality. In the former relation, a kindly paternal feeling is engendered, which operates as a protection to the inferior: when, on the contrary, the inferior aspires to an equality, this kindly, paternal feeling gives way to a feeling of repulsive hate and jealousy. This accounts for the greater distance between the two races North, than at the South.

Should Slavery be abolished among us, this repulsive feeling will been gendered to an alarming extent, that will endanger, at least temporarily, the peace and good order of society. It will be carried to an extent much beyond what it is at the North, on account of the very near equality of numbers between the two races at the South. The black race at the North may stand a degree of neglect, contempt, and hatred, which the same
race at the South, if free, would resent with indignation: for I take it for granted, that no people in the world can be found, that would submit quietly to be maltreated, if they had the power to redress their grievances. The blacks at the North are too few in numbers to resist: they have in consequence, with but few exceptions, submitted quietly to all the indignities which have been heaped upon them. It would be far otherwise at the South, where the two races are nearly equal in numbers: hence maltreatment of the black race would be met with resistance, and a state of turmoil and strife, the consequences of which could not be foreseen, would invariably ensue. Riots, murders, mobs, pillage, and general discontentment and alarm, would be the order of the day. A strong military force, kept up at enormous expense, would be necessary to preserve the public peace.

The Negroes might even attempt the general destruction of the white race. Being free, they could act in concert from one end of the country to the other: and though I do not believe that success would crown their efforts, they might, nevertheless, do much mischief, before their course could be arrested. There would exist at all times, even in the absence of civil strife, a
general feeling of disquietude throughout the country. At present there is a feeling of the most perfect security throughout the South: we know our Negroes, and feel perfectly satisfied that there is scarcely the shadow of a reason to apprehend insurrection. Through the long period of our history, there have been fewer disturbances of the public peace on the part of the Negroes, than from the working classes of any other country in the world. Riot after riot has occurred at the North, and in England, France, and other countries; whilst at the South, with but few unimportant exceptions, the most perfect harmony and good order has been preserved. We have had two or three partial insurrections, in which a few white persons have been killed, and these constitute all the difficulties which we have had with our Negroes, throughout the long period of our history.

But other evils would follow emancipation, one of which is idleness, on the part of the blacks. It is estimated that the black population of the world amounts to about one hundred millions of souls: of this number about sixty millions are in Africa, and forty millions in other countries. Now of all this large population, these cannot be found a single nation, or tribe, in the possession of freedom, that are industrious, economical and thrifty:
and this is not only the case now, but it has always been so. The Africans have existed in their own country as a separate people for thousands of years past, yet not a step have they taken in civilization—not the slightest advance have they made in agricultural, mechanical, or manufacturing industry. The Negro in Africa is as ignorant as he was thousands of years ago. Other nations have advanced in a wonderful manner, even in their immediate vicinity; but still they have remained stationary; showing, in the most conclusive manner, their inferiority to the Caucasian. If there was not a radical inferiority on the part of the blacks, there certainly would have been some evidence to the contrary, in the long period of near four thousand years.

In the island of St. Domingo, where the Negroes have been for fifty-odd years, there has been a constant decline in every branch of industry. The quantity of sugar exported from the island, before the Negroes gained their independence, amounted to 163,000,000 lbs. annually. The quantity now exported, after fifty-five years of freedom, is scarcely worth naming: it has dwindled down almost to nothing. The same is true, but not quite to the same extent, with coffee: in a word, every branch of industry has declined
to an enormous extent: the decline, it is estimated, is as one hundred and fifty compared to fifteen.

As an evidence of the idleness of the Negroes in St. Domingo, and the vices to which idleness necessarily leads, I take the following from the Westminster Review, for October, 1842. The account was written by an eye-witness of the scene:

"On the very night of the earthquake, the canaille of the town began thieving on a small scale, but it was on the third day that the sack and plunder commenced en grand. On that day the country people flocked in, and for eight or ten successive days it was one continued scene of open, undisguised, sword-in-hand pillage. No town given up to a victorious army, was ever so thoroughly gutted. The merchant's stores on the Bord de la Mer were the most especial objects of spoliation.

Every man was armed, and bloody fights were of common occurrence, over the division of the spoil, or when a stronger party attempted to wrest the booty from a weaker. Not the slightest effort was made by the authorities to keep order. The great hardship is, that soldiers and officers, who should have been our protectors, vied with each other in the unholy work of robbing the wounded and the dying. No foreigner, but at the imminent risk of his life, could have put a foot on the ruins of his house, to save even a change of clothes: to attempt such a thing would have been extreme fool-hardiness. The robbers killed each other in
and before the stores for a piece of cotton check. What, then, could an owner of property and a foreigner expect, if he dared to interfere with them?"

Here we have a picture of a population, starting fifty-five years ago in the race of freedom, under highly favorable circumstances. They had acquired habits of industry, and learned to some extent the arts of life, when in a state of Slavery; but no sooner did they commence their career of freedom, than they commenced a rapid decline. Becoming idle, vicious, and utterly reckless, they soon abandoned their fields, their workshops, and all other branches of regular industry.

The Negroes have not done better in the British West India Islands, where emancipation has been of more recent date. The Negroes have already become idle and vicious to an extent that

**Hayti.**—The condition of this Negro republic is beginning to attract attention in England. The wars between the blacks and the Mulattoes are ferocious and exterminating. The London Times says:

"Military movements, fears, and general agitation, are fast completing the ruin of the order, such as it was, that existed under Boyer: agriculture and business are almost suspended; sugar is even imported for consumption into this island that might supply the world. The intervention of some powerful nation is imperiously called for to mediate between the colors. The independence of the east should be acknowledged, when each party might range itself under its own color, as the present state of things will cause it to retrograde into worse than African barbarism."