
THE AMERICAN WAR AND SLAVERY.

SPEECH

OF THE

HON. GEORGE BROWN,

AT THE

ANNIVERSARY MEETING

OF THE

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY OF CANADA,

HELD AT TORONTO,

ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1863.

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THE HON. GEORGE BROWN, in moving the second resolution, spoke as follows:—**Mr. Chairman**, I have frequently enjoyed the privilege of addressing my fellow-citizens in the public halls of our city, but I say sincerely that I never before experienced such heartfelt pleasure in appearing on a public platform as I do on this occasion. The Anti-Slavery Society of Canada has been many for years in existence, but I see around me not a few who, long before its establishment, were the earnest and untiring friends of the down-trodden slave. For twenty-five years many of us have striven together to promote the cause of emancipation; and long, long years we laboured almost without hope to arouse our neighbours to the frightful position they occupied in the eyes of the Christian world, and to goad them on, if possible, to some vigorous effort towards the suppression of the inhuman traffic that disgraced their land. How earnestly did we watch every passing event in the Republic that promised some little amelioration to the condition of the slave, or some additional influence to the friends of emancipation. Sad, hopeless work it appeared to be for many, many years! But at last light broke in upon the scene—and, now, what a change has passed over the whole picture! (Cheers.) What man among us ten years—aye, five years ago—ever expected to see the day when the cause of emancipation should occupy the position it does at this moment in the American Republic! (Cheers.) For several years it has happened that I have not been able to be present at the annual meetings of this society—but well do I recollect the work we had on hand at the last meeting I attended. Our work then was to mark and deplore the increasing power of the slave interest over the Federal Government, to denounce the infamous Fugitive Slave Law as a disgrace to civilization, and to express our hearty sympathy with the noble, but inconsiderable band of true men, throughout the Republic, who were standing firm for the cause of liberty. That, sir, was a very short time ago; but what an entire revolution have these few brief years witnessed. Now, sir, we have an anti-slavery President of the United States. (Cheers.) Now, sir, we have an anti-slavery

Government at Washington. (Cheers.) Now, sir, we have an anti-slavery Congress at Washington. (Continued cheers.) Already slavery has been abolished in the district of Columbia. (Cheers.) At last a genuine treaty for the suppression of the slave trade has been signed at Washington with the Government of Great Britain, and for the first time in her history the penalty of death has been enforced in the Republic for the crime of man-stealing. (Cheers.) Further, the Black Republic of Hayti and Liberia have been recognised by the United States as independent powers—and, even more important still, the vast territories of the United States have been prohibited by law from entering the Republic except as Free States. (Continued cheers.) And, sir, the climax was reached a month ago, when Abraham Lincoln, as President of the United States, proclaimed that from that moment every slave in the rebel States was absolutely free, and that the Republic was prepared to pay for the freedom of all the slaves in the loyal States. The freely-elected Government and Legislature of the United States have proclaimed that not with their consent shall one slave remain within the Republic. (Great cheering.) Was I not right then, sir, when I said that we ought to rejoice together to-night? I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman (Rev. Dr. Willis) on the issue of your forty years' contest here and on the other side of the Atlantic on behalf of the American slave—I congratulate the venerable mover of the first resolution (Rev. Dr. Burns) who, for even a longer period, has been the unflinching friend of freedom—I congratulate the tried friends of emancipation around me on the platform, and the no less zealous friends of the cause throughout the hall, whose well-remembered faces have been ever present when a word of sympathy was to be uttered for the down-trodden and the oppressed. Who among us ever hoped to see such a day as this? And does it not well become us to meet as we are now doing to proclaim anew our earnest sympathy with the friends of freedom in the Republic, our hearty gratification at the great results that have been accomplished, and our gratitude to the men who staked life and fortune on the effort to strike the shackles from the bondsman. (Cheers.) Sir, I care not to pry narrowly into the motives of all those who have contributed to bring about this great change in the Republic. I care not to examine critically the precise mode by which it has been brought about. I care not to discuss the arguments by which it has been promoted or defended in the Republic. What to us signifies all this? We see before us the great fact that the chains have already fallen from the hands of tens of thousands of human chattels—we see that if the policy of the present Government at Washington prevails, the curse of human slavery will be swept from our continent for ever—and our hearts go up with earnest petitions to the God of battles that he will strengthen the hands of Abraham Lincoln and give wisdom to his councils. (Cheers.) But, Mr. Chairman, we have yet another duty to perform. In the face of all the wonderful progress that the anti-slavery cause has made in the United States—in defiance of the decided emancipation measure of Mr. Lincoln's Government—it is the fact, the strange and startling fact, that professing Abolitionists—nay, genuine Abolitionists—men who have done much for negro emancipation—are to be found both here and in Great Britain, who not only refuse their sympathy to Mr. Lincoln, but regard the slave-trafficking Government of Jefferson Davis with something very much akin to sympathy and goodwill. (Hear, hear.) As you are aware, sir, I have recently returned from a visit to Great Britain—and I am bound to say that I was astonished and grieved at the feeling with which I found the contest now waging in the United States generally regarded. In my six months' journeyings

through England and Scotland, I had opportunities of conversing with a very large number of persons in all positions of life, and I am sorry to say that, while there were many marked exceptions among men of thought and influence, the general sympathy was very decidedly on the side of the South. I entirely agree with you, sir, that this feeling has not originated from any change in the popular mind of Great Britain on the subject of African slavery. On the contrary, I believe the hatred of slavery, and the desire for emancipation all over the world, are nearly as strong as ever. In almost every one of the hundreds of discussions in which I was a participator, it was again and again repeated by all, that could they believe African slavery to be the cause of the civil war, and that Mr. Lincoln was sincerely desirous of bringing the horrid traffic to an end, they would promptly and heartily give their sympathy to his cause. But the truth is that the systematic misrepresentation of the *London Times* and other journals, commenced shortly after the outbreak of the civil war and diligently kept up ever since, has perverted the public mind of Great Britain, and the most amazing misconceptions as to the true nature of the struggle are everywhere met with, and that even among the most candid and generous-minded men. (Hear.) I have said, sir, that to this general state of feeling there are many eminent exceptions—but there are men in Britain who perfectly comprehend the whole merits of the contest—and pre-eminently among these, I believe, stand the members of the British Cabinet. I entirely agree with you, sir, that the whole policy and conduct of the British Government throughout the war has been worthy of all praise, and I do think it is much to be regretted that our neighbours across the lines have not viewed aright the wise course it has pursued, but have permitted their journals, and some of their public speakers, to indulge in accusations as groundless as impolitic. When the impartial history of this civil war shall be written, that page of it which will record the part taken in it by the British Government—its dignified disregard of contumacy—its patient endurance of commercial distress and individual suffering and destitution directly resulting from the war—its firm and persistent resistance of the seductions of other Powers to intrude unasked in the domestic affairs of the republic—will, I am persuaded, stand out as an imperishable monument to the wisdom and justice of the men who held the helm. (Cheers.) Whatever misconceptions may exist among the people, there have been no misconceptions on the part of the British Government: firmly and discreetly it has pursued the only course open to it, that of scrupulous neutrality. That the sympathies of the people of England have not been with the North in the present struggle—that those who urged the American people to throw off the disgrace of slavery have not acted up to their own principles when their advice was followed and the contest came—that aid and encouragement have been given to the slaveocracy by subjects of Great Britain—we are forced to concede and deplore; but the British people are a fine people, over these things their Government has little or no control, and what has been done by the British Government, as a Government, has been all that any just American could demand. (Cheers.) Now, Mr. Chairman, I humbly conceive that in all this we, the anti-slavery men of Canada, have an important duty to discharge. We who have stood here on the borders of the Republic for a quarter of a century protesting against slavery as the “sum of all human villainies”—we who have closely watched every turn of the question—we who have for years acted and sympathized with the good men of the Republic in their efforts for the freedom of their country—we who have a practical knowledge of the atrocities of

the "peculiar institution," learnt from the lips of the panting refugee upon our shores—we who have in our ranks men well known on the other side of the Atlantic as life-long Abolitionists—we, I say, are in a position to speak with confidence to the anti-slavery men of Great Britain; to tell them that they have not rightly understood this matter—to tell them that slavery is the one great cause of the American rebellion, and that the success of the North is the death-knell of slavery. (Cheers.) Strange, sir, after all that has passed, that a doubt of this should remain! The North declares that it was the determination to perpetuate and extend slavery that caused the South to appeal to arms; the South declares that the determination of the North to abolish slavery caused the election of Mr. Lincoln, and that this is the great end and aim of Mr. Lincoln's Government; the whole thirty millions of the American people unite in declaring slavery to be the one great issue of the war; but these good people, thousands of miles off, who never had their feet on American soil, are satisfied that they know better, and that slavery has no concern in the matter! Tens of thousands of lives have been lost, hundreds of millions of treasure have been spent, the peace and happiness of every family in the land have been broken up; but it seems the combatants are in entire ignorance of the cause of quarrel—the whole contest is a mere strife for power! Now, sir, we who have watched the struggle from its commencement, and from day to day, almost from hour to hour, well know how erroneous all this is. We can look back to the time when the Abolitionists of the States were a small and feeble party; we can recollect when James G. Birney, the abolition candidate for the Presidency, received no more than six thousand votes in the whole Republic; we can recollect when noble old John Quincy Adams stood almost alone battling in Congress for the first right of freemen—the sacred right of petition; we can remember how completely and how ruthlessly the slave influence dominated over the whole affairs of the Republic; and well can we remember when the first ray of hope broke in upon us when the slaveocracy, growing insolent in their day of power, rushed to their own destruction by the repeal of the Missouri compromise that laid down the line of demarcation between Slavery and Freedom. That act did more for the cause of emancipation than tongue can tell. The fierce contests fought in Kansas and Nebraska between Freedom and Slavery added immensely to the strength of the friends of freedom; and the atrocious Fugitive Slave Law, compelling the freemen of the North to become slot hounds on their own farms after the human chattels of the slaveholders of the South, roused a feeling deep and strong throughout the free States. It was soon apparent that the time had come when the issue between Freedom and Slavery for supremacy in the Republic must be fought and won. That feeling, sir, increased and strengthened, until it became overwhelming in the Northern States; and under its influence the great Republican party was formed, and Abraham Lincoln selected as their standard-bearer in the Presidential contest. (Cheers.) Now, let it be well remembered, that Mr. Lincoln was not elected as an abolitionist, in the sense ordinarily applied to that term. He did not openly avow that slavery was an outrage on all law, human and Divine—and that every law or constitution framed to legalize and establish it should be treated with contempt, and the vile traffic swept away. Mr. Lincoln and the party who elected him did not go that length. They said: We want nothing more than the Constitution gives us; we wish to abolish slavery wherever we have control under the Constitution; we wish to restrict slavery within its present domain, so far as the Constitution permits us

to do ; we wish to exercise our constitutional right to prevent the extension of slavery over the territories of the Republic not yet admitted as States of the Union. That was the sum and substance of the Republican demand : they stood by the Constitution. And when it is asked why the Northern men have always averred that they were fighting for the Union and the Constitution, and not for abolition, it should be borne in mind that the Constitution gave them all the power that they could possibly desire. Well did they know, and well did the Southerners know, that an anti-slavery President and Congress, by their direct power of legislation, by their control of the public patronage, and by their application of the public moneys, could not only restrict slavery within its present boundaries, but could secure its ultimate abolition. The South perfectly comprehended that Mr. Lincoln, if elected, might keep within the letter of the Constitution, and yet sap the foundations of the whole slave system. And they acted accordingly. A great and final effort was resolved on by the Slave Power for the mastery of the Union ; and it was insolently proclaimed that if the Northern electors dared to elect Mr. Lincoln to the Presidential chair, the South would secede from the Union, and force their secession by an appeal to arms. The present rebellion, then, was conceived and planned, not only before Mr. Lincoln appeared at Washington, but previous to his election ; and the sole ground on which it was threatened was his determination to restrict the limits of slavery so far as he had the power under the Constitution, and no further. Well, sir, the North was not intimidated by the threats of the South, and Mr. Lincoln was elected. (Cheers.) From that day actual revolution began. Months before he was sworn in, the Southerners, with the connivance of a weak Democratic President, commenced their preparations for revolt. Arms and supplies were distributed over the South, and before Mr. Lincoln reached Washington the tocsin of civil war had been sounded. The first blow was struck by the Southerners--- it was struck at Fort Sumter---although Mr. Lincoln had not yet taken the slightest step in the direction of emancipation. The preservation and perpetuation of slavery was the one cause why that blow was struck ; and had any doubt on that point existed, the speech of Mr. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederate States, delivered at Savannah in March last, would have effectually removed it. He said :---

“ Last, not least, the new Constitution has put at rest *for ever* all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution---African slavery as it exists among us, the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson, in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the ‘rock upon which the old union would split.’ He was right. What was conjecture with him is now a realized fact. But whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which the rock stood and stands, may be doubted. The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen of the time of the formation of the old Constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature, that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically. * * * * Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation ; and the idea of a Government built upon it---when ‘the storm came and the winds blew, it fell.’ Our new Government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas ; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man ; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition. This, our new Government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.”

Here the issue between North and South is clearly and frankly stated,

and those who sympathise with the South can see very plainly what it is they are aiding to establish. But, Mr. Chairman, the question is constantly put: Why, when Mr. Lincoln and his Government saw that the Southern States were determined to leave the Union, did they not let them go in peace, and save the frightful effusion of blood that has been witnessed? To this, sir, I think it might be enough for an American to reply: Why did not England let the thirteen States go? Why did not Britain let Ireland go? Why did not Austria let Hungary go? Why does not the Pope let the people of Rome go? We have often heard of parts or sections of States desiring to secede, sometimes with reason and sometimes without, but who ever heard of the central authority of any country patiently acquiescing in the dismemberment of their land? Such a concession is not in human nature, however reasonable the demand for it. But, it is contended, the South had the right to secede; the Republic was but a collection of independent States, surrendering for a while their sovereignty, but holding the right to assume it at any moment. Now, sir, I do not think it worth while to waste time in discussing this point. I have failed to meet with any proof that the Federation was only assented to for a limited time. The argument seems to rest simply on the plea that as the States freely chose to enter the Union, so may they freely choose to depart. Well, sir, Scotland freely entered into union with England—but does that prove that Scotland can separate when she chooses? Ireland entered the union with Great Britain not over willingly—but does that prove that she can leave it when she chooses? No doubt, the Southern States, like Scotland or Ireland, may break the compact and go—if they have the power—but success would be revolution, and failure rebellion. (Cheers.) Governments exist for the good of the whole people. We once had a glorious revolution in England—(cheers)—and assuredly when the Government of any country ceases to be administered for the essential benefit of the people, a revolution is the sound and politic remedy. The world no longer admits the Divine right of either Kings or Presidents to govern wrong—but those who seek to change an established Government by force of arms, assume a fearful responsibility—a responsibility which nothing but the clearest and most intolerable injustice will acquit them for assuming. The Southern States plead as their excuse for revolution that Abraham Lincoln was fairly and constitutionally elected President of the Republic, and that the permanency of slavery was thereby placed in danger. Is that a plea to be accepted by the civilized world in the second half of the nineteenth century? Revolutions have usually arisen from efforts of the oppressed to deliver themselves from bondage; but here is an attempt at revolution to perpetuate slavery, to fasten more hopelessly than ever the chains of servitude on the limbs of four millions of human beings,—(cheers)—is it with that Christian England can sympathise? Ought not an outburst of indignation at such a spectacle be heard from every land? (Cheers.) There is no justice, no right, in the case of the Southern slaveholders; it is simply a question of might. If they have the power to go, of course they will go—

A VOICE—They have gone!

ANOTHER VOICE—That's so!

MR. BROWN—Not quite yet; but whether they go or stay is now of comparatively little moment. What does concern us, and what must rejoice every true-hearted man in Christendom, is that go when they may, they will go without their slaves. (Great cheering.) We owe that much, at any rate, to Abraham Lincoln and his friends. (Continued cheering.) But, Mr. Chairman, let us return to the question, why did

not Mr. Lincoln let the Slave States go? And before proceeding to examine that question from an anti-slavery point of view, will you permit me, sir, to make a digression, and, speaking for myself and not for any other, to give an answer with which I am persuaded every true British heart ought to sympathise. Sir, we all know the prejudice at this moment against the United States in Great Britain and Canada; we know well all that is said, and that unfortunately can be said with too much truth, as to the statesmanship of the Republic—as to the tone assumed by the Americans towards foreign nations—as to the defects in their political system, and as to the conduct of the civil war; but were all that is alleged on these grounds true—were vastly more than is averred, true—I do think that no man who loves human freedom and desires the elevation of mankind could contemplate without the deepest regret a failure of that great experiment of self-government, across the lines. (Hear, hear.) Had Mr. Lincoln consented to the secession of the Southern States, had he admitted that each State could at any moment and on any plea take its departure from the Union, he would simply have given his consent to the complete rupture of the Federation. The Southern States and the Border States would have gone—the Western states might soon have followed—the States on the Pacific would not have been long behind—and where the practice of secession, once commenced, might have ended, it would be difficult to say. Petty Republics would have covered the continent, each would have had its standing army and its standing feuds;—and we, too, in Canada, were it only in self-defence, must have been compelled to arm. I, for one, sir, cannot look back on the history of the American Republic without feeling that all this would be a world-wide misfortune. How can we ever forget that the United States territory has, for nearly a century, been an ever-open asylum for the poor and the persecuted of every land? Millions have fled from suffering and destitution in every corner of Europe, to find happy homes and overflowing prosperity in the Republic; and I confess I know no more wonderful or more delightful spectacle than to pass (as you easily can) for thousands of miles along the high roads of the Republic, and witness the wonderful material success that has been achieved by men who, a few short years ago, landed on the American shore, for the most part without means and without education. Is there a human being who could rejoice that all this should be ended? And who could fail bitterly to regret the effect of such a catastrophe on the politics of Europe? Who can tell how much influence the great American Republic has exerted on the liberties of the world. Circumstances have caused me to search deep and often into the debates of the British Parliament, and I confess I have been frequently struck by the constant references in the speeches of our greatest statesmen, for nearly a century past, to American practices, American precedents, and American institutions. These may not have been copied by the mother country, but it is impossible to doubt that on many important questions the free theories and free examples of America have greatly influenced for good the legislation of Great Britain. And if this has been the case under the good government of Britain, what influence may not have been exerted upon the despotic systems of the European continent? Can the hosts of Frenchmen, Austrians, Prussians, Italians, and other Europeans, who found homes in the United States, have failed to waft across the Atlantic or to carry back with them to their native lands, the new ideas of popular rights acquired in the land of their adoption?—and would it not be sad indeed if the echo of these ideas so often heard on the Continent, in the shape of demands for extended popular rights and free constitutions, could be met by the

despotic rulers of Europe with the taunt to look at America and learn how free constitutions and popular rights ended in disruption and anarchy? Who can deny that the American constitution, as framed by the fathers of the revolution of '76, was one of the noblest conceptions that ever emanated from the human mind!--and if one must regret that the fruit of late years has not been worthy of the tree, who shall say how much of that we are compelled to deprecate may not be directly traced to the canker-worm of Slavery. (Hear, hear.) With a free constitution the United States has not been a free country. One half has been entirely surrendered to slavery, and the other half has been subject indirectly to the same malign influence. The Southern States have been knit together by one common bond--touch the slave interest and the whole South is in a flame and drawn together as one man. The Northern States, on the contrary, had no such universal interest to bind them together, and through their divisions as Whigs and Democrats, Liberals and Conservatives, the South always continued to hold the balance of power, and control the national policy of the Union. The South has had entire sway at Washington. No man could be successful in public life, no man could hope to rise to eminence in the administration of affairs, unless he knelt at the Southern shrine, and maintained with his whole strength the peculiar institution. Nothing could be more corrupting, more utterly demoralizing to the public men of the North than the choice constantly presented to them--adhere to your Northern principles and ruin your career--abandon your principles and bow your neck to slavery, and the gates of the White House are open to you. Nor was the slave influence confined to the political arena--it permeated every walk of life. The vast cotton trade and the supplying of goods to the slaveholder, extended their ramifications all over the Union; their influence was felt in the store, the workshop, the lecture-room, the press,--aye, even in the pulpit. Every one was made to feel the potency of cotton, and a style of argumentation in defence or palliation of slavery was heard everywhere from men who, on any other question, would have scorned to advance such miserable sophistries. The whole Union was debauched by the cotton influence; and it does appear to me that it would be unreasonable and unjust to test the American constitution by its working while controlled by influences so malign and injurious. Let the friends of freedom rejoice that at last the hope of a better state of things begins to dawn, and that, freed from the curse of human slavery, the American people may yet show themselves worthy of their high origin, and take their right place among the free nations of the world. We, in Upper Canada, Mr. Chairman, cannot help having some sympathy with the Northerners in their peculiar position; for though we have no South, we have an Eastern influence to contend with--an Eastern minority that rules the Western majority--that controls our public affairs and dictates terms to our public men as the price and the penalty of official success. (Hear, hear.) None know better than the people of Upper Canada the demoralising scenes that may be witnessed in the public arena under an influence like this. (Hear, hear.) Let it not be imagined for a moment, Mr. Chairman, from my speaking thus, that I am a Republican either in theory or practice. Sir, I am persuaded that no one can have studied closely and impartially the Republican system of the United States and compared it with the limited monarchy of Great Britain, without coming to the conclusion that the practical results obtained from our own form of Government are infinitely more satisfactory than those secured under the system of our neighbours. (Cheers.) But let us not forget that we are apt to judge of monarchy

by the monarchy of Queen Victoria—the best, the wisest Sovereign that ever ascended a throne. (Great cheering.) Let us not forget that there have been, and there are still, very different monarchies in the world from that of our own beloved Queen—and assuredly there are not so many free governments on earth, that we should hesitate earnestly to desire the success of that one nearest to our own, modelled from our own, and founded by men of our own race. (Cheers.) Sir, I do most heartily rejoice for the cause of liberty that Mr. Lincoln did not patiently acquiesce in the dismemberment of the Republic. But, Mr. Chairman, let us return from this long digression, and examine the question from an anti-slavery point of view,—*Why not let them go?* No honest anti-slavery man can hesitate in answering—because it would have been wrong to do so, because it would have built up a great slave republic that no moral influence could have reached. (Cheers.) Had the extreme Slave States been allowed to secede without a blow, there is every reason to believe that all the Border States would have gone with them, and a large portion of the unadmitted territories of the Union would have been added to the slave domain. Such a confederacy would have over-awed the free Northern States, the slave trade would at once have been thrown open, and no foreign Government would have ventured to interfere. It has been said that if that were attempted, France and England would enforce by arms a treaty against the inhuman traffic. I do not believe anything of the kind. If England could have been induced to go to war about the slave trade, she would have gone to war with Spain long ago. She paid money to Spain to give up the shameless traffic, and yet Spain carries it on to the present day, and England has not gone to war to compel her to desist. No, sir,—if this Confederacy had been formed, with slavery and the slave trade as its chief corner-stones, no European Government would have interfered; and we should have had on this continent, under the protection of a regularly organised Government, the most monstrous outrage on humanity that has disgraced the present age. (Hear, hear.) Had Mr. Lincoln passively permitted all this to be done—had he permitted the Southern States to go, and such a Government to be formed without a blow—he would have brought enduring contempt upon his name, and the people of England would have been the first to have risen up and reproached him for his imbecility. “Why,” they would have demanded, “did you allow the whole of that vast country to pass under the rule of slavery without one effort to prevent it? How came it that you struck not a single blow to avert such a frightful evil? Had you only stood firm, the attempt would have broken down—and even had it not, you might have fearlessly looked to us for sympathy, and at once we would have aided you.” Mr. Lincoln and his Government did their duty in resisting the establishment on this continent of so infamous a Government; they are striving to do it now; but unfortunately the sympathies of a large portion of the British people were wrongfully withheld from them, if not indeed given to their opponents. And yet I believe most sincerely that if they had allowed the South to go—if they had permitted a vast slave Republic to be built up and the slave trade declared legal,—there are few men in England or France who would not have expressed bitter indignation at such lamentable weakness—and foremost among them, I do not doubt, would have been the very men who now cry,—“Why not let them go?” (Cheers.) Sir, Mr. Lincoln and his friends would have disgraced themselves for ever had they consented to let the South go with a knowledge of what would happen. And come what may hereafter, already has enough been achieved to justify their refusal

Slavery has been abolished by law in the District of Columbia, half of Virginia has declared for freedom, the great State of Missouri has resolved to accept indemnification and manumit its bondsmen, and there can be very little doubt that Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky, come what may, will now cast in their lot with the free Northern States. Tens of thousands of slaves have been actually set free; the law has declared every slave in the rebel States free; and were the South to achieve its freedom to-morrow, it is hard to see how the chattels can be held in bondage. These great results have not been obtained without prodigious sacrifices; but assuredly for what has been done the hearty thanks of the civilized world are due to the Government at Washington. But, Mr. Chairman, there is another question constantly heard, and it is this:—Why did not Mr. Lincoln openly, frankly, and from the first declare the overthrow of slavery to be his object in the civil war? Now, sir, I could understand such a question as this coming from a pro-slavery man, for we have become used to the twistings and windings of that class of disputants; but I confess I do not comprehend such a question coming from the lips of a true emancipationist. Mr. Lincoln was not elected by the whole North, but only by a portion of the Northern electors. Mr. Lincoln's views on the slave question were not held by the whole North, but on the contrary, a large portion of the North approved of slavery, and denounced Mr. Lincoln's policy upon it. Mr. Lincoln had a divided North to fight with against a united South; and yet these professing Abolitionists would have had him come out with an unnecessary declaration which would have split up his supporters, and given the South the uncontrolled mastery of the Union. (Hear, hear.) No, sir, Mr. Lincoln knew better what he was about. He simply declared for the maintenance of the Union. And why? Because he knew that men would come in to fight with him for the maintenance of the Union, whose political antecedents forbade them from fighting for the overthrow of slavery. He desired to get a united North as against a united South, and he could only get them united on the ground of the maintenance of the Union. But well he knew that, if the Union were maintained, and he himself remained President of the Union, his end would be accomplished. One can fancy Mr. Lincoln reasoning thus:—"If I am President, I have power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia; I will have power to prevent its entrance into the territories; I will be able to offer money to induce each State to abolish slavery; I will have a right to put men, loving freedom, in all the public offices of the South; and by these and other means I shall confine slavery within so narrow a compass that it will soon come to an end." By this course he kept his great end in view, and he prevented open division in the North at the commencement of the struggle. Time did its work—many of the Democratic party, in the heat of strife, forgot their political antecedents, and gradually saw and admitted the necessity of waging war against slavery; and Mr. Lincoln was thus soon enabled to venture on measures that dared not have been breathed at the beginning of the struggle. But, sir, we are told that if the North and South separated, and the North became an independent State, the most friendly relations would spring up between the South and Great Britain, and an immense trade would be thereby secured to the Mother Country. Now, I apprehend that we very well understand what all this amounts to. If there is a body of men on the face of the earth who hate Great Britain with undying hatred, it is the slaveholders of the Southern States. They hate the very name of Britain, because they know that the British people love freedom, and are the genuine enemies of slavery throughout

the world. (Cheers.) To serve present purposes, they may profess to be friendly for the moment, but as soon as their ends are obtained, they will speedily be seen in their true colours as the bitter enemies of Great Britain. The most violent attacks on Great Britain, the most insulting language, has almost invariably proceeded from Southern lips and Southern pens. But it is said "the North has the same feelings, the "North has no love for Great Britain, and the moment the present civil "war is ended, the Northerners will cross over to Canada, conquer us in "a week, and annex our country to their dominions." I fancy, Mr. Chairman, we understand the eccentricities of our American neighbours much better than our friends in the Mother Country, and can place a more correct value on the vauntings of their press, and the boastful language of their orators. We have lived at peace with them for fifty years, and notwithstanding all that is come and gone, we hope to live at peace with them for fifty more. We have large commercial relations--mutually profitable relations with them--we have no cause of quarrel with them, and except as oratorical flourishes, the idea of attacking Canada, I am persuaded, never entered their conception. Were the civil strife ended to-morrow, our neighbours will have had enough of war to last them for years to come; but assuredly, should they be mad enough to attack us, we are vastly more able now to defend our soil than we were fifty years ago--and what we did in 1812 we would unflinchingly do again. (Cheers.) It is not by such petty bug-bears that honest Britons will be prevented from candidly examining the true merits of the American civil war, and praying earnestly that God may uphold the right. (Cheers.) Mr. Chairman, there is one fact that I conceive ought to be perfectly conclusive with every sincere emancipationist, whether in Britain or in Canada, as to the side on which his sympathy should be cast. There have been for many years in the United States noble men fighting for freedom--the Tappans, the Jays, the Adams, the Beechers, the Garrisons, the Gerrit Smiths, and a host of other patriots, whose names will one day have a high rank in the annals of their country. These men have justly enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the British public, and they have never done anything to forfeit it. Now, it is an instructive fact, that there is not one such man, not one man who ever stood high in English estimation for moral worth and sterling patriotism, who is not found ranged on the side of the North in the present struggle--there is not one such man who is not found on the side of Mr. Lincoln and heartily supporting him. (Cheers.) Every one of them perfectly comprehends, and we anti-slavery men of Canada perfectly comprehend, that the whole hope of immediate emancipation, thorough emancipation, rests on the success of Abraham Lincoln's administration. (Great cheering.) Mr. Chairman, I must apologize for detaining the meeting to so unreasonable a length--(Cries of no! no!)--but I felt it was a duty we owed to ourselves, to our neighbors across the line, and to our friends in Great Britain, that the true merits of this great struggle should be clearly stated from our position of advantage, and from an anti-slavery point of view. I am well assured that those of us who may be spared some years hence to look back upon this civil war in America, will never have cause to repent that we took part in the proceedings of this night, but will remember with pride and pleasure that we did what we could to uphold the right. (Cheers.) For myself, sir, whatever may be the result of the present strife, I shall always feel the highest satisfaction in recollecting that with the sin of sympathising with slavery or secession, my hands have not been defiled; but that from the commencement of the struggle my earnest aspirations have gone with the friends of freedom. (The hon. gentleman resumed his seat amid loud and continued applause.)