LETTER

FROM

GEN. C. F. HENNINGSSEN,

IN REPLY TO THE

LETTER OF VICTOR HUGO

ON THE

HARPER'S FERRY INVASION;

WITH

AN EXTRACT FROM THE LETTER OF THE REV. NATHAN LORD,
D.D., PRESIDENT OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, N.H.; AND AN
ARTICLE FROM THE LONDON "TIMES" ON SLAVERY.

New York:

DAVIES & KENT, PRINTERS,
113 NASSAU STREET.
1860.
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INTRODUCTION.

The following letter from the pen of Gen. C. F. Henningsen commends itself to the earnest attention of all lovers of the Union, particularly at the present juncture. The forcible arguments, based upon incontrovertible facts, and the conciliatory and patriotic spirit which pervades it, induced its publication in the present shape, by those to whom Gen. H. is personally an entire stranger, and without his knowledge; in the earnest hope that it may meet that attention and consideration so richly merited.
LETTER FROM GEN. HENNINGSSEN

to

VICTOR HUGO.

NEW HAVEN, January 2, 1860.

Sir—The name of Victor Hugo suggests vaguely to all so-called Anglo-Saxons a distinguished poet, dramatist, and philanthropist.

To the few among them who have enjoyed early familiarity with his own language, that name conjures up something more. They recognize in him—what a more intimate knowledge of the tongue in which he wrote and of his writings will one day enable their countrymen to appreciate and acknowledge—not only one of the greatest of dramatists and poets, but the greatest who has yet illustrated the literature of France.

Translators you have none worthy of the name. Even a Voltaire could not understand a Shakspeare. It required a Victor Hugo to appreciate him, and—differing as the bent of your genius does from that of the bard of Avon—of all his copyists, great or small, most successfully to have imitated him where, perhaps unconsciously, you tried it. We,
sir, have no Anglo-Saxon Victor Hugo to translate you. Your public career is familiar to us all. Your championship of liberty, of equal rights, of mercy, of universal brotherhood and pacification—your undeviating course of self-sacrificing rectitude, your uncompromising war on all oppression—the lofty aspirations of the Christian and philosopher—have needed no interpreter to enable us to venerate and admire your character.

In the prosecution of your self-imposed duties your voice has recently been heard on this side of the Atlantic. Appealing to the American people, you plead at once for remission of the death penalty upon John Brown, and for the deliverance of the negro out of bondage. When Victor Hugo speaks, two continents listen. As one of the people of that republic which you call “The Queen of an entire world”—as one of the atoms of which it is an aggregation—you have therefore given me the right to answer you. You will, however, feel, I trust, that no disrespect dictates; but, on the contrary, the greatness of my respect for your character and genius urge me to obtrude the following observations.

As might have been expected, you recognize the greatness of this Union. “A glory of the human race,” something outmarching “Europe by the sublime audacity of her progress, and bearing on her brow an immense light of freedom.” But you urge that very greatness as constituting the magnitude of the supposed crime you deprecate and would avert. Brown’s execution, you say, would outdo the first fratricide, and you conclude—“There is something more terrible than Cain slaying Abel: it is Washington immolating Spartacus.”

To this suggestive sentence, which condenses into a few words a world of thought, I have heard a simple answer made by Southern men. To you it may appear flippancy and frivolous, yet it embraces a whole theory on which tens of thousands not only conscientiously justify the course which you pursue and you condemn, but hold themselves in duty
bound to follow it. It is simply this: "That Spartans
struggled to free white men, not negroes."

In the early days of this republic, slavery was universally
recognized as an evil, whereas, indeed, the sudden abolition
might prove a remedy worse than the disease, but of which
the gradual extinguishment was desired and contemplated.
This view was more ardently adopted, perhaps, by eminent
Southern men, as more deeply interested in the question,
than by Northern men. They might justly doubt the expediency,
or even safety, of liberating at once and without
preparation, a slave population concentrated in a few States,
and amounting to about one fifth of the population of the
Union. But if they did not think the negroes fit, in mass,
for emancipation, they did not doubt the negro's capacity
of being fitted for the rational enjoyment of freedom. His
improvionence and idleness were supposed to be the natural
result of servitude, and it was believed that, like other races
whom oppression had debased, he would, with its removal,
assert his manhood, and learn to walk alone.

But protracted discussion of this subject, by the light of
increased investigation and by the experience of subsequent
events, has entirely altered these convictions, and substituted
for them others at which it may seem sad that men should
have arrived, but yet not rationally to be avoided. These
convictions, to which the most eminent Southern men who
formerly advocated emancipation, became reluctant con-
verts, now universally entertained in the South and shared
by large numbers of intelligent men in the free States, are,
that the negro race has a different, and, in some respects,
inferior mental organization, certainly, to the Caucasian
race, and probably to every other, and that he is wanting in
natural capacity for freedom.

To these conclusions they have been led by investigation
of the condition of the negro in Africa, by his history in St.
Domingo, in the British West India Islands, and in the
Northern free States of this Union. In Africa, the negro,
according to Egyptian paintings at least four or five thou-
sand years old (and to which double that age has recently been assigned), has been, for at least the former period, in contact with civilization. He is still unchanged in type and in condition.

The cultivation of the Egyptian, of the Persian, of the Greek, of the Carthaginian, of the Roman, and of the Arab, have left him what they found him—a barbarian, a savage, or a slave.

Since the Declaration of American Independence, left to himself in Hayti, with the advantage of a large number of highly educated half-breeds to direct him, you know the savagery into which he has relapsed. Hardly has the grotesque despotism and virtual servitude which Souloouque imposed been superseded by the presidency of Geffrard (said to be a bright exception to his race), when you have a hideous sample of Haytien civilization in the unprecedented murder of his unoffending daughter.

In the West India Islands the free negro has rich lands, a congenial climate, and protection against self-imposed despotism or slavery. In Canada and in the free States of the North, he is surrounded by highly civilized majorities, who extend to him countenance, sympathy, and aid. Yet, what is everywhere the result? Left to himself, he falls into barbarism, despotism, and virtual servitude.

Free, surrounded by white civilization, he undergoes moral and physical deterioration, and sinks into idleness, pauperism, and crime.

Hence, it has been assumed that he is wanting in the capacity both for self-government, and for the enjoyment of freedom in a manner beneficial even to himself; because unwilling, except under coercion, to labor, and deficient in providence and forethought necessary to sustain independent existence north of the tropics, or to prevent relapse into abject barbarism within them.

This conviction is entertained and acted on by that white population of the South who acknowledge the capacity (if not the fitness) for self-government in every man of the so-
called Caucasian race, whether Teutonic, Celtic, Latin, Slavonic, Greek, Tartar, or Semitic. Hence they extend to him the hand of fellowship, and, holding themselves to be an aggregation of sovereigns, after a few years' residence proffer to him equal rights. To these privileges, in fact, until the recent Chinese immigration into California, the right of no creed, race, or color, excepting one, has ever been disputed or denied. That one race is the negro; not the African, nor yet the black—not the Copt, nor yet the dark-skinned Hindoo, with straight hair and Caucasian profile. Exclusion from the white man's privileges extends only to the negro, and he only can be, or has ever been, within the Union lawfully held in bondage. He is physically distinguished by feature, by thickness of the skull, by its covering of wool instead of hair, by a peculiar odor, and by a distinctive tissue of the brain when microscopically examined. In bondage he was found by the present generation of Southern white men, having been originally imported by Spain, under the auspices of the benevolent Las Casas, by France and by England, into their then colonies, or transferred by the Northern States to the Southern, when the former republics, finding slavery unprofitable in the North, abolished servitude by law, and got rid of the negro without sacrifice, by allowing their citizens to sell him to the Southern planters. Always known by those acquainted with him to differ as much in psychological and mental as in physical characteristics from the white and other races, the belief has become prevalent South, and is rapidly spreading in the North, that these characteristics preclude his emancipation beneficially to himself, from at least some kind of tutelage.

A distinguished Northern jurist—Mr. Charles O'Conor—has recently, on a public occasion in New York city, expressed the opinion that the negro requires, for his own good, the same restraints that the law everywhere enjoins and authorizes over minors up to the age of twenty-one; or,
he might have added, allows and enforces throughout life, for their own benefit, over people of deficient intellect.

While European serfdom, in its varying phases, from unmitigated slavery to the enforcement of a portion of the serf’s labor, has shown that the white race will never work as efficiently under coercion as with free labor, the experience of the last sixty years proves that the negro can not be allured by the fruitfulness of a Southern, nor driven by the rigors of a Northern climate, to work without coercion. Yet nature has not only endowed him with aptitude for physical exertion, but he thrives better under it than in idleness. Too far removed above the animal creation to be endowed with the provident instinct of the ant, the beaver, or the bee, he is asserted to be too low in the human family to have reasoning power enough for protracted or provident exertion. Hunger, like a master or an overseer, may oblige him to work to-day, and induce him to look a week or a month ahead, but it is said to be as rare to find a negro who could look and work ahead for a season, as to find a cultivator of another race who would fail to do so. Hence, where a straw hat and a breech cloth do not suffice for clothing, and where the earth beneath a tropic sun is not yielding a perpetual crop of plantains, yams, or breadfruit, he must lean, at best, without a master, upon white civilization. In the few instances where he emerges from the pauperism which, without the white man, would be starvation, he becomes a barber, domestic servant, oyster seller, cook, or, perhaps, whitewasher—occupations which, without the white man’s industry and forethought, would have no existence.

It is universally asserted and believed in the South, that the average lot of the negro slave on a Southern plantation is happier than that of the negro in any other place or condition, and frequently his lot is exultingly contrasted with that of the poor white operative or laborer. I, sir, for my own part, am satisfied that the negro on a Southern plantation is, at least, less unhappy than the negro left to himself
in Hayti or in Africa, or than the free negro in Canada, in the Northern States of the Union, or in Jamaica. Neither can I deny that he is better fed, better clothed, better cared for, and merrier than nine tenths of the operatives of Europe. I will not affirm that he is happier, but that he looks happier; because I know that no human being, unless utterly degraded, should, however miserable his condition, be willing to exchange places with the pampered white elephant of Siam, and because I believe that few starving white operatives, or white tenants of a prison, would voluntarily become sleek, well-satisfied negro slaves. But though we feel that the higher the organization the greater the sensitivity to pleasure or to pain, from the lowest animal organism up to the lowest human intelligence—from the shellfish to the Bushman, or from the Bushman up to the most exalted type of Caucasian genius, how do we know but what the stolid contentment of the lower order may not compensate the rapture or acute suffering of the higher? We are sure, at least, that taking each according to its kind, what would be enjoyment to the one would be no enjoyment to the other.

It is, of course, not worth while, for practical purposes, ethnologically, to discuss a question in all probability eternally insoluble—that is to say, whether the white man and the negro sprang, aboriginally, from the same or separate stocks—whether the white man is a negro progressively improved, or whether the negro is a white man retrogressively degraded. Even though it were probable that time and cultivation might raise the negro into the white man, it is enough for us to know that fifty centuries have made no perceptible difference in the characteristics or the type of either.

Neither does it appear that amalgamation of blood can effect this approximation. As there are a per-centage of white men whose weakness or obliquity of mind, or depravity of heart, sink them not only below the average of the negro, but to the level of the animal, so there is a per-centage of negroes who rise, in most respects, to the white man's
level. These, it is true; are chiefly mulattoes, or what are called colored people in the South. Commonly inheriting the worst qualities of both races, occasionally they exhibit a large share of the intelligence of their white progenitors.

But nature itself has barred the elevation of the negro race by this admixture. The mulatto is, in fact, a mule, with limited powers of propagation. That is to say, that his progeny, without recurrence to the black blood or the white, deteriorates physically and mentally, and about the third generation cease altogether to procreate. The germ of an inextinguishable animosity seems, too, implanted by nature in the breast of the pure negro against the colored race, which, under favoring circumstances, fatally develops and leads him, as in Hayti, after he had driven out the whites by the aid of the mulatto, next to exterminate him. This the pure black strives to do wherever he is the master, which his superior physical vigor soon makes him, as soon as the mulatto can no longer recruit from the white stock.

The negro has, it is true, certain qualities which the white man may and does emulate, and which should and do endear him to the latter, but they are not of a nature to enable him to walk unprotected and alone. He has unbounded hospitality. I have met, on the Spanish Main, industrious free negro emigrants from Jamaica, who told me that they could earn more in that island, but were compelled to leave it because their voluntarily idle relatives and neighbors ate up all their earnings, which they could not refuse them. On some plantations in the South the owners are forced to sacrifice Monday morning for the weekly distribution of provisions, because, if given out on Saturday, the negroes will consume the rations of a day or two to entertain their Sunday visitors. The negro has imitative powers, a natural command of language, musical taste, and even talent, in which the Anglo-Saxon is deficient. When kindly treated, he has often strong attachment and fidelity to individuals of the white race. Negroes and negro women show frequently more disinterested affection to whites than to their own kin,
or even offspring. It appears natural to them to lean, as it were, for support, on a superior race, and this inclination seems instinctive in the negro. The negroes of two gangs recently introduced into the United States from Africa—the one captured on the slaver Echo, and subsequently sent back to that continent, and the other landed from the Wanderer, and distributed through the South—seem to have been utterly divested of natural affection for each other; messmates, kindred, even brothers, would steal each other's food, and look on each other's sickness, suffering, or death with apathy, and even with an idiotic grin. Yet several of the Wanderer's Africans attached themselves at once, with dog-like and disinterested fidelity, to certain white men, from whom the seduction of increased kindness was in vain tried to alienate their affection.

The reprobation with which this attempt to reopen an illicit traffic would have been met by a large portion of the Southern white population was singularly modified by these considerations: Firstly, that it was soon after ascertained that the remainder of the gang from whom these negroes were selected was sacrificed at a barbaric funeral, as they would have been if not brought to the United States; that for half the value of a negro in the South, the African chiefs offered to sell their own kindred; that in Africa slavery prevails, as it has prevailed from remote ages, to an extent which the exportation of slaves has been a comparatively insignificant cause in determining, even when that exportation was tenfold greater than of late years. Lastly, because the trade, under another name, but really more objectionable form, is carried on openly and wholesale by other nations and notables, under the protection of the imperial flag of France.

On the part of the white Southern population there exists a large amount of attachment to the negro, manifesting itself by a patronizing but affectionate familiarity. There is a total absence of that repugnance invincible to those not reared with or long acquainted with him. He is as acutely
sensitive to the one as to the other, and it is common in the Northern free States to see the heart of the escaped slave warm toward a Southern slaveholder, while it remains cold toward the sincere abolitionist, who has made sacrifices in his behalf—who calls him brother, who takes him as an equal by the hand, but cannot conceal from his instinctive perception the repugnance which that touch inspires.

Placed in authority over his own race, the kindliest negro becomes notoriously the most harsh of masters; next to him the Northerner or European. Worst of all is usually the Northern abolitionist with his hired servants. He begins by treating them like white people; he appeals to their reason and to their interest. But ignoring alike the characteristic failings and good qualities of the African, he is wanting in indulgence for the one and appreciation of the other. He becomes disappointed, soured, and persecutive, like a driver losing his temper because he does not find in a mule the qualities distinctive of the horse. With such facts within their knowledge, with such experiences within their reach, and with such opinions universally spread in the South, it is plain that the Southern whites can have no intention of emancipating their negroes. The belief that sudden emancipation would be ruin, insurrection, and bloodshed, would, of itself, deter all from such a step. A minority, perhaps even gradually a majority, at the risk of or at the sacrifice of their own interest, might have favored gradual enfranchisement. The conviction now universally entertained (the growth of recent years), that while the white man would be ruined the negro would be worse off than before, because incapable of being fitted for a state of unlimited freedom, bars even the prospect of progressive emancipation.

Yet to a measure which the South conceives suicidal, Northern and foreign abolitionism attempts to urge it by three methods. Firstly, through the voluntary action of the white Southern population by means of discussion. Secondly, by obtaining, through political agitation, control of the three branches of the federal legislature and of the
federal executive, with the view of eventually enforcing abolition. Thirdly, by direct foray, and by raising the negroes in insurrection, according to the programme of John Brown.

The first method, obviously ineffective, because it resulted in strengthening, as we have seen, pro-slavery opinions in the South, has been stopped by the virtual suppression there of discussion which could only disturb the negro population. The second and the third, which inevitably lead to war, to dissolution of the Union, and to a slave insurrection, the Southern States are determined to resist, conceive it is their right to resist, and are compelled to resist by the necessity of self-preservation. That their determination is a reality, no reasonable man can doubt. Their right is derived from the fact that the thirty-four States of this Union are thirty-four independent republics, united by a federal compact, by which, for their mutual benefit, they have stipulated only the surrender of certain sovereign rights, reserving all others, and most jealously that of self-government, and of the regulation of their own institutions. They are compelled to resist, because a negro insurrection, whether as the means or the consequences of abolition, signifies not only utter ruin, desolation, and death, but death and worse than death, to mothers, wives, sisters, and children.

This is what they conceive that abolitionism, either directly or indirectly, proposes to force upon them. This is what John Brown brought to their own threshold. The proposed benefactor of the negro, they say, is not only the malefactor of the white, but the negro's worst enemy. It is certain that up to this time he has proved so. It is not true that the Southern whites have any apprehension of the negro if left to himself. It is the prospective aid and present incitation of the white abolitionist which constitute for them a danger against which they provide by every precaution which vigilance can devise. For years past, the avowed purpose of a portion of these abolitionists has turned the whole thought and action of the South on this question to
measures of defense against impending aggression. Every law passed since that time, with regard to the negro, has been a law of repression. Previous to that, for years, every law tended to ameliorate the condition of the slave. So that, if left to themselves, the Southern States would, in every human probability, so far have continued to mitigate the bondage of the negro as gradually to reduce it to a state of tutelage and modified coercion, which, until his nature changes, must, for his own benefit, be perpetually exercised over him—a coercion which, as a senator from Georgia (Mr. Toombs) has observed, the laws of civilized nations impose temporarily on one of the boldest, hardest, and most useful classes of all free communities—the merchant seamen.

We know the share of sea commerce in the commerce of the world; we know that where otherwise only barbarism would be, it renders civilization possible; we know its fostering influence on civilization, and how it renders habitable, regions which without it must be wastes. Yet what maritime commerce could exist, what ship would be sent to sea, if the law did not rigorously bind the sailor to labor for the whole voyage, and authorize, during its whole continuance, the enforcement of that labor?

The Southern States, when extraneous pressure ceases to threaten them—but, I fear, not till then—instead of occupying themselves solely with defensive measures, will, no doubt, again turn their attention to the amelioration of the slave's condition, and one of the first laws in this direction ought to be the prohibition of his being sold or hired to any man who has not resided long enough in the South to insure his understanding something of the peculiarities of the negro.

As my argument hinges on those peculiarities—as you have not been in the South, as you have no special acquaintance with the negro, and as your views are obviously derived from ex parte statements, I can hardly expect you to accept those which I have laid before you, whatever be the conclusion to which thorough investigation may ultimately lead you. But the world is ruled less by facts than by men's
opinions upon facts; and you must, at least, admit that the calamities consequent on the course you advocate, depend on the opinions entertained respecting these facts by large masses of men. The extent and character of their convictions, inquiry will show you that I have not overstated. You might say, and with sorrow, but with a full appreciation of the nature of these calamities, 

_Justitia ruit calum_, if it were a question of the perpetual or long-protracted enslavement of a race fitted, or with the capacity of being fitted, to be free.

But consider, sir, the immense importance of that if; and allow me, respectfully, to remind you how your noble aspirations have already led you astray.

In 1848, like many other good and eminent men, you were in favor of universal suffrage. The veteran Dupont de l'Eure, I believe, alone of the Provisional government, mistrusted its expediency, although the fact that the _Gazette de France_, the organ of absolutism, of the right divine of kings, and of the ultramontane party, had long been advocating the measure, was enough to invest it with suspicion. With organized and accurate means of information, the leaders of that party knew and reckoned on the difference between the intelligence of the civic and the ignorance of the rural population. The consequence was not only the overthrow of the republic, but retrogression from constitutional monarchy to despotism. The parish priest, the mayor, the rich man of the village, influenced these rural communities, not only to oblige the French Republic to turn its fratricidal bayonets against that of Rome, but to place, in this century, in France, an outcast upon the throne, in spite of more knowledge, more talent, and more public virtue than ever were concentrated in Athens or in Rome. The Emperor of the French is, no doubt, restrained, as, while sane, every despot always is, and has been, by public opinion; but can he disguise the fact that he, placed as he is above all law, could, with legal impunity, hang up the most illustrious Frenchman—you, sir, for instance, if he caught
you—by the heels till you were dead, while a Southern plan-
ter perpetrating on a negro a like offense, would swing in-
evitably by the neck.

Yet, if any should doubt—as it is not unreasonable that
many should—the capacity of the European masses for self-
government on the basis of that universal suffrage, let them
turn to this country. There is not a race, not a nationality,
unrepresented in this Union. Yet, in education, the vast
immigration of the United States is below the average of the
countries whence it emigrated. Like the rest of the white
race who have crossed the Atlantic to people this continent,
it has been above the average of the Old World in adven-
turous spirit, while leavened with an amount of improvi-
dence or criminality which has inflicted on the new republic
the chief part of its pauperism and crime. Hence every
element of turbulence and anarchy existed in a higher de-
gree than in the Old World. Yet these emigrants, though
a vast majority of them were without political rights at
home, after a five years’ residence, have their vote in the
government of the Union and most of the States, on the
principle of universal suffrage, without more abusing this
privilege than native-born citizens.

Hence the aptitude or capacity of the European masses
for self-government, by universal suffrage, is plainly demon-
strated, but not their fitness. A portion of that fitness they
acquire by five years’ residence, and the ignorance of a mi-
nority of voters is modified by the experience of majorities,
which they in time acquire. With the quick apprehension
of the French people, if the means of information had pre-
ceded the right of universal suffrage in the rural districts,
you, sir, would not have been in exile, nor the nephew of
his uncle upon the throne. You, a poet, in common with
the political economists, Bright and Cobden, believed in
and advocated general disarmament and universal peace—a
state of things to which humanity is no doubt progressively
tending, but still obviously very far remote. But could
you, sir, if the past were present, Frenchman as you are, in
that exile which so much honors you, advise the country affording you a niggardly hospitality, which does her so little honor, to disarm, as your Peace Congress did advise, or even cease the augmentation of her armament to the fullest measure of defensive security? In a Christian, in a philanthropic, and a philosophic spirit, you advocate abolition of the death penalty, by the just repudiation of all idea of revenge in punishment. The unanswerable arguments of your school are, that the only legitimate objects of punishment being to reform the criminal or to deter from crime by example, it is impossible for a dead man to amend, and that more are deterred by the certainty of minor than by the increased severity of capital punishment, with its concomitant uncertainty. Above all, you insist on not visiting with death political offenses; and herein you are followed by many who do not go the full length of your doctrine. But if ever the death penalty is universally abolished, is it reasonable to suppose that this abolition will be inaugurated in favor of an incendiary by a community living in a city stored with gunpowder? You would not have had the Greeks non-resistant to Xerxes, nor the Parliament to Charles the First, nor the American colonies to Great Britain, nor the French Convention to the invading Allies. Some wars you are therefore bound to admit are justifiable. Yet how carry on a successful resistance without discipline, and the martial law, abrupt, severe, and decisive, which enforces it? By that law, and to save innumerable lives, you are often compelled to put to death the guilty mutineer and the unfortunate sentry sleeping at his post. He watches while others rest, that he may afterward rest while they in turn are watching. Overcome by fatigue, it is often only the certainty of death which enables him to struggle against sleep, which, where sleeping sentinels prevailed, would soon be death both to him and all his fellows.

Now, it is in the case of that community, and under circumstances analogous to martial law, that the State of Virginia finds itself. A political offender in Europe menaces
only the lives, the rights, the privileges, or the property of a few. A negro insurrection—a servile war of races—threatens the white population of all age, sex, and condition with imminent destruction, and against such a catastrophe the State laws of Virginia seek to provide, by laying down certain forms of procedure in punishing those attempting to excite it. Under these forms John Brown and his accomplices were tried. You call on the free States to interfere to prevent his execution. Are you aware that you are inviting them to what they have no more right to do than France or England have? That you are imploring them to commence a civil war, to break up the Union, and to attempt what every State within it would resist?

For, sir, though every man in Virginia had been anxious for John Brown’s death, if her laws only allowed a month’s imprisonment in visitation of his offense, and that the federal government and the other thirty-three States had interfered to hang him, Virginia, the oldest State in the Union, would have risen to a man in his defense, as, under similar circumstances, Rhode Island, the smallest, and Oregon, the youngest of the States of the Union, would have done, resisting such intrusion even by war to the knife.

The economical view of emancipation in the Southern States is one that you may disdain. But if you will consider the magnitude of the interest involved you must acknowledge that no such sacrifice has ever been made, including even that unparalleled example which is at once the most glorious incident in the history of the British people, and the most complete vindication of the course pursued by our Southern population.

Twenty millions of pounds sterling—one hundred millions of dollars—five hundred millions of francs, were voted by the people of Great Britain to free the negroes in their colonies. The result of that experiment has been that these colonies, once a source of wealth, are now a burden to her, and that the heavily taxed British operative is curtailed now in the necessaries of life to pay the interest of that debt or
maintain the establishments which alone prevent the emancipated negro from relapsing into savage life. Jamaica, the most considerable of these colonies, does not now produce more than a per-centange of what she exported or produced before emancipation, while its population of free negroes, after twenty years, notwithstanding extraneous accessions, has declined, while the slave population of the United States had increased sixty per cent. during the twenty years preceding the last census. On landing in the island, the first sights that meet your eyes are the negro women forced to carry heavy loads of coal upon their heads by their fathers, husbands, sons, or brothers, who bask idly on the wharves, to coal the steamer. Out of a crowded thoroughfare, more than half the colored population whom you meet beg you for alms. Yet, are less coffee and sugar produced as a consequence of this sacrifice, by slave labor? On the contrary, statistics show that the amount of both these products, slave grown and introduced into Great Britain, is much larger than before.

But, sir, the emancipation of the negroes in the United States, on the principle of compensation, would involve an expenditure, not of twenty, but of three or four hundred millions of pounds sterling. The interest on that sum at the rates usual in this country would equal the interest on the whole national debt of Great Britain. But that is not all. At least three out of the four millions, at which the colored population is now computed, must be supported. This, at the lowest estimate, would come to as much more—a charge it would be impossible to avoid, whether the negro were freed with or without compensation to his owner. The freed negro having neither industry nor providence to make a crop, must plunder, starve, or be supported. You will find that interest or compensation money, support of negroes, loss of Southern crop and of Northern trade to South, would be under-estimated at the enormous sum of five hundred millions of dollars annually. Such burdens, impossible for the most prosperous community which has existed to bear, would
fall on the utterly ruined white Southern population and on
the impoverished North.

Yet these negroes, now better cared for than the majority
of the laborers and operatives of Europe, besides earning
their own subsistence, furnish to Europe about two thirds of
its cotton. Cotton, the cheapest article of human clothing,
was, as the covering of the needy, and the substitute for
more solid, elegant, or comfortable fabrics, once the synonym
in your country of whatever was insignificant and mean.
Yet have you ever considered what that cotton is, which, as
the product of forced labor, you may probably regard with
both abhorrence and contempt? Cotton is the material out
of which a mighty cable has been gradually but inextricably
interwoven, not only with the destinies of this republic, but
of tens upon tens of millions beyond it, so as in some mea-
sure to have entangled in its web nearly all civilization. To
sever it would produce new calamities, second only to the
sudden and utter disappearance from the world of iron. The
silk looms, the fine cloth factories, the potteries, the glass
works, the manufacture of linens, shawls, laces, and of in-
umerable articles of use or luxury, might vanish in one
night to subside forever among the lost arts, without occa-
sioning one tithe the ruin and desolation which the sever-
ance of that humble cotton link would occasion.

To Great Britain alone the Southern States of this Union
export an amount of cotton exceeding the whole rental of
the soil of the British Islands—though the agricultural pro-
duce of that soil is of higher value than the agricultural pro-
duce of the soil of France. It furnishes, directly or indirectly,
employment to many millions of white men. The destruc-
tion of the cotton crop of the United States would, at the
lowest computation, drive into pauperism one million and a
half of individuals in the British islands, and occasion uni-
versal commercial bankruptcy in that country and in this.
The cotton which these negroes of the Southern States pro-
duce, clothes at least sixty millions of the human race, or
But when these sacrifices had been made, or at least such of them as it was within human power to make, what at the cost of this wide-spread ruin would be the benefit to the emancipated negro? To place him even in the condition of the Haytien or Jamaica negro inhabiting the tropics? No; to leave him on a soil and in a climate whose winter frosts, however light, permit only a perennial crop, and which to sustain human life require an amount of industry and forethought which unhappily he is not possessed of. It is the firm belief of all those who know the negro, that he could there no more sustain himself than the horses or the horned cattle of a rigorous northern climate could, if set at liberty and at large by the sudden extinction of their master, man. Left alone in the Southern States of the American Union, the emancipated negro must from these causes gradually and miserably die out, leaving at the end of a few generations only the bones of his race in the howling wilderness to authenticate his sad story.

You may say, "Remove him to a tropical climate, then." But, sir, benevolent as you are toward all God's creation, if your father had bequeathed to you an elephant, entrapped from his native wilds in which he roamed harmlessly, in which for tens of centuries his kindred elephants had not enslaved others, nor sacrificed them by hundreds in funeral rites, if you could not afford to feed him without making him work, if you could not afford to restore him to a wilderness in which he could live, would you be blamable? Left to himself, it is plain that the negro, with his strong local attachments, weak reasoning powers, and vacillating purpose, would not emigrate from a climate in which he must die out, to another in which he might vegetate.

Recent laws passed in several slave States, based on the long known fact that the great majority of free negroes live in idleness and by theft, have obliged the free negro either to vacate the State or to choose a master.
Will you inquire how many have preferred slavery to emigration, even into adjacent States, where assured of aid and sympathy which would not be extended to a white immigrant?

To remove the colored population would probably be beyond the power of the white population, if they were, to a man, enthusiastic abolitionists, even in the normal condition of the Union.

If that great Southern interest were willingly broken up, it would be as impossible as for you, if you had not wherewithal to feed your hypothetical elephant for a day, to ship him back to Africa or Asia.

I have, however, been making impossible suppositions, viz.: that the white race in the South, against their convictions, and against their interests, should become abolitionists, and abandon to the negro willingly the soil, with all the wealth and civilization which the intelligence of the white man has created or developed, and which certainly, even in one single Southern State, not two generations old, exceeds that cumulated by the whole negro race (forty or fifty millions) to fifty and perhaps a hundred centuries. I have been supposing, even that against all probability and experience, the negro would not expulse and exterminate the small white remnant which might leaven his barbarism, and that he would not virtually reenslave and decimate his kind.

But in fact even voluntary abolition by the Southern whites would involve the massacre of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children. Abolition successfully forced upon them would add the horrors of interneeine and civil to a servile war. It could only at best be St. Domingo and La Vendee re-enacted and intensified, with the certain disruption of this Union, and the probable establishment of one or several military despotisms on the ruins of the greatest and most promising republic which the world has ever seen.

It would bear the same relation to ordinary political change and revolution that the geological convulsions (if the
term may be allowed to express the subsidence or upheaval of islands or continents do to the ordinary convulsions of nature, that is to say, to the tempests and tornadoes which devastate the earth's surface. As a venerable and eloquent Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Crittendon) has recently observed, that disruption would proportionately to its suddenness more affect the destinies of mankind than the last great political catastrophe, the fall of Rome, which, after centuries of gradual decline, plunged the world for ages into barbarism and darkness.

Would you then, sir, encounter the certainty of most, and the probability of all, of these stupendous calamities, to place between three and four millions of negroes, at best in the condition of the Haytien or Jamaica negroes, or to restore them to the rule of a king of Dahomey?

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. F. HENNINGSSEN.
DR. LORD ON SLAVERY.

Rev. Nathan Lord, D.D., President of Dartmouth (N. H.) College, has written a letter on the Harper's Ferry affair, to a Virginian, who has published it in the Richmond (Va.) Whig. Dr. Lord is now a man in advanced years—his age is about seventy-five—but he reiterates to-day the same principles which he has taught for the thirty years during which he has presided over Dartmouth College. He has heretofore published letters upon the slavery question, which obtained a wide circulation from the ability and force which characterized them. Few men surpass him in the cogency of his thoughts, his vigorous expression of them, and the fearlessness and courage with which he maintains the right. He concludes this last letter, to the Virginian, as follows:

"But whether we have democracy, anarchy, or despotism, we shall not be rid of slavery till the day of the Lord. Its existence depends not on forms of government, or philosophical speculations, or political maneuvers, or legislative enactments, or judicial decisions, except as these may temporarily change its name, aspects, or conditions, or vary its locations. The world must live on to its appointed period. It can live, as things are, only as it has lived, more or less, with all varieties of race, character, and condition. These will find their appropriate spheres and places, not accord-
ing to mere human judgments, but by God's providential ordering of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, agreeably to physical laws and the plan of moral government, in reference to the ends of the present probationary state. Wherever there is a place and work for slaves, there they will be found. All things are fitted to all other things, and general laws will have their course. Our only wisdom is to study them, and live under them and by them, in subserviency to their mixed righteous and benevolent design. Without a miracle, I see not but that slaves will yet be called for in New England, and by New England men—slaves having the attributes, if not the name of slaves, and possibly in worse conditions than we now complain of in reference to the South. Why not, if our present government should last another eighty years? For Yankees will not perform the menial work of life. They are above it now. The imported free servants of Ireland and other countries will soon be infected with Yankee independence, and have the means of living, above servile work, on their own freeholds! Then who will be our servants? Shall we have Coolies or Africans to hew our wood and draw our water? And what form of government shall be over them but that which is adapted to their comparative rudeness and imbecility, and conservative of the general system? The children and grandchildren of our present Abolitionists may yet be first to institute a harder servitude than has yet been known, unless, indeed, they should themselves be compelled to sell themselves for bread, and suffer the proper chastisement of their fathers' sins for their rebellion against the government of God."

We were not wrong in supposing that the enthusiasm for John Brown's memory would speedily die out, and that the vagaries of the Abolitionists would cause a revulsion of feeling in favor of the South. By the present mail we learn that the country is most indignant at the Bostonians, and they themselves seem not to be a little ashamed of their proceedings. The capital of Massachusetts was on December the 8th the scene of a demonstration in favor of the Union, and the more sensible portion of the citizens had an opportunity of protesting against the doings of their Abolitionist brethren. The tone of this meeting was as patriotic and becoming as the speeches at "Tremont Temple" were the reverse. Mr. Everett, a man respected throughout the Union, delivered a speech which will, no doubt, produce a great effect in all parts of the Republic. He showed the wickedness of Brown's attempt, reminded his hearers that the old man had long meditated raising a revolt, that he was aided by Abolitionist money, and supplied with Abolitionist guns and pikes; that his plan was well considered, inasmuch as he seized the largest arsenal in that part of the country, full of arms and occupying a good position; and that his enterprise only failed because the slaves were not ripe for insurrection, as they were represented to be. Mr. Everett then read extracts from the narrative of
the revolt in St. Domingo, to show the horrors which necessarily follow from such an outbreak as Brown sought to cause, and he might certainly have directed attention to the present state of the island as a proof of how little the world is likely to gain by the establishment of a negro commonwealth. Using the arguments which suggest themselves to every reflecting man, he called upon the people of the North to discontinue the system of provocation which they have used toward the Southern people, and to use all means to strengthen the Union, which Abolitionist madness had endangered. The reception of Mr. Everett was most enthusiastic, and his eloquent appeal will no doubt produce the best effect both on his own neighbors and on the irritated Southerners.

In many other places meetings have been held to express sympathy with Virginia, and abhorrence of such schemes as that of Brown and his associates. In New York a manifesto to the same effect has been circulated and numerous signed, and there is no doubt that the feeling in the country will be such as to strengthen the Federal Government and the several Southern States against such malefactors for the future. In this result we most sincerely rejoice. Mr. Everett in his speech expressed apprehensions for the future of the Union, in which we should not have been inclined to share. But, as his experience and observation on this subject have been very great, we must conclude that of late the party war has been carried on with a virulence which leads even people accustomed to American exaggeration to feel that there is danger; and, indeed, the attempt at Harper’s Ferry most necessarily has brought new considerations into the controversy. Formerly the North contented itself with attacking the planters in newspapers or speeches, and decoying away or giving shelter to their negroes; but now the Abolitionists have gone a step further, and the crusade is for the slaughter of the white people, and the establishment of a half-caste republic, after the model of the Central American communities. The Virginians may
hitherto have been contented to live under the same government as people who merely wrote at them and preached at them, but when it comes to revolution and murder, the case is widely different. The States which produced Washington, Jefferson, and Monroe might be excused for declining to descend to the level of Hayti or Costa Rica. Men of the purest English blood may well shrink from turning their country into a region in comparison with which Mexico would be gentle and enlightened. But there are still more pressing considerations. After all, security for life and property is the great object of society, and the Southerners have now been called upon to decide whether they can in justice to themselves, their wives, and children, live under the same federation with men who make no secret of their purpose to revolutionize the South by force of arms. It was boasted in Boston that from John Brown's ashes armed men would spring to carry on the war for the liberation of the slaves. The people of the frontier Southern States may be excused for taking these expressions literally, and demanding some guarantee that there shall not be periodical seizures of federal arsenals, incitements of the negroes to murder, and imprisonments of inoffensive citizens by Abolitionist bands. The federal Union presumes the disarmament of one State with respect to another. Virginia and Kentucky have not men ready posted to protect them from invasion by their Northern countrymen. It is not the duty of each State to defend itself against its neighbors, and when the necessity for such vigilance arises, the objects of the federation are gone. The Southerners may well say that if they are to be exposed to these inroads they must have their own army and navy to protect themselves, and that, however much they regret the disruption of a nation which has existed in prosperity for eighty years, yet the necessity of self-preservation dictates this course.

It is for the whole body of honest and reflecting men throughout the United States to unite in calming these natural fears. The union of the American people is of im-
importance not only to themselves, but to the world at large. To Englishmen the spread of our language, of our religion, and to a certain extent of our laws and manners, can never cease to be an object of interest, nor can we desire success to the fanatics who, in their wild dream of raising an inferior race, would imperil all that has been accomplished in the New World during two centuries of industry and genius. That the harshness of masters in the Southern States may be lessened, that the slaves may receive education and moral instruction, and that ultimately slavery may be changed into a system by which the colored race shall enjoy personal liberty and the legal rights which are necessary for the preservation of life and property, we most heartily desire; but anything further we can not join in seeking. Well might Mr. Everett ask, "Has any one whose opinion is entitled to the slightest respect ever undertaken to sketch out the details of a plan for effecting abolition at once by any legislative measure that could be adopted?" The Abolitionists would have the population of the Southern States turned into a mixed race, whites, blacks, and mulattoes being on terms of equality, and constantly intermarrying; but if one thing more than another has tended to give to the Anglo-Saxon race in the New World the victory over the Spanish, it is that it has kept itself apart from the Red and Negro races, and lodged power constantly in the hands of men of European origin. It has been fully proved, not only on the American Continent, but in our own colonies, that the enforced equality of European and African tends, not to the elevation of the black, but the degradation of the white man. We can not find any sympathy for those who would try in the United States the plan of a half-caste Republic, and we trust that the Federal Government and the right-thinking part of the community will protect the South from the repetition of such outrages as that at Harper's Ferry.