

THOMPSON GEORGE,
BRECKINRIDGE ROBERT
JEFFERSON

**DISCUSSION ON
AMERICAN SLAVERY**

George Thompson
Robert Breckinridge
Discussion on American Slavery

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Discussion on American Slavery

INTRODUCTION

The following were the preliminary steps connected with the Discussion reported in the succeeding pages: —

Mr. Breckinridge's Letter, expressing his willingness to meet Mr. Thompson at Glasgow, was occasioned by the following passage in Mr. Thompson's Letter, which appeared in the *London Patriot*, in reply to the extracts inserted in that Journal, from the work published by the Rev. Drs. Cox and Hoby, entitled, "The Baptists in America": —

"In the mean time, I am ready to meet Dr. Cox in Exeter Hall, in his own chapel, or in any other building, to justify my charges against America and American Ministers; my general policy in the Anti-Slavery cause, and any particular act of which Dr. Cox complains. I am ready, also, and anxious to meet any American Clergyman, or other gentleman, in any part of Great Britain, to discuss the general question, or the propriety of that interference, of which so much has been said by persons who are otherwise engaged, and most praiseworthily so, in interfering

with the institutions, social, political, and religious, of every *other* quarter of the Globe."

MR. THOMPSON'S CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

To the Editor of the London Patriot

SIR,

A friend in this city, with whom I have stopped for a day or two, on my way to Scotland, has put into my hands your paper of the 23d inst., which contains Mr. George Thompson's letter of the 13th, attacking Dr. Cox.

As to the difficulties which exist between those two gentlemen, I, of course, have no right to speak.

Mr. Thompson, however, has not contented himself with urging a particular controversy with Dr. Cox; – nor even a general controversy, free for all who desire to engage him, or call in question his 'charges against America, and American Ministers' – as slave-holding Ministers and Christians on the other side of the water. 'But,' says he, 'I am ready, also, and anxious to meet any American clergyman, or other gentleman, in any part of Great Britain, to discuss the general question, &c.:' that is, the general question of his 'charges against America and American ministers, touching the whole subject of African slavery in that

country.'

After mature and prayerful consideration, and full consultation with a few friends, I am not able to see how I can avoid taking notice of this direct, and almost personal challenge; which, I have some reason to suspect, was probably intended for me.

And yet I feel myself encompassed by many difficulties. For some may consider me defending the institution of slavery; whereas I myself believe it to be contrary to the spirit of the gospel, and the natural rights of men. Others might naturally look for more full proofs, and more exact information than I can give, when relying almost entirely upon mere memory. While by far the greater part, I much fear, are as impatient of all investigation on the subject, as, I am sorry to say, they seem to me, totally unacquainted with its real condition in America.

I have concluded, however, to accept the somewhat boastful challenge of Mr. Thompson. And I trust the following suggestions and conditions will be considered most reasonable, when the peculiar circumstances of the case are considered: —

1. I will meet Mr. Thompson at Glasgow, any time during the three first weeks of June; and spend three or four hours a day, for as many days consecutively as may be necessary — in discussing the 'general question,' as involved in his 'charges against America, and American Ministers,' in reference to the whole subject of slavery there.

2. But as my whole object is to get before the British churches

certain views and suggestions on this subject, which I firmly believe are indispensable, to prevent the total alienation of British and American christians from each other; I shall not consider it necessary to commence the discussion at all, unless such arrangements are previously made, as will secure the publication, in a cheap and permanent form, of all that is said and done on the occasion.

3. I must insist on a patient and fair hearing, by responsible persons. Therefore I will agree that the audience shall consist of a select number of gentlemen, say from fifty to five hundred; to be admitted by ticket only, – and a committee previously agreed on to distribute the tickets – only to respectable persons.

I take it for granted that Mr. Thompson would himself prefer Glasgow to any other city, for the scene of this meeting: as it is the home of his most active supporters. And while the selection of the particular time of it cannot be important to him, my own previous arrangements are such, as to leave me no wider range than that proposed to his choice above.

More minute arrangements are left to the future; and they can, no doubt, be easily made.

I must ask the favour of an early insertion of this note, in the *Patriot*; and beg to say, through you, to the Editor of the *Glasgow Chronicle*, that I shall feel obliged by its republication in his paper.

*R. J. BRECKINRIDGE,
A Delegate from the General Assembly of the
Presbyterian Church of the U. S. America,
to the Congregational Union of England and
Wales.*

Durham, May 28, 1836.

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE
GLASGOW CHRONICLE**

London, June 1, 1836.

SIR,

I forward you, without a moment's delay, a copy of this evening's *Patriot*, containing a letter from the Rev. Robert J. Breckinridge, of Baltimore, United States. The following is my reply, which you will oblige me by immediately inserting, in company with the communication to which it refers.

I feel thankful that my overture has been accepted; and, notwithstanding the arrangements I had made to remain in London during the whole of the present month, and the announcement of my name in the public advertisements to lecture during the forthcoming week, I shall, D. V. be in Glasgow on Tuesday next; and shall be ready to meet Mr. Breckinridge, in the Religious Institution House, South Frederick Street, at noon of that day, to settle the preliminaries of the discussion, which, I

trust, will commence the following morning.

It is my earnest hope, that every thing said and done, will be in accordance with gentlemanly feeling and christian courtesy.

Your's respectfully,

GEORGE THOMPSON.

NOTE

The Speeches and Documents in this Pamphlet having been submitted to the correction of the Speakers, the Report may be relied on as an accurate and full account of the important proceedings.

DISCUSSION

FIRST NIGHT – MONDAY JUNE 13

Agreeably to public advertisement, the discussion betwixt Mr. George Thompson and the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge, was opened Monday evening, June 13. By half-past six, the hour fixed on by the Committee, Dr. Wardlaw's Chapel contained 1,200 individuals, the number agreed upon by both parties. A great number could not gain admittance, in consequence of the tickets allotted, being bought up on Saturday. On the entrance of the two antagonists, accompanied by the Committee, the audience warmly cheered them. By appointment of the Committee —

Rev. Dr. WARDLAW took the Chair. Having thanked the Committee for the honor they had conferred on him, and which, he trusted, would meet with the concurrence of the meeting, he said he had accepted the honorable post with the utmost confidence in the forbearance and propriety of conduct of the two gentlemen – or antagonists, should he call them? who were to address the meeting; and also, with the most perfect confidence in the good conduct and sense of propriety possessed by the meeting. Had he not possessed such confidence, he would never have thought of undertaking the present task. Had he imagined that the present meeting would give way to similar expressions

of feeling as had taken place within these walls on some former occasions, he would at once have declined the task, as one for which he was totally unfit, – he was not fit to manage storms. The parties on the present occasion were different from those to whom they had listened at the time to which he referred. One of them, it was true, was the same, and his character all of them knew. They knew his sentiments, his zeal, his eloquence, his devotedness to the great cause of which he was the fearless advocate. In reference to his opponent, on the present occasion, he would not dishonor that gentleman by naming him along with an individual who had stood before them formerly in opposition to their eloquent friend. He felt it to be his duty to introduce to them his friend – for he was allowed to call him so – the Rev. Mr. Breckinridge. That gentleman had come to this country, the accredited agent from the Presbyterian church – a large and influential body of Christians in America, to the congregational union of England and Wales. It was proper that he should state to the meeting that Mr. Breckinridge was no advocate of slavery – that he believed it to be opposed to the letter and spirit of the gospel, and as a proof how far he was in earnest in his professions in this matter, he had freely parted with a patrimonial estate so far as it consisted of slaves. (Cheers.) Having stated this, it might be further necessary that he should mention what gave rise to the present meeting. They were all aware, then, he said, that since his return from America, Mr. George Thompson had been lecturing in various parts of the kingdom. In the course

of his labors he was accused of having brought extravagant and unfounded charges against the American nation, and especially against the ministers of religion in that country. In consequence of this, Mr. Thompson published a challenge in the Patriot newspaper, in which he called upon any American minister to come forward and defend his brethren, if he were able, from the charges which he brought against them. This challenge, through the columns of the same newspaper, had been accepted by Mr. Breckinridge, and now they were here met to enter upon the discussion. The Chairman then read the regulations with regard to the conducting of the discussion which had been agreed upon by the Committee. In addition to what they contained, he might add that the chairman was not to be considered judge of what was relevant or irrelevant, nor was the speaker to be interrupted on any account. He would especially beg their serious attention to the rule requiring the entire suppression of every symptom of approbation or disapprobation. He trusted that his interference would not be required, but if it were he would feel himself called upon by imperative duty to enforce this regulation with the utmost strictness. Mr. Breckinridge had heard from some quarter or other very unfavorable accounts of the decorum of a Glasgow audience. He hoped that their conduct on the present occasion would disabuse that gentleman's mind of any unfavorable opinion he might entertain of them on that score. In conclusion, he might repeat, that he placed the most perfect reliance on the good sense and gentlemanly feeling of both speakers. Let them both, then,

be heard fairly. He solicited favor for neither – he demanded justice for both.

Mr. BRECKINRIDGE said, it was not easy to conceive of circumstances that were more embarrassing than those in which he was placed this evening. They had already taken for granted all that had been said and done on one side of the question; their minds had been already made up to oppose those conclusions to which it was his purpose to bring them. Their affections and feelings had long been engaged to his opponent in this cause; and all that he could say would necessarily have little effect in changing what he would not hesitate to call those unhappy opinions, which were long ago formed against him. Another cause of his embarrassment was, that he would be rejudged of all he might say here. What he said would be approved by one party in America, but would be disapproved of by another. In the United States they were differently situated from what the people were in this country. Here the people seemed now united on this subject, but in America they were split up into a great number of different parties, whose opinions and feelings were arrayed against each other in as great a measure as it was possible to conceive. Whatever, therefore, he might say in this country, would be disapproved of by many in the United States, while nothing was more certain than that, what was said by his opponent, would the more commend him to his friends on the other side of the Atlantic; and nothing he could say would probably lower him in the good opinion of his friends here.

Hence arose the difficulty of the situation in which he (Mr. B.) found himself placed, and his unusual claim upon their patience in the course of the discussion. Still he should be unworthy of his country, he should be forgetful of the power of truth, he would have little trust in God, if he was not ready to espouse the cause which he believed to be right; and more especially if he was not ready, before a Scottish and a Christian audience, to defend the principles he adopted and avowed. He had no desire to attempt a mitigation of their hatred to slavery; and if, at a future time, he should meet in America with any one now present, he would prove to them by the friendship of those who loved and respected him, and the opposition of those who did not, that he hated slavery as much as any one of those present could do. It was said by one of the ancients, 'I am a man: I consider nothing that relates to man, foreign to me.' It was a true and noble sentiment. The fate of the most hopeless might be theirs if power could make it so; and their condition might have been that of the poorest wretch on earth if God had not smiled upon them and their ancestors as he had done. He did not wish them to interfere with slavery in America. They might interfere, but the question was, how were they to do so? He wished in the course of the discussion to bring before them facts to show, that if they did at all interfere with slavery in America, it must be done as between individuals, not as a national question. That, whatever they did, they do as Christians, not as communities. That they must not, for a moment, look upon it as a question of rival power

and glory, as a question between Great Britain and America. If they did so in the slightest degree, their chance of success was gone for ever. In the prosecution of the question, they should not allow themselves to be identified in their efforts with any party in America, in politics, in religion, or metaphysics; more especially, with a small and odious party as they had done to a deplorable extent. They should not identify themselves with a party so small as not to be able to obtain their object, and so erroneous as not to deserve success. Whatever they did should be done meekly, and in the spirit of the gospel; they should not press the principles of the gospel with the spirit of a demon, but with all the sweetness and gentleness of the gospel of peace. These were the principles which he intended to endeavor to impress upon their minds by details which he would adduce in the course of the discussion. It was nothing more than just to the audience that they should know, that they should understand it distinctly, that as far as regarded his opponent, he neither was nor could be any thing more to him or his countrymen than as an individual who had identified himself with certain parties and principles in America. Neither he nor the Americans could have any object in underrating or overrating him. America could have no desire to raise him up or to pull him down. It is not, it cannot be any thing to America what any individual is, or may be, in the eyes of his own countrymen. The King of England is known to America only as the King of Great Britain; if he ceased to be the King of that kingdom, he was to them no more than a common individual.

Let it not be supposed that either he or America had any wish, even the most remote, to break down or injure the well earned or ill earned reputation of his opponent. They looked upon him only with reference to his principles, and had no personal motive on earth in reference to that gentleman. Let them not, therefore, think that in any remarks he might make, or charges he might bring forward, he had any intention of implicating his opponent as being solely responsible for these results. He called in question, not the principles of a particular individual only, but those also of a party in America, to whom he would have to answer when he returned to that country. Having said thus much, he would now proceed to the question before them, but would previously make a few preliminary remarks, which he thought necessary to enable them to come to a proper understanding of the subject. He did not think it necessary to trace the progress of the great cause to the present moment. For forty years they had suffered defeat after defeat – yet these defeats only strengthened their cause, even in this country, till they had arrived at a given point. He would not wish to hurt the feelings of a single individual now present, but he was sure he spoke the feelings of all in America, when he said that the great day of their power to do good, as a nation, was to be dated from the passing of the Reform Bill. From that period, they started in a new career of action, both at home and abroad. The sending out of agents was one of the great lines of operation attempted upon the Americans. This the Americans complained of as having been done in an imprudent

and impossible way, and sure to meet with defeat. They have sent out agents to America who have returned defeated. They admit they were not successful, though they say they retreated only, that they were not defeated. They have failed – they admit they have failed in their object. One of these agents on his return made certain statements as to the condition of the slaves in America; and as to the state of the churches in the United States, which implicated not only the great body of Christian ministers of the country, but the government, and the people of America, except a small handful of individuals. If, as was admitted, the number of pastors in America was twelve to fifteen thousand, and only one thousand had embraced these views, were they anything but a small party? While yet the whole nation was denounced as wicked – and the wrath of Heaven invoked against the country. It was only a very small handful that came in for a share of the praise of his opponent; and the sympathies here were invoked, on the assumption of principles which it was his object to prove false and unfounded. What could be the cause of such an anomaly? that those principles which are said to be loved and admired here, are repudiated there to the extremity of pertinacious obstinacy? This cause it would be his duty to point out; first, he would say what perhaps no one would believe, that the question of American slavery, is in its name not only unjust, but absurd. There was, properly speaking, no such thing as American slavery. It was absurd to talk of American slavery, except in so far as it applied to the sentiments of what was the minority, although he

would say a large minority, which tolerated slavery. It was not an American question. In America there were twenty-four separate republics; of these, twelve had no slaves, and twelve of them tolerated slavery. Two new states had recently been added to the Union, and God speed the day when others would be added, till the whole continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific was included in union, carrying with the union, Liberty and Independence. Of the two states which were lately added, one was a slave state and the other free. Of the twelve free, independent, sovereign states of America to which he had alluded – one, Massachusetts, had, for a longer time than his opponent had lived, not tolerated slavery. There were no slaves in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois, and in four of them there never had been a slave. Eight of them, of their own free will and choice, abolished slavery without money and without price. By the influence of the Spirit of God, and the influence of divine truth, they had totally abolished slavery. Of the twelve states, at least four, Ohio, with a million of inhabitants, Indiana, Illinois, and Maine, never had a slave. Since 1785 till this hour, there had not been one slave in any of these states. These twelve either never had slaves or had abolished slavery without any remuneration. These states contain seven million out of the eleven million of the white population of the Union, and nearly two-thirds of the territorial extent of the republic as now peopled. And when we remember that they have stood as they

now do for the last twenty years, as it was now more than twenty years since slavery was abolished, how could they be charged with the responsibility of the existence of slavery in other states, or be charged with fostering slavery which they were the first people upon earth to abolish, and the first to unite with other nations in putting down the slave trade as piracy. This he was aware would be denied; but though Wilberforce had labored in the cause for twenty years, the American constitution had fixed a limited time for the abolition of the slave trade, and the moment the twenty years had elapsed, the Congress did abolish it; and this was in the same month, and some days before the Abolition Bill had passed through Parliament. Thus, America was the first nation on earth which had abolished the slave trade, and made it piracy. If we judge by the number of republics which tolerate no slavery – if we judge by the number of American citizens who abhor slavery, it will be found not to be an American question, but one applicable only to a small portion of the nation. If he wished to prove that the British were idolaters, he could point to millions of idolaters in India, under the British Government, for every one in America who approved of slavery. If he wished to prove the British to be Catholics, and worshippers of the Virgin Mary, he could point to the west of Ireland, where were one thousand worshippers of the Virgin Mary for every one in America who did not wish slavery abolished. If he were to return to America, and get up public meetings, and address them about British idolatry, because the Indians were Idolaters, or on

British Catholicism, because many of the Irish worshipped the Virgin Mary, would not the world at once see the absurdity and maliciousness of the charge; and if he heaped upon Britain every libellous epithet he could invent – if he got the wise, the good, and the fair, to applaud him, would not the world see at once the grossness of the absurdity. And where, then, lay the difference? The United States Government have no power to abolish slavery in South Carolina – Britain can abolish idolatry throughout its dominions. It was absurd to say it was an American question. America, as a nation, was not responsible, either in the sight of God or man, for the existence of slavery within certain portions of the Union. As a nation, it had done every thing within its power. The half hour having now expired, Mr. B. sat down; and

Mr. THOMPSON rose. He said he did not stand on the platform this evening to explain to them his views in reference to slavery. He would occupy no portion of their time by an exposition of any of the principles or views entertained by himself on the subject of slavery as it has existed in our own dependencies, or as it exists in America at the present moment, or in other portions of the globe. He stood there to justify that policy which in a distant land he had deemed it right to pursue; he stood there to justify the policy which had been adopted and pursued, and was still pursued by certain individuals in the United States, whether many or few, whether a handful or a multitude, who were known by the name of the abolitionists of the United States of America. He stood there to justify himself and them in the act

of fearlessly, constantly, unceasingly, and universally, to every class and color on the face of the habitable globe, enunciating the great principles of equal justice and equal rights – of enunciating this great truth that slaveholding is a crime in the sight of God, and should be immediately and totally abolished. That God had in no instance given to man a discretionary power to hold property in his fellow-man; that instant emancipation was the right of the slave; that instant manumission was the duty of the master. That no government had a right to keep a single soul in slavery; that no nation had authority to permit slavery, let that nation exist where it may; if professing to be a Christian nation, so much the more atrocious was their wickedness. The nation which permitted the keeping in slavery of God's creatures, which allowed the traffic in human beings for 400 pieces of silver, even in the capital itself, was not entitled to be called a christian nation, and if professing to be a christian nation, so much the more pre-eminently wicked and infamous was the nation. By that act that infamous, wicked nation violated every christian feeling, and was worthy of being exposed to the scorn and derision of every nation under heaven, christian or pagan. This was a most momentous question, and he spoke strongly upon it, but he spoke advisedly. He did not speak angrily, but he did and must speak warmly on the subject of Slavery. He could not talk of millions of men and women, each of whom was endowed with a soul which was precious in the sight of God – each of whom was endowed with that principle which out-valued worlds – he could not speak of

such, registered with the brutes, with calm unconcern, or classed with chattels, and be calm – if he could do so, he should be ready with these nails to open his breast, and tear therefrom a heart which would be unworthy of a man. He could and would speak calmly on other topics, but this was a subject which required energy, unceasing energy, till the evil was removed from the face of the earth, till all the kingdoms of the world had become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ. He was thankful for the present opportunity which had been afforded him of entering into this discussion; he was thankful that his opponent, for so it seemed he must be called, was an American, that he was a christian minister, that he was an opponent of slavery, that he brought to the question before them, talent, learning, patriotism, and christian feeling. Such an opponent he respected and wished the audience to respect. He would ask them to cherish his person, to respect his opinions, to weigh his arguments, to test his facts, and if they were just and righteous, to adopt his principles. If he (Mr. T.) knew the strongest expression he had ever used regarding America, he would use it to-night; if he knew in what recess of his heart his worst wish towards America was deposited he would drag it forth to the light, that his opponent might grapple with it in their presence. He would not soften down any of his language; he would not sugar over his words, he would not abate one iota of what he had ever said in reference to the wickedness of America on former occasions. Let his opponent weigh every syllable he (Mr. T.) had uttered, every statement he had ever

made, every charge he had ever brought against his country or against his cloth, and if he found that he had exaggerated facts or stated what was not true, he would be glad to be shown it. He was there before them and his opponent to search after the truth, truth which would outlive Mr. Breckinridge – truth which would outlive Geo. Thompson – truth which was far more valuable than the proudest victory – truth which was invaluable to both – and let the truth stand out during the discussion which might follow; and when they had found out the truth, if they saw anything which had to be taken back – anything to be given up – anything for which to be sorry, he would try to outstrip his opponent in his readiness to retract what was wrong, to yield what was untenable, and to express his sorrow before God and the audience for what he had undeservedly said of America. With regard to the feelings he entertained towards the Americans, he need only refer to the last letter he had published to the American people, from which he would read a passage to show the feelings he entertained towards that country, as well as to those of her citizens who might reach these shores from America. Mr. Thompson then read the following passages: —

I love America, because her sons, though my persecutors, are immortal – because 'they know not what they do,' or if enlightened and wilful, are so much the more to be pitied and cared for. I love America, because of the many affectionate friends I have found upon her shores, by whom I have been cherished, refreshed and strengthened;

and upon whose regard I place an incalculable value. I love America, for there dwells the fettered slave – fettered and darkened, and degraded now, but soon to spring into light and liberty, and rank on earth, as he is ranked in heaven, 'but a little lower than the angels.' I love America, because of the many mighty and magnificent enterprises in which she has embarked for the salvation of the world. I love her rising spires, her peaceful villages, and her multiplied means of moral, literary, and religious improvement. I love her hardy sons, the tenants of her vallies and her mountains green. I love her native children of the forest, still roaming, untutored and untamed, in the unsubdued wildernesses of the 'far west.' I love your country, because it is the theatre of the sublimest contest now waging with darkness and despotism, and misery on the face of the globe; and because your country is ordained to be the scene of a triumph, as holy in its character and as glorious in its results, as any ever achieved through the instrumentality of men.

But though my soul yearns over America, and I desire nothing more eagerly than to see her stand forth among the nations of the world, unsullied in reputation, and omnipotent in energy, yet shall I, if spared, deem it my duty to publish aloud her wide and fearful departures from rectitude and mercy. I shall unceasingly proclaim the wrongs of her enslaved children; and, while she continues to 'traffic in the souls of men,' brand her as recreant to the great principles of her revolutionary struggle, and hypocritical in all her professions of attachment to the cause of human rights.

I thank God, I cherish no feelings of bitterness or revenge, towards any individual in America, my most inveterate enemy not excepted. Should the sea on which I am about to embark receive me ere I gain my native shore – should this be the last letter I ever address to the people of America, Heaven bears me witness, I with truth and sincerity affirm that, as I look to be freely forgiven, so freely do I forgive my persecutors and slanderers and pray – 'Lord lay not this sin to their charge.'

In another part of the same letter he had thus expressed himself: —

Should a kind providence place me again upon the soil of my birth, and when there, should any American (and I hope many will) visit that soil to plead the cause of virtue and philanthropy, and strive in love to provoke us to good works, let him know that there will be one man who will uphold his right to liberty of speech, one man who will publicly and privately assert and maintain the divinity of his commission to attack sin and alleviate suffering, in every form, in every latitude, and under whatever sanction and authorities it may be cloaked and guarded. And coming on such an errand, I think I may pledge myself in behalf of my country, that he shall not be driven with a wife and little ones, from the door of a hotel in less than 36 hours after he first breathes our air – that he shall not be denounced as an incendiary, a fanatic, an emissary, an enemy, and a traitor – that he shall not be assailed with oaths and missiles, while proclaiming from the pulpit in the house of God, on the evening of a

Christian Sabbath, the doctrines of 'judgment, justice, and mercy,' – that he shall not be threatened, wherever he goes, with 'tar and feathers' – that he shall not be repudiated and abused in newspapers denominated religious, and by men calling themselves Christian Ministers – that he shall not have a price set upon his head, and his house surrounded with ruffians, hired to effect his abduction – that his wife and children shall not be forced to flee from the hearth of a friend, lest they should be 'smoked out' by men in civic authority, and their paid myrmidons – that the mother and her little ones shall not find at midnight, the house surrounded by an infuriated multitude, calling with horrible execrations for the husband and the father – that his lady shall not be doomed, while in a strange land, to see her babes clinging to her with affright, exclaiming, 'the mob shan't get papa,' 'papa is good is he not? the naughty mob shan't get him, shall they?' – that he shall not, finally, be forced to quit the most enlightened and christian city of our nation, to escape the assassin's knife, and return to tell his country, that in Britain the friend of virtue, humanity, and freedom, was put beyond the protection of the laws, and the pale of civilized sympathy, and given over by professor and profane, to the tender mercies of a blood-thirsty rabble.

These extracts were from the last letter that he had written to the people of America, and which had been widely published there; and he was glad of an opportunity of now laying them before a Glasgow audience, and of having them incorporated in the proceedings of the evening, in order to show that he then

forgave America, that he now forgave America. He would stand there to defend the right of Mr. Breckinridge to a fair hearing from his (Mr. Thompson's) countrymen; and stand forward as his protector, to save him from the missile that might be aimed at him, and to receive into his own bosom the dagger which might be aimed at his heart. His opponent might be anxious to know what report he (Mr. T.) made on his return to Britain of his proceedings in America. He would therefore read an extract from the minutes of the London Society for Universal Emancipation:

George Thompson was then introduced to the Committee, and communicated at length the result of his Mission in the United States, and the present cheering aspect of the Anti-Slavery cause in that country. The following is a brief outline of his statement:

He desired to be devoutly thankful to Divine Providence for the signal preservation and help vouchsafed to him in all his labors, perils, and persecutions. He considered it a high honor to have been permitted to proclaim in the ears of a distant people the great principles held by the Society.

He sailed from this country on the 17th August, 1834, landed at New York on the 20th September, and commenced his public labors on the 1st of October. His public Lectures were continued down to the 20th October, 1835, during which period he delivered between 2 and 300 public Lectures, besides innumerable shorter addresses before Committees, Conventions, Associations, &c. &c. His audiences had invariably been overflowing,

and composed from time to time of members of State Legislatures, the Heads of Colleges, Professors, Clergymen of all denominations, members of the legal profession, and the students of nearly all the Theological and Academical Institutions in New England. The result of his labors had been the multiplication of Anti-Slavery Associations to an unprecedented extent. Up to the month of May, 1835, he met with no serious or formidable opposition. At that time the National Society reported the existence of 250 auxiliaries, and its determination to appropriate during the ensuing year the sum of 30,000 dollars in the printing of papers and pamphlets to be gratuitously circulated amongst the entire white population of the country. The Southern States, previously almost silent and inoperative, soon after commenced a system of terrorism, intercepting the public conveyances, rifling the Mail Bags, scourging, mutilating or murdering all suspected of holding Anti-Slavery views, and calling with one consent upon the Free States to pass laws, abridging the freedom of speech and of the press, upon the subject of slavery. The North promptly responded to the call of the South, and in every direction through the Free States the Abolitionists became the victims of persecution, proscription and outrage. The friends of Negro freedom every where endured with a patience and spirit of christian charity, almost unexampled, the multiplied wrongs and injuries accumulated upon them. They ceased not to labor for the Holy cause they had espoused, but perseveringly pursued their course in the use of all means sanctioned by Justice, Religion, and the

Constitution of their country. The result had been the rapid extension of their principles, and a vast accession of moral strength. G. T. gave an appalling account of the condition of the Southern Churches. The Presbyterians, Baptists, and Episcopal Methodist Churches were the main pillars of the system of Slavery. Were they to withdraw their countenance, and cease to participate in its administration and profit, it would not exist one year. Bishops, presiding Elders, Travelling Preachers, Local Preachers, Trustees, Stewards, Class Leaders, private Members, and other attendants in the Churches of the Episcopal Methodists, with the preachers and subordinate members of the other denominations, are, with few exceptions, Slaveholders. Many of the preachers, not merely possessing domestic Slaves, but being planters 'on a pretty extensive scale,' and dividing their time between the duties of the Pastoral Office and the driving of a gang of Negroes upon a cotton, tobacco, or rice plantation.

In the great pro-Slavery Meetings at Charleston and Richmond, the clergy of all denominations attended in a body, and at the bidding of vigilance Committees suspended their Schools for the instruction of the colored population, receiving as their reward a vote of thanks from their lay Slaveholding Brethren 'for their prudent and patriotic conduct.'

G. T. gave a most encouraging account of the present state of the Anti-Slavery cause, as nearly as it could be ascertained by letters recently received. He stated that there were now, exclusive of the Journals published by the

Anti-Slavery Societies, 100 newspapers boldly advocating the principles of Abolition. Between 4 and 500 auxiliary associations, comprising 15 or 1700 Ministers of the Gospel of various denominations. G. T. stated also a number of particulars, shewing the rapid progress of correct opinions amongst the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists, producing a Document just received from the last named body, signed by 185 Clergymen, being a reply to a letter addressed by the Baptist ministers in and near London to the Baptist Churches of America, and fully reciprocating all their sentiments on the subject of immediate and entire emancipation. The cause was proceeding with accelerated rapidity. Ten or twelve Agents of the National Society were incessantly laboring with many others employed by the State Societies, of which there were seven, viz. Kentucky, (a slave State,) Ohio, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Gerrit Smith, Esq. a competent authority, had stated that every week witnessed an accession to the ranks of the Abolitionists of not less than 500, in the State of New York alone, and he did not know that in all the Societies there was one intemperate or profane person. G. T. in describing the character of the persons comprising the Anti-Slavery Societies in America, stated, that they were universally men and women of religious principles, and, in most instances, of unquestioned piety. He had never known any benevolent enterprise carried forward more in dependence upon Divine Direction and Divine Aid, than the abolition cause in the United States. In all their meetings,

public or social, they committed themselves to God in Prayer, and he had found that those who had been most vehemently denounced as 'Fanatics and Incendiaries' were men sound in judgment, calm in temper, deliberate in council, and prudent, though resolute, in action. The great principle on which all their Societies were founded was the essential sinfulness of slaveholding, and the consequent necessity of its immediate and entire abolition. The great means by which they had sought to accomplish their object, was the fearless publication of the truth in love, addressed to the understandings and hearts of their fellow citizens. Expediency was a doctrine they abjured. Free from a time-serving or timid spirit, they boldly relied upon the righteousness of their cause, the potency of truth, and the blessing of God. They were entitled to receive from the Abolitionists of Great Britain the warmest commendation, the fullest confidence, and most cordial co-operation.

He was happy in being able to state, that wherever the principles of immediate abolition had been fully adopted, prejudice against color had been thrown aside, and that the members of the Anti-Slavery Societies throughout the country were endeavoring by every proper means to accomplish the moral, intellectual, and spiritual elevation of the colored population.

He hoped he would yet have ample opportunities of replying to the positions assumed by his opponent. He thought he would be able to show that slavery in America was American slavery; that the Congress of America – that the Constitution of America

made it an institution of the country, and therefore a national sin of America. In reference to any question as to the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, he was glad he had to do with a gentleman who knew these well, who held a high character for his Constitutional and legal attainments; and he hoped he would be able to show that Slavery in America was American Slavery – that the people in the North did not hate slavery – that they did not oppose slavery – that they were the greatest supporters of slavery in the United States – that slavery in America was a national question. But he would keep his proofs till he had time to say something along with them. Our interference was not a political interference with America, it was only a moral interference, to put an end to slavery – and he hoped the people of this country, would continue to denounce slavery in America; and at the same time he was quite willing that his opponent should denounce the idolatry of our eastern possessions.

Mr. BRECKINRIDGE said, he would take up the line of argument in which he had been proceeding; but before doing so he wished to make one observation. How did it happen – admitting all that had been said by his opponent to be true and fair, how did it happen, that the same arguments and the same principles were so differently received in different countries? How did it happen that the individual who advocated the same cause, with the same temper, and almost in the same words, in Glasgow and in Boston, should in the one place be supported by

general applause, and in the other be ill-treated and despised, and even made to flee for his life? This was a question which was yet to be solved. Mr. Thompson had spoken of the Northern states as the greatest friends of slavery, forgetting that he had formerly represented the clergy as such. This was one of the principal reasons of his want of success – of what might justly be called his signal failure. He had brought unjust charges against an entire people, and had in consequence been ill-treated. Mr. Thompson had shown the better part of valor, discretion, in taking care never to visit any of the slave states. He had never seen a slaveholder, except, perhaps, he had met such an individual in a free state. At least if he had done so, it was a circumstance which was not generally known, one of those hidden things of which it was not permitted to read. Having made this observation, he (Mr. B.) would proceed to state that in the slaveholding states there was a large minority – in some, nearly one half of the population – zealously engaged in furthering the abolition of slavery. In Kentucky, slaveholding had been introduced only by a small majority. When some time after, a convention canvassed the subject, that majority was diminished, and, still at this hour in that State, in which he had been born, one of the greatest political questions agitated was whether slaveholding should be abolished or retained as an element of the constitution. A law had long ago been passed imposing a fine of six hundred dollars on whoever brought a slave into the State for sale, and three hundred dollars on whoever bought him. A fine of nine hundred dollars

was thus made the penalty of introducing a slave into Kentucky as merchandise. He was sorry to have to speak of buying and selling human beings; but, to be understood, it was absolutely necessary that he should do so. In Virginia also, from which Kentucky had been in great measure peopled, not many years ago a frightful insurrection had taken place, and many cruelties had been practised – it was needless to say whether most on the side of the blacks or the whites. The succeeding legislature of that State took up the question of slavery in its length and breadth – passed a law for giving \$20,000 to the Colonization Society, – and rejected only by a small majority a proposal to appropriate that fund equally to the benefit of slaves to be set free – as of those already free. He mentioned these things merely to show that there was a great and an increasing party in the south favorable to the abolition of negro slavery. In fact, in some of the Southern states the free people of color had increased faster than the whites; in Maryland alone there were 52,000 of a free colored population, all of whom, or their immediate progenitors, had been voluntarily manumitted. It was needless to say, therefore, that in the Southern states there was no anti-slavery party. There certainly was not such a party in Mr. Thompson's sense of the word; but Mr. Thompson's definition was not the correct one, as he (Mr. B.) would explain directly. Was it fair then, he would ask, to hold up to the British public, not only the people of the free states, but also this great minority in the Southern states as pro-slavery men. Let slavery be denounced,

but let not the denunciation fall upon the whole American people, many of whom were doing all they could for its abolition. If Louisiana resolved on perpetuating slavery, let this be told of Louisiana. If South Carolina adhered to the system, say so of South Carolina; but do not implicate the mass of the American people, so many of whom are as much opposed to slavery as is Mr. Thompson himself. He had heard it said that the sun never sat on the British dominions. As well, then, might the British people be identified with the idolatry which prevailed in Hindostan as the Americans be identified with negro slavery. The question was not American; it existed solely between the slaveholder and the world. It was unfair, therefore, to blame the Americans as a nation: the slaveholder, and the slaveholder alone, should be blamed, let him reside where he might. Having thus disposed of the first branch of his argument, he was naturally led to explain the wonderful phenomenon of Mr. Thompson's reception in America – to give a reason why that reception was so different from what the same gentleman met with in Glasgow. Mr. Thompson had taken up the question as one of civil organization. Now the fact was, that the American nation was divided into two parties on the subject, namely, the pro-slavery, and the anti-slavery parties. One party said, let it alone; the other, and by far the most numerous party, said, something ought to be done in relation to it. In the last named class, was to be included the population of all the non-slaveholding states. He declared, in the presence of God, his conviction, that there

was not a sane man in the free states who did not wish the world rid of slavery. He believed the same of a large minority in the states in which slavery existed. The pro-slavery party themselves were also divided. One section, and he rejoiced to add, a small one, called into exertion in fact only by that effervescence which had been produced by the violence of Mr. T's friends – spoke of slavery as an exceedingly good thing – as not only consistent with the law of God, but as absolutely necessary for the advancement of civilization. This party was organised within the last few years, and met the violence of Mr. Thompson's party by a corresponding violence, as a beam naturally seeks its balance. Another section of the pro-slavery party, considered slavery a great evil, and wished that it were abolished, but they did not see how this could be effected. They had been born in a state of society where it had an existence, and they could see no course to adopt but to let it cure itself. These were the two sections into which the supporters of slavery were divided. The anti-slavery party was also composed of individuals who had different views of the subject. The one class had been called Gradualists, Emancipationists, and Colonizationists. – The other were called Abolitionists. With the latter class, Mr. Thompson had identified himself. And now, as while in America, by his praises of Mr. Garrison, and all their leaders, his abuse of their opponents, and his efforts to chain the British public, hand and foot, to them and their projects, shows his continued devotion to them. He would refer to this party again, but, in the mean time, he would only

say, that its members manifested far more honesty than wisdom. In 1833, the abolitionists held a Convention in Philadelphia, at which they drew up a Declaration of Independence – a declaration which he dared to say Mr. Thompson cherished as the apple of his eye; but which had been more effectual in raising mobs than ever witch was in raising the wind. The document of which he spoke announced three principles, to the promulgation of which, the members of the Convention pledged their lives and their fortunes. A number of the particulars specified, in support of which they said they would live and die, went to change materially the laws and Constitution of the United States, and yet it was pretended that this was not a political question! Their first principle was, that every human being has an instant right to be free, irrespective of all consequences; and incapable of restriction or modification. The second was like unto it, that the right of citizenship, inherent in every man, in the spot where he is born, is so perfect, that to deprive him of its exercise in any way whatever – even by emigration, under strong moral constraint, is a sin. Their third principle was, that all prejudice against color was sinful; and that all our judgments and all our feelings towards others should be regulated exclusively by their moral and intellectual worth. Mr. B. said he stated these principles from memory only – as he did most of the facts on which he relied. But he was willing to stand or fall, in both countries, upon the substantial accuracy of his statements. Mr. Breckinridge here closed his address, the period allotted to him having expired.

Mr. THOMPSON was anxious to lay before the meeting documentary testimony, in preference to any thing he could say himself. Rather than set forth his own views, as he had done on many former occasions, he wished to bring forward such documents as even his opponent would admit to be really American. He pledged himself to show that this was an American question. He was not prepared for this branch of the subject, because he had not expected that Mr. Breckinridge would exonerate America from the charge of being a slaveholding nation; nevertheless, he was perfectly ready to take it up. He would undertake to prove that the existence of slavery in the United States was the result of a compromise – that the Constitution of the United States was, in fact, based upon a compromise, in relation to this subject. At the time when the Constitution was agreed to, the then slaveholding states refused to come into what was called the confederacy of republics, unless slaveholding was permitted. At that time there were only three hundred thousand slaves in the Union; now there were two millions and a half. So much, said Mr. Thompson, for what the good and influential men of the South, spoken of by Mr. Breckinridge, had done for the abolition of slavery. Then there were three hundred thousand; now there were two million four hundred thousand. The method by which these good and influential people had gone about extirpating slavery, had been an Irish method; it had shown distinctly the extent of their zeal and usefulness. Why, setting aside their influence

altogether, they might, had they been as numerous as represented by his respected opponent, have manumitted as many of their own slaves. It was said, no doubt, that the laws prevented this; but who made the laws? The child could not do what her mamma had commanded her to do, because she was tied to the mahogany table, she could only answer, when asked who tied her, that it was herself. In like manner, he could turn round on those whom his respected opponent represented, as haters of slavery. Emancipationists they wished to be called; colonizationists they ought to be called. He would ask them, what had they done? Had they not compromised every principle of justice and truth, by permitting slaveholding in their Union? Had they not even bestowed exclusive privileges on the slaveholders? Had they not bestowed on them such privileges as that, even now, they sent twenty-four or twenty-five representatives to Congress more than their proportion? His respected opponent had said this was not a national question. Why, then, send six thousand bayonets to the South for the protection of the slaveholder? Why were the American people taxed in order to maintain bayonets, blunderbusses, and artillery in the South? Not a national question! Why, then, was Missouri admitted a member of the Union – Missouri a slaveholding State, admitted by the votes of the Northern republics. Mr. Breckinridge had fought very shy of the state of the Capital, and the power of Congress to suppress the internal traffic in slaves. He (Mr. Thompson) trusted, however, that this branch of the subject would be taken

up. His opponent himself, in a letter addressed to the New York Evangelist, had stated, that Congress possessed full power to suppress the internal traffic in slaves; and yet they did it not. There was in fact no question at all respecting the power of the Congress, in this matter; yet it was said the question of slavery was not national. The people of the Northern states, – the slavery-hating, liberty-loving people of the Northern states had said they would fight shoulder to shoulder with the Slaveholders of the South, should the slaves dare to rise and say they were men, and after all this, it was asserted that this was not a national question. Mr. Breckinridge had said, that he (Mr. Thompson) got all his information at second hand. He might have told the reason why; he knew, however, that such a revelation would have been awful. He knew that pious men, advocates of the cause of abolition had been hanged, butchered, their backs ploughed up by Presbyterian elders; and if such had been done towards natives of New England, what could a stranger such as he have expected? He (Mr. T.) had, it seems, got all at second hand. He would tell the meeting where he had obtained some of his information. From Mr. Breckinridge himself; and he must say, that sounder or juster views respecting slavery – or a more complete justification of the mission in which he (Mr. T.) had been so lately engaged, could scarcely be met with. This was evidence which he had no fear could be ruled out of court. It was that of the friend and defender of America. Mr. T. then read the following passage from a speech delivered by Mr. Breckinridge: —

What, then, is slavery? for the question relates to the action of certain principles on it, and to its probable and proper results; what is slavery as it exists among us? We reply, it is that condition enforced by the laws of one half of the states of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another portion called slaves; as

1. To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself, by continuing healthful existence, thus committing clear robbery.

2. To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, by denying to them the civil rights of marriage; thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution.

3. To deprive them of the means and opportunities of moral and intellectual culture, in many states making it a high penal offence to teach them to read; thus perpetuating whatever of evil there is that proceeds from ignorance.

4. To set up between parents and their children an authority higher than the impulse of nature and the laws of God; which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and, at pleasure, separates the mother at a returnless distance from her child; thus abrogating the clearest laws of nature; thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands upon thousands of beings, created like themselves, in the image of the most high God! This is slavery as it is daily exhibited

in every slave state.

Here, continued Mr. T., is slavery acknowledged to be clear robbery, and yet it is not to be instantly abolished! Universal concubinage and prostitution, which must not immediately be put an end to! Oh, these wicked abolitionists, who seek to put an immediate close to such a state of things. What an immensity of good have the emancipationists of the South, as they wish to be called, of the colonizationists as they ought to be called, done during their fifty years labor, when this is yet left for the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge to say. Dear, delightful, energetic men! Truly, if this is all they have been able to effect it is time that the work were committed to abler hands. Mr. Thompson then read an extract from the Philadelphia declaration. Mr. Breckinridge had called it a declaration of independence, but it was only a declaration of sentiments; —

We have met together for the achievement of an enterprise, without which, that of our fathers is incomplete, and which, for its magnitude, solemnity, and probable results upon the destiny of the world, as far as transcends theirs, as moral truth does physical force.

In purity of motive, in earnestness of zeal, in decision of purpose, in intrepidity of action, in steadfastness of faith, in sincerity of spirit, we would not be inferior to them.

Their principles led them to wage war against their oppressors, and to spill human blood like water, in order to be free. Ours forbid the doing of evil that good may come, and lead us to reject, and entreat the oppressed to reject the

use of all carnal weapons, for deliverance from bondage – relying solely upon those which are spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

Their measures were physical resistance – the marshalling in arms – the hostile array – the mortal encounter. Ours shall be such only as the opposition of moral purity to moral corruption – the destruction of error by the potency of truth – the overthrow of prejudice by the power of love – and the abolition of slavery by the spirit of repentance.

Their grievances, great as they were, were trifling in comparison with the wrongs and sufferings of those for whom we plead. Our fathers were never slaves – never bought and sold like cattle – never shut out from the light of knowledge and religion – never subjected to the lash of brutal task masters.

But those, for whose emancipation we are striving, constituting at the present, at least one-sixth part of our countrymen, – are recognised by the laws, and treated by their fellow-beings as marketable commodities – as goods and chattels – as brute beasts; are plundered daily of the fruits of their toil, without redress; – really enjoy no constitutional or legal protection from licentious and murderous outrages upon their persons – are ruthlessly torn asunder – the tender babe from the arms of its frantic mother – the heart-broken wife from her weeping husband – at the caprice or pleasure of irresponsible tyrants; – for the crime of having a dark complexion – they suffer the pangs of hunger, the infliction of stripes, and the ignominy

of brutal servitude. They are kept in heathenish darkness by laws expressly enacted to make their instruction a criminal offence.

These are the prominent circumstances in the condition of more than two millions of our people, the proof of which may be found in thousands of indisputable facts, and in the laws of the slaveholding states.

Hence we maintain: —

That in the view of the civil and religious privileges of this nation, the guilt of its oppression is unequalled by any other on the face of the earth – and, therefore,

That it is bound to repent instantly, to undo the heavy burden, to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free.

We further maintain: —

That no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother – to hold or acknowledge him, for one moment, as a piece of merchandise – to keep back his hire by fraud – or to brutalize his mind by denying him the means of intellectual, social, and moral improvement.

The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable. To invade it is to usurp the prerogative of Jehovah. Every man has a right to his own body – to the products of his own labor – to the protection of law – and to the common advantages of society. It is piracy to buy or steal a native African, and subject him to servitude. Surely the sin is as great to enslave an American as an African.

Therefore, we believe and affirm: —

That there is no difference *in principle*, between the African slave-trade and American slavery.

That every American citizen who retains a human being in involuntary bondage, as his property is (according to Scripture) a man-stealer.

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free, and brought under the protection of law.

That if they had lived from the time of Pharaoh down to the present period, and had been entailed through successive generations, their right to be free could never have been alienated, but their claims would have constantly risen in solemnity.

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are therefore, before God, utterly null and void; being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the relations, endearments, and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of all the holy commandments – and that, therefore, they ought to be instantly abrogated.

He would ask if there was any thing here different from what he had read from his respected opponent? The sentiments were the same, though not given in Mr. Breckinridge's strong and glowing language. Mr. Breckinridge's description of slavery was even more methodical, clearer, and better arranged; he was therefore inclined to prefer it to the other. He would, however, ask Mr. Breckinridge not to persevere in speaking of the violence, as he called it, of the abolitionists, only in general terms. He hoped he would point out the instances to which he alluded,

and not take advantage of them, because they were a handful and *odious*. They were not singular in being called odious. Noah was called odious by the men of his day, because he pointed out to them the wickedness of which they were guilty. Every reformer had been called odious, and he trusted to be always among those who were deemed odious by slaveholders and their apologists. He repeated, that he wished Mr. Breckinridge to forsake general allegations, and to specify time and place when he brought forward his charges. The time was passed, when, in Glasgow, vague assertions could produce any effect. The time was not, indeed, distant when even here the friends of negro freedom had been deemed odious – when they were a mere handful, met in a room in the Black Bull Inn. But from being odious they had become respectable, and from respectable triumphant, in consequence of their having renounced expediency, and taken their stand on the broad principles of truth and justice.

Mr. BRECKINRIDGE said, he had on so many occasions and in so many different forms uttered the sentiments contained in the passages which had just been read as his, that he was unable to say from what particular speech or writing they were taken. But he had no doubt that if the whole passage to which they belonged were read, it would be seen that they contained, in addition to what they had heard, the most unqualified condemnation of the irrational course pursued by the abolitionists. He believed also, that, whatever it was, that writing had been uttered by him in a slave state. For he could say for

himself, that he had never said that of a brother behind his back, which he would be afraid or unwilling to repeat before his face. He had never gone to Boston, to cry back to Baltimore, how great a sin they were guilty of in upholding slavery. The worst things which he had said against slavery had been said in the slave states, and had Mr. Thompson gone there and seen with his two eyes, what he describes wholly upon hearsay, he would, perhaps, have understood the subject better than he seems to do. As he felt himself divinely commissioned, he should have felt no fear, he should have gone at whatever hazard, he should have seen slavery in its true colors, though he had read it in his own blood. If Saul of Tarsus had gone to America to see slavery – I dare to say, with the help of God, he would have been right sure to see it. He did not say that Mr. T. should have gone to the Southern states if his life was likely to be endangered by his going there; but he would say this, that Mr. Thompson ought not to pretend, that he had been, in the least degree, a martyr in the cause, when, in reality, he had exercised the most masterly discretion. With regard to the acts of the abolitionists, as he had been called on to mention particulars, he could not say that he had ever heard of their having killed any person, nor had he ever heard of any of them being killed. He might mention, however, that he himself had once almost been mobbed in Boston, and, that too, by a mob stirred up against him, by placards, written, as he believed, by William Lloyd Garrison. He had never obtained direct proof of this, but he might state, as a reason for his belief,

that the inflammatory placards were of the precise breadth and appearance of the columns of Garrison's paper – the Liberator, and the breadth of the columns of no other newspaper in that city. Mr. B. stated a second case, in which, on the arrival at the city of New York of the Rev. J. L. Wilson, a missionary to Western Africa, in charge of two lads, the sons of two African kings, committed by their fathers to the Maryland Colonization Society for education; some friends of the Anti-Slavery Society of that city, with the concurrence, if not by the procurement, as was universally believed, of Elizur Wright, Jr., a leading person, and Secretary of the principal society of abolitionists – got out a writ to take the bodies of the boys, under the pretence of believing, that they had been kidnapped in Africa. These two cases he considered, would perhaps satisfy Mr. T's appetite for facts in the meantime; he would have plenty more of them when they came to the main question of debate. One other instance, and he would have done. There was a law in the United States, that if a slave run away from one of the slaveholding states, to any of the non-slaveholding states, the authorities of the latter were bound to give him up to his master. A runaway slave had been confined in New York prison, previous to being sent home, an attempt was made to stir up a mob, for the purpose of liberating him. A bill instigating the people to take the laws into their own hands, was traced to an abolitionist – the same Elizur Wright, Jr. He brought to the office of one of the principal city papers, a denial of the charge – in a note signed by him in his official capacity.

He was told that was insufficient, as it was in his individual, not in his official capacity, that he was supposed to have done the act in question. He replied, it would be time to make the denial in that form, when the charge was so specifically made; meantime he considered the actual denial sufficient. Then, sir, said one present, I charge you with writing the placard – for I saw it in your hand writing. These instances were sufficient to prove the charge of violence which he had made was not unfounded. In reference to the statement made by Mr. Thompson regarding the number of slaves in the United States, at the commencement of the Revolution, Mr. B. said, it was impossible to know precisely what number there was at that time, as there had been no statistical returns before 1790, at which time there were six hundred and sixty-five thousand slaves in the five original slave states. The exertions of the American nation to put an end to slavery were treated with ridicule, but he would have them to bear in mind, that there were in the United States four hundred thousand free people of color, all of whom, or their progenitors, had been set free by the people of America, and not one of these, so far as he knew, had been liberated by an abolitionist. In addition to these, there were not less than four thousand more in Africa, many of whom had been freed from fetters and sent to that country. He would ask if all this was to be counted as nothing. If they were to consider for a moment the enormous sum which it would take to ransom so many slaves, they would perceive the value of the sacrifice. They might say that they had given \$150,000,000

towards the abolition of slavery. It might seem selfish to talk of it thus; but if the conduct of Great Britain, rich and powerful as she was, was not reckoned worthy of praise for having done an act of justice, in granting emancipation to the West India slaves, at the cost of \$100,000,000, or £20,000,000, how much more might be said of £30,000,000, being paid by a few comparatively poor and scattered communities, and individual men. They had been told some fine stories of a mahogany table, to which the people of America had tied themselves, and they were left to infer that it was quite easy, that it merely required the exertion of will, for them to set their slaves free. Now, on this head, he would only ask, had he the power of fixing the place of his birth? No. Nor had he any hand in making the laws of the place where he was born, nor the power of altering them. They might, indeed, be altered and he ought to add, they would have been altered already, but for the passionate and intemperate zeal of the abolitionists; but for the conduct of those who tell the slaveholders of the Southern states, that they must at once give freedom to the slaves, at whatever cost or whatever hazard, and unless they do so, they will be denounced on the house-tops, by all the vilest names which language can furnish, or the imagination of man can conceive. And what was the answer the planters gave to these disturbers of the public peace? First, coolly, 'there's the door;' and next, 'if you try to tell these things to those, who, when they learn them, will at once turn round and cut our throats, we must take measures to prevent your

succeeding.' Such conduct was just what was to be expected on the part of the slaveholders. They saw these men coming among their slaves, and where they could not appeal to their judgments, endeavoring to speak to the eyes of the black population by prints, representing their masters, harsh and cruel. It was not surprising that such unwise conduct should beget a bitter feeling of opposition among the inhabitants of the Southern states. They themselves knew too well the critical nature of their position, and the dangers of tampering with the passions of the black population. Let him who doubted go to the Southern states, and he would learn that those harsh laws, in regard to slavery, which had been so much condemned, were passed immediately after some of those insurrections, those spasmodic efforts of the slaves to free themselves by violence, which could never end in good, and which the conduct of the abolitionists was calculated continually to renew. They ought to take these things into account when they heard statements made about the strong excitement against the abolitionists. He would repeat what he had before stated, that the cause of emancipation had been ruined by that small party with which Mr. Thompson had identified himself: but to whose chariot wheels he trusted the people of this country would never suffer themselves to be bound.

Mr. GEORGE THOMPSON said, the work he had to do in reference to the last speech was by no means great or difficult. They had heard a great many things stated by Mr. Breckinridge on the great question in debate, but every one of these had

been stated a thousand times before, and answered again and again within the last sixty years. Within these very walls they had heard many of them brought forward and refuted within the last four years. But there was one part of his opponent's speech to which he would reply with emphasis. And he could not but confess that he had listened to that one part of it with surprise. He knew Mr. Breckinridge to be the advocate of gradual emancipation; he (Mr. Thompson) had therefore come prepared to hear all the arguments employed by the gradualists, urged in the ablest manner, but he had not been prepared to hear from that gentleman's lips the things he had heard – he did not expect that the foul charge of stirring up a mob against Mr. Breckinridge for advocating the principles of colonization, would be brought against William Lloyd Garrison. But they would here see the propriety and utility of his calling upon his opponent to leave generalities and come to something specific – to lay his finger on a fact which could be examined and tested circumstantially. And what did they suppose was the truth in the present case? Simply this, that when Mr. Breckinridge came forward to explain the principles of the Maryland colonization scheme, the noisy rabble who sought to mob, did so only so long as they were under the impression that he was an abolitionist. Mr. B. and his brother, who was along with him on that occasion, did their best to let the meeting know that they were not abolitionists but colonizationists, and whenever the mob learned that, they became quiet. This was the fact in regard to that case – he would

willingly stake the merits of the whole question on the truth of what he had just stated, and he would call on Mr. B. to say whether it was not true; he would call on him to exhibit the placard which had been written by Mr. Garrison, or tell what it contained. He had a copy of the Liberator of the day referred to, and he would ask him to point out a single word in it which could be found fault with. He would dare Mr. B. to find a single sentence in that paper calculated to stir up a mob, or to induce any one to hurt a single hair of his head. With regard to the Maryland colonization scheme, he was not going to enter upon its discussion at that hour of the evening, but the next evening, if they were spared, he would endeavor to show the gross iniquity of that scheme, recommended as it was by Mr. Breckinridge. In the mean time, to return to the next charge, they were told of an active abolitionist – Elizur Wright. And here he would at once say, that it was too bad to bring such a charge against an individual like Elizur Wright, than whom he knew no man, either on this or the the other side of the Atlantic, whose nature was more imbued with the milk of human kindness, or whose heart was more alive to the dictates of Christian charity – it was too bad, he repeated, to bring such a charge against that man, unless it could be substantiated beyond the possibility of doubt. They were told that Elizur Wright had stirred up the people of New York to insurrection, by inflammatory placards. Here indeed was a serious charge, but they ought to know what these placards were. Again, he would call upon Mr. B. to show a copy of the

placard, or to say what were its contents. In explanation of the matter he might state to the meeting that there was a little truth in what had been said about this matter; and in order to make them understand the case properly, they must first know, that in New York there were at all times a number of runaway slaves, and also, that there was in the same city a class of men, who, at least wore the human form, and who were even allowed to appear as gentlemen, whose sole profession was that of kidnappers; their only means of subsistence was derived from laying hold of these unfortunates, and returning them to their masters in the South. Nothing was more common than advertisements from these gentlemen kidnappers in the newspapers, in which they offered their services to any slave master whose slaves had run off. All that was necessary was merely that twenty dollars should be transmitted to them under cover, with the marks of the runaway who was soon found out if in the city, and with the clutch of a demon, seized and dragged to prison. These were the kidnappers. And who was Elizur Wright? He was the man who at all times was found ready to sympathise with those poor unfortunate outcasts, to pour the balm of consolation into their wounds – to come into the Recorder's Court, and stand there to plead the cause of the injured African at the risk of his life – undeterred by the execrations of the slave-masters, or the knife of his myrmidons. And was it a high crime that on some occasions he had been mistaken. But Elizur Wright would be able to reply to the charge himself. The account of this meeting

would soon find its way to America, and he would then have an opportunity of justifying himself. As to the charge of error in his statistics, on the subject of American Slavery, it was very easily set at rest. He had said that the slave population amounted to but three hundred thousand, at the date of the Union, and that it was now two millions. The latter statement was not questioned, but it was said that there were no authentic returns at the date of the Union, and consequently, that it was impossible to say precisely. But although they could not say exactly, they could come pretty near the truth, even from the statement of Mr. Breckinridge. That gentleman admitted, that in 1790, there were only six hundred and sixty-five thousand slaves in the states. He (Mr. T.) had said, that in 1776, there were only three hundred thousand; but as the population in America doubled itself in twenty-four years, he was warranted in saying that there was no great discrepancy. But the question with him did not depend upon any particular number or any particular date. It would have been quite the same for his argument, he contended, whether he had taken six hundred and sixty-five thousand in 1790, or three hundred thousand in 1776. All that he had wished to show, was the rapid increase of the slave population, and consequently, of the vice and misery inherent in that system, even while the American people professed themselves to be so anxious to put an end to it altogether. Had he wished to dwell on this part of the argument, he could also have shown, that the increase of the slave population during the first twenty years of the Union, had

gone on more rapidly even during that time, the trade in slaves having been formally recognised by the Constitution during that period, and a duty of \$10 imposed on every slave imported into the United States. The following was the clause from the Constitution:

Sec. IX. The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited prior to the year 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding \$10 for each person.

To sum up Mr. Breckinridge's last address, what, he would ask, had been its whole aim? Clearly, that they should consider the abolitionists as the chief promoters of all the riots that had taken place in America on this question, by making inflammatory appeals to the passions of the people. He would call upon Mr. Breckinridge again, to lay his hand on a single proof of this. He would call upon him to point out a single instance where language had been used which was in any degree calculated to call up the blood-thirsty passions of the mob as had been represented. If the planters of the South were roused into fury by the declaration of anti-slavery sentiments – if they were unable to hear the everlasting truths which it promulgated, was that a sufficient reason for those to keep silent who felt it to be their duty, at all hazards, to make known these truths. Or were they to be charged with raising mobs, because the people were enraged to hear these truths. As well might Paul

of Tarsus have been charged with the mobs which rose against his life, and that of his fellow-apostles. As well might Galileo be charged with those persecutions which immured him in a dungeon. As well might the apostles of truth in every age be charged with the terrible results which ensued from the struggle of light and darkness. In conclusion, Mr. Thompson said, that on the following evening, he would take up the question of the Maryland colonization scheme.

Dr. WARDLAW announced to the meeting that the discussion closed for the evening. In doing so he complimented the audience on the very correct manner in which they had observed the rule regarding all manifestation of applause. The attention and interest of the audience were much excited throughout the whole proceedings, indeed, at few meetings have we observed so lively an interest taken in the entire business of an evening, and yet there was not a single instance in which the interference of the chairman was required. On several occasions the rising expression of applause was at once checked by the general good sense of the meeting.

SECOND NIGHT – TUESDAY, JUNE 14

Mr. THOMPSON, before proceeding with the discussion, would make one or two preliminary observations. Last evening he had been led into an error, as regarded both number and time, in speaking of the amount of slaves in America at the adoption of the Constitution; and he was anxious that every statement made by him should be without a flaw; and if there should be an error committed he would be the first person to admit and correct it when discovered. He stated that at the adoption of the American Constitution, there were only about three hundred thousand slaves in the United States. There were not many more in 1776, when the states declared themselves independent: in 1788 when the Constitution was settled there were more; and in 1790, there were between six and seven hundred thousand slaves in the United States of America. His error consisted in his subtracting 1776 from 1790, and saying twenty-four years instead of fourteen. He mentioned this error to show that he held a regard to truth to be the ultimate end of their discussion. There was one other preliminary remark. His antagonist had repeatedly said that George Thompson had published himself a martyr. George Thompson never did publish himself a martyr. Mr. Breckinridge, in the course of his speeches last night, had said more of himself than he (Mr. T.) had ever done during all

the speeches he had ever made on the question. He had only referred to himself when urgently requested to give an account of his personal experience. He never had a wish to be considered a martyr. If, when he had finished his course here; if, when this probationary scene was over, he was found to have done his duty, he would be fully satisfied. He was not pharasaical enough to imagine that he had performed any works of supererogation. Mr. Breckinridge had said this was not a national question; that slavery in America was not American Slavery; that it was not a national evil; that it was not a national sin; that is was merely a question between the State Legislatures and the slave owners. He (Mr. T.) had said last night, that slavery in America was a national sin, and he would now adduce the reasons for his statement: – First – The American people had admitted the slave states into the Union; and by consenting to admit these states into the confederacy, although there were in them hundreds of thousands in a state of slavery, they took the slaves under the government of the United States, and made the sin national. Second – For twenty years after the adoption of their Constitution, and by virtue of that very instrument, the United States permitted the horrid, unchristian, diabolical African slave-trade. Third – Than the Capital of the United States of America there was not one spot in the whole world which was more defiled by slavery; and considering the professions and privileges of the people, there was not a more anti-christian traffic on the face of the earth. Fourth – each of the states is bound by the Constitution to

give up all run-away slaves; so that the poor, wretched, tortured slave might be pursued from Baltimore to Pennsylvania, from thence to New Jersey and New York, and dragged even from the confines of Canada, a fugitive and a felon, back into the slavery from which he had fled. He might be taken from the Capitol: from the very horns of the altar, to be subjected by a cruel kidnapper to the most horrid of human sufferings. It is not a national question! When the North violates the law of God – when it tramples on the Decalogue – when it defies Jehovah! what was a stronger injunction in the law of Moses than that the Israelites should protect the run-away slave? But in America every state was bound by law to give up the slave to his slave-master, to his ruthless pursuer; and yet it must not be called a national question! Fifth – The citizens of the free states were bound to go South to put down any insurrection among the slaves. They were bound and pledged to do this when required. The youth of Pennsylvania had pledged themselves to go to the Southern states to annihilate the blacks in case they asserted their rights – the rights of every human being – to be free. So also was it in New York, and in the other free states, and yet we are to be told that slavery is not a national question. The whole Union was bound to crush the slave, who, standing on the ashes of Washington said, he ought to be, and would be free. Yes, Northern bayonets would give that slave a speedy manumission from his galling yoke, by sending him in his gore, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Yet it is

not a national question! Sixth – The North is taxed to keep up troops in the South to overawe and terrify the slave; and yet it is not a national question! Seventh – Mr. Breckinridge has shown in a letter published by him, that the Congress has the power to put an end to the international slave trade, and yet this trade goes on in America. Mr. B. well knows that at least one hundred thousand human beings – slaves – change hands annually; he must have seen the slaves driven in coffles through his own beloved state, to be sold like cattle at Washington and Alexandria; he knows that thousands of Virginia and Maryland slaves are sold at New Orleans yearly, and yet he tells us that slavery is not a national question! Eighth – How did they admit Missouri into the Union with slaves? Were they Southern votes which admitted it? No! But they were the votes of recreant New Englanders – false to the principles of freedom, who sold the honor of their country, and with it the liberty of thousands of human beings in Missouri – or at least consented to their bondage. And yet it is not a national question! He (Mr. T.) would last refer to the remarks of a constitutional lawyer, who was able, eloquent, sincere, and high minded. Mr. T. then read the following extract: —

Such thoughts (referring to the judgments to be expected) habitually crowd upon me when I contemplate those great personal and NATIONAL evils, from which the system of operations (vis., the movements of the Colonization Society) which I stand here to advocate, seems to offer us some prospect of deliverance.

From that day (1698) till the present, there have flourished in our country, men of large and just views, who have not ceased to pour over this subject a stream of clear and noble truth, and to importune their country, by every motive of duty and advantage, to wipe from her escutcheon, the stain of human tears.

It is generally known, that the original members of the American Colonization Society anticipated, that, at some future period, the General Government, and some, if not all the State Governments, would co-operate in their exertions for the removal of an evil which was obviously NATIONAL in all its aspects.

Now who was the writer from whom he had quoted? – His friend Mr. Breckinridge. This was his final reason. If Mr. Breckinridge's argument survived these reasons, it would have a life like that of a cat, which is said to have nine lives; for they were nine fatal thrusts at his position, that slavery in America was not American slavery. Mr. B. admits the existence of slavery, but lays no blame either in this quarter or in that; he does not lay it on the states, nor on the General Government. Slavery does exist in America, but – interminably; but, but – coming as these butts did from a temperance country, he wondered much that they had escaped being staved. Slavery exists in America, but it is not a national question! There are upwards of two millions and a half of slaves in the United States of America, and of these, at least one hundred thousand changed hands annually, thus sundering, without remorse, the tenderest ties of human

nature; at whose door, then, lay the guilt of this sin? To whom were the people of this country to address their warnings – over whose transgressions were they to mourn – whose hearts were they to endeavor to humanize and mollify – where were the responsible and guilty parties to be found – how are we to get access to their consciences on behalf of the slave? Mr. Breckinridge says the system is one of 'clear robbery,' 'universal concubinage,' – 'unmitigated wickedness' – and yet it is not to be immediately abolished! If it be clear robbery – if it be universal concubinage – if it be unmitigated wickedness – let the horrid system immediately, and totally, and eternally cease – a worse system it was impossible to have if these were the evils it entailed. Mr. B. triumphantly makes out my case for immediate and complete emancipation. The duty is plain and indispensable. Mr. Breckinridge says the abolitionists are the most despicable and odious men on the face of the earth. Those who love liberty are always odious in the eyes of tyrants. The lovers of things as they are, of corruption of despotism – men who look at every thing from beneath the aprons of their grandmothers, invariably regard as insufferably odious all who are lovers of reformation and liberty. This always has been, and always will be the case. As it was said in the service of the church of England, it might be said on this subject, 'As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be' if not 'world without end,' at least to the end of this world. On the 6th day of January, 1831, Mr. Breckinridge delivered in Frankfort, Kentucky, an able address in favor of

the Colonization Society. In that address, Mr. B. stated that the Society was established on the 21st day of Dec. 1816, and was of course, at the time of his speech, fourteen years and sixteen days old. Mr. Breckinridge said the legislatures of eleven states of the Union had recommended this Society to Congress; that the ecclesiastical tribunals of all the leading sects of Christians in America had testified their approbation of its principles; and yet there were, after fourteen years and sixteen days, with all this support and high patronage in church and state only one hundred and sixty auxiliary societies existing throughout the Union. Now, as to the contemptible and odious abolitionists! as they were called by the gentleman who differed from him. The National Society for the immediate abolition of American slavery, was formed on the 6th of Dec. 1833; and on the 12th of May, 1835, when the anniversary was held – without being recommended to Congress by any of the state legislatures – without a testimony of approbation from any of the ecclesiastical tribunals – being only one year and six months old – how many auxiliary societies were connected with this abolition organization? Two hundred and twenty-four. That was the number then on the books of the Society; and the Secretary said the whole of them were not inserted from the want of proper returns. In a letter addressed to him (Mr. T.) by the Secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, dated New York, 31st March, 1836, were the following words: —

Never were societies forming in all parts of our country

with greater rapidity. At this moment we have four hundred and fifty on our list, and doubtless, there are five hundred in existence. We have at this time eleven agents in the field, all good men and true, and all fast gaining converts.

And yet the abolitionists are a handful! The one society in fourteen years and sixteen days, having one hundred and sixty auxiliaries; the other in two years and three months, having, without the support of state legislatures, or of ecclesiastical tribunals, not fewer than five hundred; and yet the abolitionists are a handful. He (Mr. T.) held in his hand a list of delegates to the New England Convention which was held in the city of Boston, on the 25th of May, 1835. In that list he found two hundred and eighty-one gentlemen, who, at their own expense, had come from all parts of New England, to attend that Convention. On the 27th May, it was stated that the Massachusetts Society were in want of funds, and a committee was appointed to collect subscriptions. That committee in less than an hour obtained \$1,800, and on the following day, \$4,000, for the American Society. In New York, at the anniversary, there had been collected \$14,500 – and yet the abolitionists were a handful. The American Society at its anniversary, had collected a larger sum than was collected by all the other societies together, during the week set apart for the purpose; and in Boston, \$6,000 had been collected in two days; whilst in two months, a friend of Mr. B's, viz. Mr. Gurley, had only been able to collect, in the same city, about \$600 for the Colonization Society. By their

fruits shall ye know them; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? You may send to New England any foreigner you please – but he must show his cause to be sound and practicable before he can draw a dollar or a cent from a New Englander, who gets his bread by early rising, and laborious attention to business – yet \$6,000 were collected in two days. But the abolitionists are a mere handful! Yes – they may be a handful, but they are most precious and multiplying seed. Mr. B. said that many of the slave-owners were doing all they could for the emancipation of the slaves; whether they were doing any thing or nothing, we find New Englanders had endeavored to retrieve the honor of their country, by a subscription for emancipation of \$6,000 in two days – and yet it was said, they were an odious handful! When he saw the Colonization Society like a Juggernaut, endeavoring to crush the bodies and spirits of colored men and colored women, he would league himself with the despised and 'odious handful,' and labor with them, and for them, till, by the blessing of God, on their exertions, the slaves were elevated to the condition and dignity of intelligent and intellectual beings. Mr. T. would give another proof that the abolitionists were a handful of most odious creatures. He would refer to the New York Convention. Mr. B. knows well that the pro-slavery prints pointed forward to the New York Convention in October last, as likely to be a scene of blood. Not rendered so by the abolitionists, for they were men of peace, but by the fury of their opponents. Notwithstanding, there were six hundred delegates assembled in Utica, at 9 o'clock, on the

first day; and when they were driven from that city by a mob, headed by the Hon. Mr. Beardsley, member of Congress, and by the Hon. Mr. Hayden, Judge of the county – and the greater part of them went to Peterborough, these six hundred were joined by other four hundred, making one thousand delegates, for one state – and yet they were a mere handful. He would next refer to the Rhode Island Convention, at which, though held in the smallest State in the Union – in the depth of winter – and at a time when many of the roads were impassible through a heavy fall of snow, four hundred delegates attended, and \$2,000 were collected – but yet the abolitionists were a mere handful! Gerrit Smith had said that there was an accession to the anti-slavery societies, in the State of New York alone, of five hundred weekly, among whom he says, there is not known one intemperate or profane person; – five hundred weekly added to one state society – yet they are a mere handful! If they go on increasing at this rate in New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and throughout New England, they will not long be a small handful! Besides, many of those who were formerly on the side of colonization, have now come over to the ranks of the abolitionists. Where are now the Smiths, and Birneys, and Jays, and Coxs, that once were the eloquent and munificent advocates and patrons of the Colonization Society? They are now, with all their souls and energies, on the side of immediate abolition. Nor these alone. He might – he ought to name such men as President Green, and Professors Wright, Bush, Follen, Smyth, and Gregg. He ought to speak of a Leavitt in New

York, a Kirk in Albany, a Beman in Troy, a Weld in Ohio, a Garrison in New England; and of a Mrs. Child, a Mrs. Chapman, a John G. Whittier, a May, a Dickinson, a Phelps, a Goodell, a Bourne, a Lundy, a Loring, a Sewall, and a host of others. All these men esteemed it their joy and honor to be amongst the most odious of the contemptible handful referred to. These were men of mind, of piety, of influence, of energy; men not to be deterred from doing their duty by the harsh music of the birds of ill omen, from the Upas Tree of Slavery, who sent forth their croakings, by night and by day, to scare the nation from its indispensable work of Justice and Truth – and yet these men are odious and contemptible! Your agent, too, is contemptible – he was the agent of the 'goodies' of Glasgow – and – his fair auditors could scarcely believe what epithets were lavishly bestowed on him and them – yet their agent, as contemptible as he was, was, perhaps, the only Englishman, who had ever been honored as he had been by the President of the United States of America. He who was so contemptible in the eyes of the Americans – who was a most impetuous, and untameable, and worthless animal – who was the representative of the 'goodies' and superannuated maids and matrons of Glasgow – was honored by a notice and a rebuke in the message to Congress of the President of the United States! This looked much like being insignificant and contemptible! He did not seek the honor which had been thus conferred upon him – it came upon him unaware – but he had not therefore refused it. It was an honor to be persecuted in the

United States with the abolitionists of 1830. And when their children, and their children's children looked back upon these persecutions, they would exult and be proud to say they were the sons, the grandsons, or the great grandsons of the Coxs, the Jays, the Garrisons, the Tappans, and the Thompsons of England and America. After alluding to the treatment he had experienced from the New York Courier and Enquirer, Mr. T. said – let us bear these honors meekly – when calumniated for truth's sake, let us be humble, while we are joyful. One word more as to the odious handful. Seven-eighths of the Methodist Episcopal ministers in the New Hampshire Conference, and seven-eighths of the New England Conference were abolitionists. The students of the colleges and institutions, academical and theological of the country, known by the names of Lane Seminary, Oberlin Institute, Western Reserve College, Oneida Institute, Waterville College, Brunswick College, Amherst College, and the Seminaries of Andover, were many of them in some, and all of them in others, abolitionists; and yet, when all these societies, and ministers, and men of learning, and students were put together, they were, in their aggregate capacity, but an odious and most contemptible handful! He would now proceed to speak of the Maryland scheme – a scheme of obvious wickedness. When Mr. B. came to Boston to advocate that scheme, he says a placard was published, calling on the rabble to mob him. This placard he attributes to Mr. Garrison and the abolitionists, as he says it was of the same size and appearance as the type

and columns of the Liberator newspaper, and that therefore Mr. Garrison was the publisher. This he (Mr. T.) most pointedly, and distinctly, and solemnly denied, and challenged Mr. B. to the proof. Did Mr. B. show the placard? No. Did he demonstrate its identity with Mr. Garrison's paper? No. He had not done so. To make Mr. Garrison the author or publisher of such a placard, was to publish him a coward and a villain; for he who could point out any man, still more a Christian minister, to the fury of a mob, was a moral monster, a coward, and a villain. He called on Mr. B. by his regard for truth and justice, and his reputation as a minister of Christ, to adduce the proofs necessary to sustain so grave an accusation, and he (Mr. T.) pledged himself to cast off the dearest friend he had, if a crime so base could be fixed on him. To return to the Maryland scheme. In the month of July or August, 1834, Boston was visited by his respected opponent, his brother, Dr. J. Breckinridge, and an agent of the Maryland Colonization Society, and a meeting was convened to enable those gentlemen to set forth and recommend the scheme of that Society, in aid of which the legislature of Maryland had made an appropriation of \$200,000. He (Mr. T.) was fully prepared to show, that the object of the Society was to get rid of the free colored population, and that according to their design the state legislature had, in immediate connection with the grant of money, passed most rigorous and cruel laws. The Colonization Society was the net cast for the colored people – the laws of the state were the means devised to drive the devoted victims into its meshes. This was

called helping them out of the country with their free consent. He (Mr. T.) would bring forward abundant proofs when he next addressed them – he would then read the laws which he could not now produce for want of time. Mr. Breckinridge might or might not notice these general charges against the Maryland scheme, but he (Mr. T.) would hereafter fully support them, and show, too, that the National Colonization Society was equally culpable, having at its ensuing annual meeting fully approved of the plan, and recommended it as a bright example for the imitation of other states.

Mr. BRECKINRIDGE then rose. He had last night understood Mr. Thompson to say, that this evening he would take up and expose the colonization scheme. It was possible that he had been wrong in this; but such was certainly the impression made upon his mind. Instead of adopting such a course, however, Mr. Thompson had treated them to a second edition of his last night's speech the only difference being that the one they had just heard was more elaborate. If they were to be called on to hear all Mr. Thompson's speeches twice, it would be a considerable time before they finished the discussion. He congratulated Mr. Thompson on his second edition, being in some respects an improvement, on his first. It was certainly better arranged. In the observations he was about to make, he would follow the course of the argument exhibited in Mr. Thompson's two speeches; but he, at the same time, wished it to be understood that he would not be cast out of the line of discussion every night in

the same manner. As to what had been said about the 'handful,' he did not think it necessary to say much. He would simply remind Mr. T., that however great or however small the 'handful' might be, one pervading evil might pollute it all. A dead fly could cause the ointment of the apothecary to stink. But to come to the point. Mr. Thompson had said that the question was national as it respected America, because slaveholding states had been admitted into the confederacy. The simple fact of these states having been admitted members of the Union, was, in Mr. Thompson's estimation, proof sufficient, not only that slavery was chargeable on the whole nation, but that there had been a positive predilection among the American people in favor of slavery. In clearing up this point, a little chronological knowledge would help us. He would therefore call the attention of the audience to the real state of matters when the confederacy was established. At that period, Massachusetts was the only State in which slavery had been abolished; and even in Massachusetts its formal abolition was not effected till some time after. For in that State it came to an end in consequence of a clause inserted in the Constitution itself – tantamount to the one in our Declaration of Independence, that freedom is a natural and inalienable right. Successive judicial decisions, upon this clause, without any special legislation, had abolished slavery there; so that the exact period of its actual termination is not easily definable. This recalls another point on which Mr. Thompson would have been the better of possessing a little chronological information. He had

repeatedly stated that the American Constitution was founded on the principle, that all men are created free and equal. Now, this was not so. The principle was no doubt, a just one; it was asserted most fully by the Continental Congress of 1776, and might be said to form the basis of our Declaration of Independence. But it was not contained in the American Constitution, which was formed twelve years afterwards. That Constitution was formed in accordance with the circumstances in which the different states were placed. Its chief object was to guard against external injury, and regulate external affairs; it interfered as little as possible with the internal regulations of each state. The American was a federative system of government; twenty-four distinct republics were united for certain purposes, and for these alone. So far was the national government from possessing unlimited powers, that the Constitution itself was but a very partial grant of those, which, in their omnipotence, resided, according to our theory, only in the people themselves in their primary assemblies. It had been specially agreed in the Constitution itself, that the powers not delegated should be as expressly reserved, as if excepted by name; and, amongst the chief subjects, exclusively interior, and not delegated, and so reserved, is slavery. Had this not been the case, the confederacy could not have been formed. It had been said that the American Constitution had not only tolerated slavery, but that it had actually guaranteed the slave-trade for twenty years. Nothing could be more uncandid than this statement. Never had facts been more perverted. One of the

causes of the American Revolution had been the refusal of the British King to sanction certain arrangements on which some of the states wished to enter, for the abolition of the slave-trade. At the formation of the Federal Constitution, while slavery was excluded from the control of Congress, as a purely state affair, the slave trade was deemed a fit subject, by the majority, for the executors of national power, as being an exterior affair. And at a period prior to the very commencement of that great plan of individual effort, guided by Wilberforce and Clarkson, in Britain; and which required twenty years to rouse the conscience of this nation – our distant, and now traduced fathers, had already made up their minds, that this horrid traffic, which they found not only existing, but encouraged by the whole power of the King, should be abolished. It was granted, perhaps too readily to the claims of those who thought, (as nearly the whole world thought) that twenty years should be the limit of the trade; and at the end of that period it was instantly prohibited, as a matter course, and by unanimous consent. How unjust then was it to charge on America, as a crime, what was one of the brightest virtues in her escutcheon. Mr. Thompson had next asserted, that slavery of the most horrid description existed in the Capital of America, and in the surrounding District, subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress. He (Mr. Breckinridge) did not hesitate to deny this. It was not true. Slavery did exist there; but it was not of the horrible character which had been represented. It was well known that the slavery existing in the United States was the

mildest to be seen in any country under Heaven. Nothing but the most profound ignorance could lead any one to assert the contrary. Mr. Thompson had a colleague in his recent exhibitions in London, who seemed to have taken interludes in all Mr. T's speeches. In one of these, that colleague had said, he knew of his own knowledge a case, in which a man had given \$500 for a slave, in order to burn him alive! Mr. Thompson, no doubt knew, that even on the supposition that such a monster was to be found, he was liable in every part of the United States, to be hanged as any other murderer. Slavery was bad enough anywhere; but to say that it was more unmitigated in America than in the West Indies, where emigration had always been necessary to keep up the numbers, while in America, the slave population increased faster than any part of the human race, was a gross exaggeration, or a proof of the profoundest ignorance. To say that the slavery of the District of Columbia was the most horrid that ever existed, when it, along with the whole of the slavery on that continent, was so hedged about by human laws, that in every one of the states cruelty to the slave was punished as an offence against the state; the killing of a slave was punished every where with death; while in all ages, and nearly in all countries where slavery has existed besides, the master was not only the exclusive judge of the treatment of his slave, but the absolute disposer of his life, which he could take away at will; these statements can proceed only from unpardonable ignorance, or a purpose to mislead. As to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, there

might, at first sight, appear to be some grounds of accusation; but yet, when the subject was considered in all its bearings, so many pregnant, if not conclusive, reasons presented themselves against interference, that though much attention had been bestowed upon it for many years, the result had been that nothing was done. It was to be recollected that the whole District of Columbia was only ten miles square; and that it was surrounded by states in which slavery was still legalized. It was thus clear, that though slavery were abolished in Columbia, not an individual of the six thousand slaves now within its bounds, would necessarily be relieved of his fetters. Were an abolition bill to pass the House of Representatives to-day, the whole six thousand could be removed to a neighboring slave state before it could be taken up in the Senate to-morrow. It was, therefore, worse than idle to say so much on what could never be a practical question. Again; the District of Columbia had been ceded to the General Government by Maryland and Virginia, both slaveholding states, for national purposes; but this would never have been done had it been contemplated that Congress would abolish slavery within its bounds, and thus establish a nucleus of anti-slavery agitation in the heart of their territory. The exercise of such a power, therefore, on the part of Congress, could be viewed in no other light than as a gross fraud on those two states. It should never be forgotten that slavery can be abolished in any part of America only by the persuasive power of truth voluntarily submitted to the slaveholders themselves. And though much is

said in that country, and still more here, about the criminality of the Northern States in not declaring that they would not aid in the suppression of a servile war – such declamation is worse than idle. But there is a frightful meaning in this unmeasured abuse heaped by Mr. Thompson on the people of the free states, for their expressions of devotion to the Union and the Constitution, and their determination to aid, if necessary, in suppressing by force – all force used by, or on behalf of the slaves. Is it then true, that Mr. Thompson and his American friends, did contemplate a servile war? If not, why denounce the North for saying it should be suppressed? Were the people of America right when they charged him and his co-workers with stirring up insurrection? If not, why lavish every epithet of contempt and abhorrence upon those who have declared their readiness to put a stop to the indiscriminate slaughter and pillage of a region as large as Western Europe? Such speeches as that I have this night heard go far to warrant all that has ever been said against this individual in America, and to excuse those who considered him a general disturber of their peace, and were disposed to proceed against him accordingly. It was, however, the opinion of many that Congress had no power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. Mr. B. said his opinion was different; yet it must be admitted that the obstacles to the exercise of this power were of the most serious kind, and such as, to a candid mind, would free those who hesitated, from the charge of being pro-slavery men. Perhaps the great reason against the exercise of that power,

even if its existence in Congress were clear, was, that it would inevitably produce a dissolution of the Union. When he spoke of the free states bringing about the abolition of slavery in the South, he was to be understood as meaning that these states, in accordance with what had been so often hinted at, should march to the South with arms in their hands, and declare the slaves free. Now, even supposing that the people of the North had no regard for the peace of their country – that they were perfectly indifferent to the glory, the power, and the happiness resulting from the Federal Union – was it certain, that by adopting such a course, they would really advance the welfare of the slave? Every candid man would at once see that the condition of the slave population would be made more hopeless than ever by it. The fourth proof brought forward by Mr. Thompson, in support of his proposition that America was chargeable, in a national point of view, with the guilt of slavery, was the fact that the different states were bound to restore all run-away slaves. But this was a regulation which applied to the case of all servants who leave their masters in an improper manner. Apprentices, children, even wives, if it might be supposed that a wife would ever leave her husband, were to be restored as well as the slaves. Were this not provided, the different states would form to each other the most horrible neighborhood that could be imagined. No state is expected to say, that any man is of right or should be 'held to service' of any kind, in another state; for such are the words of the Constitution, But the purely internal arrangements of each

state, must necessarily be respected by all the others; or eternal border wars must be the result. In the re-delivery of a run-away slave, or apprentice, therefore, the court of the one state is only required to say what are the law, and the fact of the other state from which the claimant comes, and to decide accordingly. And when Mr. T. says that this proceeding is not only contrary to the spirit of the gospel, but to the express command of God under the Jewish dispensation, I need only to defend the practice, by questioning his biblical capacities, and referring for explanation to his second printed speech before the Glasgow Emancipation Society. In that, he states a fictitious case as regards Ireland – resembling remarkably the case recorded in holy writ, of Egypt under the government of Joseph; and while all men have thought that Joseph came from God, and was peculiarly approved of him – Mr. T. has represented, that he who should do in Ireland, very much what Joseph did in Egypt, could be considered as coming only 'from America, or from the bottomless pit!!!' As long as the Holy Ghost gives men reason to consider certain principles right, they may be well content to abide under the wrath of Mr. Thompson. Mr. Thompson said, in the fifth place, that slavery was a national crime, because the states were all bound to assist each other, in suppressing internal insurrection. To this he would answer, that as it regarded the duty of the nation to the several states, there were two, and but two great guarantees – namely, the preservation of internal peace, and the upholding of republican institutions, tranquillity, and republicanism. Carolina

was as much bound to assist Rhode Island as Rhode Island was to assist Carolina. All were mutually bound to each; and if things went on as of late, the South were as likely to be called on to suppress mobs at the North, as the North to suppress insurrection at the South. It was next advanced by Mr. T. that the people of the North were taxed for the support of slavery. Now, the fact was, that America presented the extraordinary spectacle of a nation free of taxes altogether; free of debt, with an overflowing Treasury, with so much money, indeed, that they did not well know what to do with it. It was almost needless to explain that the American revenue was at present and had been for many years past, derived solely from the sale of public lands, and from the customs or duties levied on imported articles of various kinds. The payment of these duties was entirely a voluntary tax, as in order to avoid it, it was only necessary to refrain from the use of articles on which they were imposed. As for Mr. T's argument about the standing army, employed in keeping down the slaves, its value might be judged from the fact, that, though even according to Mr. T's own showing, the slave population amounted to two and a half millions, the army was composed of only six thousand men, scattered along three frontiers, extending two thousand miles each. Throughout the whole slaveholding states there were not probably fifteen hundred soldiers. The charge was, in fact, complete humbug, founded upon just nothing at all. Mr. Thompson's seventh charge was, that Congress refused to suppress the internal slave-trade. This was easily answered.

There was in America not one individual among five hundred who believed that Congress had the power to do so. And, although he (Mr. B.) believed that Congress had power to prevent the migration of slaves from state to state, as fully as they had to prevent the importation of them into the states from foreign countries; and that the exercise of this power, would prevent, in a great degree, the trade in slaves from state to state, yet very few concurred with him even in this modified view of the case. And it must be admitted that the exercise of such a power, if it really exists, would be attended with such results of unmixed evil at this time, that no one whatever would deem it proper to attempt, or possible to enforce its exercise. It was next said, that as Missouri, a slaveholding state, had been admitted into the Union after the full consideration of the subject by Congress, therefore the nation had become identified with slavery, and responsible for its existence, at least in Missouri. But on the supposition that, before receiving Missouri as a member of the confederacy, it had been demanded of her that she should abolish slavery; and supposing Missouri had acceded to the terms proposed, that she had really given her slaves freedom, and been added to the Federal Union in consequence: suppose Missouri had done all this; what was there to prevent her from re-establishing slavery so soon as the end she sought was gained. No power was possessed by the other states in the matter, and all that could have been said was, that Missouri had acted with bad faith – that she had broken a condition precedent – that she had given just cause of war. According to

the most latitudinarian notions, this was the extent of the remedy in the hands of Congress. But Mr. Thompson, being a holder of peace principles – if we may judge by his published speeches – must admit it to be as really a sin to kill, as to enslave men; so that, in his own showing, this argument amounts to nothing. But when it is considered that every state in the American Union has the recognized right to alter its Constitution, when, and how it may think fit, saving only that it be republican; it is most manifest that Congress and the other states have, and could have in no case, any more power or right to prevent Missouri's continuing, or creating slavery, than they had to prevent Massachusetts from abolishing it. But, if we were to stand upon the mere rights of war, he (Mr. B.) did not know but that America had just cause of war against Britain, according to the received notions on that subject, in the speeches delivered by Mr. Thompson under the connivance of the authorities here. But the causes of war were very different in the opinions of men, and in the eye of God. If Mr. Thompson was right in condemning America for the guilt of Missouri, then they should go to war at once and settle the question. But, if they were not ready for this conclusion, they could do nothing. In the edition of Mr. Thompson's speech which had been delivered on the preceding evening, an argument had been adduced which was omitted in the present. The argument to which he referred, was concerning the right of the slaves to be represented. A slight consideration of the subject might have shown that the whole power over the subject of citizenship in

each state, was exclusive in the state itself, and was differently regulated in different states. In some, the elective franchise was given to all who had attained the age of twenty-one. In some, it was made to depend on the possession of personal property; and in others, of real property. That in the Southern states, the power of voting should be given to the masters, and not to the slaves, was not calculated to excite surprise in Britain, where such a large proportion of the population, and that in a number of instances composed of men of high intelligence, were not entitled to the elective franchise. The origin of this arrangement, like many others involved in our social system, was a compromise of apparently conflicting interests in the states which were engaged in forming the Federal Constitution. The identity of taxation and representation, was the grand idea on which the nation went into the war of independence. When it was agreed that all white citizens, and three-fifths of all other persons, as the Constitution expresses it, should be represented, it followed of course, that they should be subject to taxation. Or, if it were first agreed that they should be taxed, it followed as certainly they should be represented. Who should actually cast the votes, was, of necessity, left to be determined by the states themselves, and as has been said, was variously determined; many permitting free negroes, Indians, and mulattos, who are all embraced, as well as slaves, to vote. That three-fifths, instead of any other part, or the whole should be agreed on, was, no doubt, the result of reasons which appeared conclusive to the wise and benevolent

men who made the Constitution; but I am not able to tell what they were. It must, however, be very clear, that to accuse my country, in one breath, for treating the negroes, bond and free, as if they were not human beings at all – and to accuse her in the next, of fostering and encouraging slavery, for allowing so large a proportion of the blacks to be a part of the basis of national representation in all the states, and then, in the third, because the whole are not so treated, to be more abusive than ever – is merely to show plainly, how earnestly an occasion is sought to traduce America, and how hard it is to find one. He came now to the last charge. He himself, it seems, had admitted, on former occasions, that slavery was a national evil. He certainly did believe that the people of America, whether anti-slavery or pro-slavery, would be happier and better, in conscience and feelings, were slavery abolished. He believed that every interest would be benefited by such an event, whether political, moral, or social. The existence of slavery was one of the greatest evils of the world, but it was not the crime of all the world. Though, therefore, he considered slavery a national evil, it was not to be inferred that he viewed it as a national crime. The cogency of such an argument was equal to the candor of the citation on which it was founded. He would now come to matters rather more personal. In enumerating the great numbers of anti-slavery societies in America, Mr. Thompson had paraded one as formed in Kentucky, for the whole state. Now, he would venture to say that there were not ten persons in that whole State, holding anti-slavery principles, in the Garrison

sense of the word. If this was to be judged a fair specimen of the hundreds of societies boasted of by Mr. Thompson, there would turn out but a beggarly account of them. He found also the name of Groton, Massachusetts, as the location of one of the societies in the boasted list. He had once preached, and spoken on the subject of slavery, in that sweet little village, and been struck with the scene of peace and happiness which it presented. He afterwards met the clergyman of that village in the city of Baltimore, and asked him what had caused him to leave the field of his labors. The clergyman answered, that the anti-slavery people had invaded his peaceful village, and transformed it into such a scene of strife that he preferred to leave it. And so it was. The pestilence, which, like a storm of fire and brimstone from hell, always followed the track of abolitionism, had overtaken many a peaceful village, and driven its pastor to seek elsewhere a field not yet blasted by it. He would conclude by remarking, that Mr. Thompson and he (Mr. B.) were now speaking, as it were, in the face of two worlds, for Western Europe was the world to America. And it was for England to know – that the opinion of America – that America which already contained a larger reading population than the whole of Britain – was as important to her, as hers could be to us. What he had said of Mr. Garrison and of Mr. Wright, he had said; and he was ready to answer for it in the face of God and man. But he had something else to do, he thanked God, than to go about the country carrying placards, ready to be produced on all occasions. Nor where he

was known, was such a course needful, to establish what he said. When those gentlemen should make their appearance, in defence or explanation of what he had said, he would be the better able to judge – whether it would be proper for him to take any notice – and if any, what – of the defence for which Mr. Thompson had so frankly pledged himself. In the mean time, he would say to that gentleman himself, that his attempts at brow-beating were lost upon him.

Mr. THOMPSON said he should commence with the end of his opponent's speech, and notice what that gentleman had said in regard to the charges brought by him against William Lloyd Garrison and Elizur Wright. It appeared as if Mr. Breckinridge expected that, because in his own country his character for veracity stood high, that therefore, he was entitled, if he chose, to enter an assembly of twelve hundred persons in Great Britain, and utter the gravest charges against certain individuals 3,000 miles away, and when called upon as he had been for proof, that he had nothing to do but turn round and say, 'Why, I am not bound to furnish proof; let the parties accused demonstrate their innocence.' This was American justice with a vengeance. This might be Kentucky law, or Lynch law, but could hardly be called justice by any assembly of honest and impartial persons. Such justice might suit the neighborhood of Vicksburg, but it would not recommend itself to a Scottish audience. He (Mr. T.) would not undertake at this time the task of justifying the men who had been calumniated. He knew these gentlemen, and had

no doubt when they heard the charges preferred against them in this country, they would be able and ready to clear themselves before the world. He would not say that Mr. Breckinridge did not himself believe the allegations to be true, but he would say that had that gentleman possessed a knowledge of the true character of those he had spoken against – had he known them as he (Mr. T.) knew them, he would have held them incapable of the dark deeds alleged against them. With regard to Mr. B's remarks upon the number of the slave population, the amount of the troops in the United States, and the existence of slavery in the district of Columbia, he must say that they were nothing but special pleadings; that the whole was a complete specimen of what the lawyers termed pettifogging. He (Mr. T.) was not prepared to hear a minister say that because only 1500 troops out of 6000 were found in the southern states, that, therefore, the nation was not implicated – that because, if the slavery of the district was abolished, there would be no fewer slaves in the country – that, therefore, the seat of government should not be cleansed from its abomination. He would remind his opponent that they were discussing a question of principle, and that the scriptures had declared that he who was unjust in the least, was unjust also in the greatest. Mr. Breckinridge had still cautiously avoided naming the parties in the United States who were responsible for the sin of Slavery. They were told that neither New Hampshire nor Massachusetts, nor any other of the Northern states were to blame; that the government was not to blame, nor, had it even

yet been said, that the Southern states were to blame. Still the aggregate of the guilt belonged somewhere; and if the parties to whom reference had been made were to be exculpated, at whose door, he would ask, were the sin and shame of the system to be laid. The gentleman with whom he was debating had repeatedly told him (Mr. T.) that he did not understand 'the system.' He frankly confessed that he did not. It was a mystery of iniquity which he could not pretend to fathom; but he thought he might add that the Americans themselves, at least the Colonizationists, did not seem to understand it very well neither, for they had been operating for a very long time, without effecting any favorable change in the system. A word with regard to the representation of slaves in Congress. Mr. B. had spoken as if he had intended to have it understood, that the slaves were themselves benefited by that representation – that it was a partial representation of the slave population by persons in their interest. How stood the fact? The slaves were not at all represented as men, but as things. They swelled, it was true, the number of members upon the floor of Congress, but that extra number only helped to rivet their bonds tightly upon them, being as they were, in the interest of the tyrant, and themselves slaveholders, and not in the interest of the slaves. What said John Quincy Adams in his celebrated report on the Tariff: —

'The representation of the slave population in this House has, from the establishment of the Constitution of the United States, amounted to rather more than one-tenth of

the whole number. In the present Congress (1833,) it is equivalent to twenty-two votes; in the next Congress it will amount to twenty-five. This is a combined and concentrated power, always operating to the support and exclusive favor of the slave-holding interest.'

Here was a mighty engine in the cause of oppression. It was a wicked misrepresentation to say that the slaves were benefited by such an arrangement. Instead of being a lever in their hands to aid them in the overthrow of the system which was crushing them, it was a vast addition of strength to the ranks of their tyrants, who went to Congress to cry down discussion, to cry up Lynch law, and shout Hail Columbia. Mr. Thompson then proceeded to give some account of the Maryland Colonization scheme.

The first movement on the subject was in March, 1831, when Mr. Brawner submitted the following resolutions to the Maryland Legislature, which were by that assembly adopted. He begged particular attention both to the letter and spirit of this document, exhibiting as it did, the feelings of 'the good people of the state' towards the colored population: —

Resolved, That the increased proportion of the free people of color in this state, to the white population, the evils growing out of their connection and unrestrained association with the slaves their habits and manner of obtaining a subsistence, and their withdrawing a large portion of employment from the laboring class of the white population, are subjects of momentous and grave consideration to the good people of this state.

Resolved, That as philanthropists and lovers of freedom, we deplore the existence of slavery amongst us, and would use our utmost exertions to ameliorate its condition, yet we consider the unrestrained power of manumission as fraught with ultimate evils of a more dangerous tendency than the circumstance of slavery alone, and that any act, having for its object the mitigation of these joint evils, not inconsistent with other paramount considerations, would be worthy the attention and deliberation of the representatives of a free, liberal-minded, and enlightened people.

Resolved, That we consider the colonization of free people of color in Africa as the commencement of a system, by which if judicious encouragement be afforded, these evils may be measurably diminished, so that in process of time, the relative proportion of the black to the white population, will hardly be matter for serious and unpleasant consideration.

Ordered, therefore, That a committee of five members be appointed by the Chair, with instructions to report a bill, based as nearly as may be, upon the principles contained in the foregoing resolutions, and report the same to the consideration of this house.

Such was the first movement on the subject. At the next session of the legislature Mr. Brawner presented the report of the committee, some of the extracts from which he (Mr. T.) would read: —

The committee to whom was referred the several memorials from numerous citizens in this state, upon the

subject, of the colored population, Report, —

That the views presented by the memorialists are various, and the recommendations contained in some of the memorials are entirely repugnant to those contained in others. The subjects, however, upon which legislative action is required, may be embraced under a few general heads:

First, That a law be passed prohibiting the future emancipation of the slaves, unless provision be made for their removal from the state.

Secondly, That a sum of money adequate for the attainment of the object, be raised and appropriated for the further removal of those already free.

Thirdly, That a system of police be established, regulating the future conduct and morals of this class of our population.

And, Fourthly, There are several memorials from different parts of our state, signed by a numerous and highly respectable portion of our citizens, recommending the entire abolition of slavery in the state.

On the 14th of March, 1832, the State Legislature of Maryland appropriated for the use of the State Colonization Society the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, payable in sums of twenty thousand dollars per annum for ten years. Having made the grant, the legislature next proceeded to pass acts to obtain the consent of the colored population to quit the state and country, and emigrate to Africa. He (Mr. T.) claimed special attention to some short extracts from those laws. They would reveal more powerfully than any language of his, the benevolent

or rather atrociously cruel designs of the 'good people' of the state. He should quote first from 'An Act relating to Free Negroes and Slaves,' passed within a few days of the grant and part and parcel of the same benevolent scheme: —

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, That after the passage of this act, no free negro or mulatto shall emigrate to, or settle in this State; and no free negro or mulatto belonging to any other state, district or territory, shall come into this State, and therein remain for the space of ten successive days, whether such free negro or mulatto intends settling in this State or not, under the penalty of fifty dollars for each and every week such persons coming into, shall thereafter remain in this State; the one half to the informer and the other half to the sheriff for the use of the county. * * * and any free negro or mulatto refusing or neglecting to pay said fine or fines, shall be committed to the jail of the county; and shall be sold by the sheriff at public sale, for such time as may be necessary to cover the aforesaid penalty, first giving ten days previous notice of such sale.

Sec. 2d. And be it enacted, That no person in this State, shall hereafter hire, employ, or harbor any free negro or mulatto who shall emigrate or settle in this state, after the first day of June next, or any free negro or mulatto who shall come into this state from any other state, district or territory, and continue in this state for the space of ten successive days as above, under the penalty of twenty dollars for every day after the expiration of four days, any such free negro

or mulatto * * * shall be so employed, hired or harbored, and all fines accruing under this act, * * * one half thereof to be applied to the informer, and the other half to the use of the county; and if any negro or mulatto shall remove from this state and remain without the limits thereof for a space longer than thirty consecutive days, unless before leaving the state he deposits with the clerk of the county in which he resides, a written statement of his object in so doing, and his intention of returning again, or unless he shall have been detained by sickness or coercion, of which he shall bring a certificate, he shall be regarded as a resident of another state, and be subject, if he return, to the penalties imposed by the foregoing provisions upon free negroes and mulattoes of another state, migrating to this state: Provided that nothing contained in this act shall prevent any free negro or mulatto from visiting Liberia, and returning to the state whenever he may choose to do so.

Sec. 4. And be it enacted, That it shall not be lawful from and after the first of June next, to import or bring into this state by land or water, any negro, mulatto or other slave for sale, or to reside within this state: * * * and any person or persons so offending, shall forfeit for every such offence, any negro, mulatto or other slave brought into this state contrary to this act, and such negro, mulatto or other slave, shall be entitled to freedom upon condition that he consent to be sent to Liberia, or to leave the state forthwith, otherwise such negro or mulatto or other slave, shall be seized and taken and confined in jail by the sheriff of the county where the offence is committed, which sheriff shall

receive ten dollars for every negro, mulatto or other slave so brought into this state and forfeited as aforesaid, and seized and taken by him. * * * Moreover, said sheriff shall receive five dollars for such negro, mulatto or other slave actually confined by him in jail, and the usual prison fee as now allowed by law, and any person or persons so offending under this act, shall be punished by indictment in the county court of the county where the offence shall be committed, and upon conviction thereof, the said court shall, by its order, direct said sheriff to sell any negro, mulatto or other slaves so seized and taken by him, under this act, to the Colonization Society for said five dollars, and the prison fees * * * to be taken to Liberia: and if such Colonization Society shall not receive such negroes, mulattoes or other slaves for said five dollars each, and the prison fees of each, upon refusing, said sheriff shall, after three weeks' public notice given by advertisements, sell any such negro, mulatto or other slave to some person or persons, with a condition that any such negro, mulatto or other slave shall be removed and taken forthwith beyond the limits of this state to settle and reside.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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