



The "Tarborough Press,"

BY GEORGE HOWARD.
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Letters addressed to the Editor must be post paid, or they may not be attended to.

Miscellaneous.



NIGHT.

By James Montgomery, Esq.
Night is the time for rest;
How sweet when labors close,
To gather round an aching breast
The curtain of repose;
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head
Upon our own delightful bed!
Night is the time for dreams;
The gay romance of life,
When truth that is and truth that seems
Blend in fantastic strife;
Ah! visions less beguiling far
Than waking dreams by daylight are!
Night is the time for toil!
To plough the classic field,
Intent to find the buried spoil
Its wealthy furrows yield;
Till all is ours that sages taught,
That poets sung or heroes wrought.
Night is the time to weep;
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of memory, where sleep
The joys of other years!
Hopes that were angels in their birth
But perish'd young, like things of earth!
Night is the time to watch;
On ocean's dark expanse,
To hail the Pleiades, or catch
The full moon's earliest glance,
That brings into the home-sick mind
All we have loved and left behind.
Night is the time for care;
Brooding on hours misspent,
To see the spectre of despair
Come to our lonely tent;
Like Brutus, midst his slumbering host,
Startled by Cesar's warning ghost.
Night is the time to muse;
Then from the eye the soul
Takes flight, and with expanding views
Beyond the starry pole,
Describes a'round the abyss of night
The dawn of uncreated light.
Night is the time to pray;
Our Saviour oft withdrew
To desert mountains far away,
So will his followers do;
Steal from the throng to haunts untrod
And hold communion there with God.
Night is the time for death;
When all around is peace,
Calmly to yield the weary breath,
From sin and suffering cease;
Think of heaven's bliss, and give the sign
To parting friends—such death be mine!

Mr. Van Buren's opinions on Abolition.—The following is the reply of Mr. Van Buren to a letter addressed to him from Jackson, Northampton county, in this State, making the enquiry, "Do you, or do you not believe that Congress has the constitutional power, to interfere with or abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia?"
Washington, March 6th, 1836.
—Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter apprising me of the deep anxiety which is felt by a portion of your fellow-citizens, as to my views upon a topic vitally affecting their immediate welfare and happiness, and of the importance of their being possessed of a thorough knowledge of them; and asking me to say, whether I do or do not believe that Congress has the constitutional power to interfere with, or abolish slavery in the District of Columbia?
I am not only willing, but desir-

ous, gentlemen, that you should have the most thorough knowledge of my views and feelings upon the delicate and interesting subject with which your question is connected; and I shall endeavor to acquaint you with them in the fullest manner in my power.

Not having, heretofore, had the honor of being in political communication with you, not advised whether the sentiments relating to it, which have been avowed by myself and by my authority, within the last two years, have come to your knowledge. I deem it therefore proper, to furnish you with the substance of them, before I reply to your more specific inquiry. The avowals to which I refer; were—

1st. An opinion that Congress has no right to interfere in any manner, or to any extent, with the subject of slavery in the States.

2d. Against the propriety of their doing so in the District of Columbia; and

3dly. The statement of my full concurrence in the sentiments expressed by the citizens of Albany, in public meeting, the most important of which are as follows, viz: "That the Constitution of the United States carries with it an adjustment of all questions involved in the deliberations which led to its adoption, and that the compromise of interests in which it was founded, is binding in honor and good faith, independently of the force of agreement, on all who live under its protection and participate in the benefits of which it is the source."—"That the relation of Master and Slave is a matter exclusively belonging to the people of each State within its own boundary, and that any attempt by the Government or people of any other State, or by the General Government, to interfere with or disturb it, would violate the spirit of that compromise which lies at the basis of the federal compact."—"That we can only hope to maintain the Union of the States by abstaining from all interference with the laws, domestic policy and peculiar interests of every other State."—"That all such interference, which tends to alienate one portion of our countrymen from the rest, deserves to be frowned upon with indignation by all who cherish the principles of our revolutionary fathers, and who desire to preserve the Constitution by the exercise of that spirit of amity which animated its framers."—"That they deprecated the conduct of those who are attempting to coerce their brethren in other States into the abolition of slavery, by appeals to the fears of the master and to the passions of the slaves; and that they could not but consider them as disturbers of the public peace, and would, by all constitutional means, exert their influence to arrest the progress of such measures."—"That whilst they would maintain inviolate the liberty of speech and the freedom of the press, they considered discussions, which, from their nature, tend to inflame the public mind and put in jeopardy the lives and property of their fellow-citizens, at war with every rule of moral duty, and every suggestion of humanity, and would be constrained, moreover, to regard those who, with a full knowledge of their pernicious tendency, persist in carrying them on, as disloyal to the Union."—"That the people of the South would do great injustice if they allowed themselves to believe, that the few who are interfering with the question of slavery, are acting in accordance with the sentiments of the North upon the subject;" and finally, "that they made these declarations to their Southern brethren in the same spirit of amity which bound together their fathers and ours,

during a long and eventful struggle for independence; and that they did, in full remembrance of that common association, plight to them their faith to maintain in practice, as far as lies in their power, what they had thus solemnly declared."

These views, thus expressed and sanctioned by myself, appear to me to cover the whole ground, save the abstract question to which you have been pleased to call my attention, and I cheerfully embrace the opportunity you have felt it your duty to afford me, to explain myself fully on that also. As anxious as you can possibly be, to arrest all agitation upon this disturbing subject, I have considered the question you have propounded to me, with a sincere desire to arrive at the conclusion, that the subject, in respect to the District of Columbia, can be safely placed on the same ground on which it stands in regard to the States, viz: the want of constitutional power in Congress to interfere in the matter. I own it, however, to candor, to say to you, that I have not been able to satisfy myself that the grant to Congress, in the Constitution, of the power of "exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever" over the Federal District, does not confer on that body the same authority over the subject that would otherwise have been possessed by the States of Maryland and Virginia; or that Congress might not, in virtue thereof, take such steps upon the subject in this District, as those States might themselves take within their own limits, and consistently with their rights of sovereignty.

Thus viewing the matter, I would not, from the lights now before me, feel myself safe in pronouncing that Congress does not possess the power of interfering with or abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. But whilst such are my present impressions upon the abstract question of the legal power of Congress—impressions which I shall at all times be not only ready, but disposed, to surrender upon conviction of error—I do not hesitate to give it to you as my deliberate and well considered opinion, that there are objections to the exercise of this power, against the wishes of the slave-holding States, as imperative in their nature and obligations, in regulating the conduct of public men, as the most palpable want of constitutional power would be.

You have alluded in your letter to the conspicuous situation in which I have been placed before the public; and I take it for granted, that it is to that circumstance, rather than to any other, that I am to ascribe the solicitude felt by yourselves and fellow-citizens in respect to my views on this subject. I recognize, to the fullest extent, the propriety of this desire on your part, and although there is nothing in your letter making the avowal necessary, I prefer that not only you, but all the people of the United States, shall now understand that if the desire of that portion of them which is favourable to my elevation to the Chief Magistracy, should be gratified, I must go into the Presidential Chair the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of any attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slave-holding States; and also with the determination equally decided to resist the slightest interference with the subject in the States where it exists. In saying this, I tender neither to them nor to you, any pledges, but declare only settled opinions and convictions of duty. Those who doubt that they will be carried into full and fair effect, are under no obligations to trust me. An opportu-

nity is afforded them to exercise their free choice in the matter, and they may be assured, that there is no one less likely to complain of its exercise than myself.

The peculiar importance of the subject, and a desire (which you will allow me to feel) that my views of it should be correctly understood, make it proper that I should explain the grounds of the opinions above expressed. They are founded, amongst others, on the following considerations, viz:

1st. I believe, that if it had been foreseen, at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, that the seat of the Federal Government would be fixed in a slave-holding region, and that the subject of slavery would be there agitated to the prejudice of those holding this species of property, the right to do so, would, with the assent of the non-slave-holding States, have been made an exception to the unrestricted legislative power given to Congress over the District to be ceded.

2dly. I cannot but regard the agitation of this subject in the District of Columbia, as a surprise upon the people of Maryland and Virginia, being very confident that if the state of things which now exist, had been at all apprehended by those States, the cession of the District would not have been made except upon the express condition that Congress should exercise no such power; and that with such a condition the cession would, in the then state of public opinion have been readily accepted.

3dly. I do therefore believe, that the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slave-holding States (assuming that Congress has the power to affect it) would violate the spirit of that compromise of interests which lies at the basis of our social compact; and I am thoroughly convinced, that it could not be so done, without imminent peril if not certain destruction, to the Union of the States. Viewing the matter in this light, it is my clear and settled opinion, that the Federal Government ought to abstain from doing so, and that it is the sacred duty of those whom the people of the United States entrust with the control of its action, so to use the constitutional power with which they are invested, as to prevent it.

I think it due to the occasion, and only a simple act of justice to my fellow-citizens of the North, of all political parties, to add the expression of my full belief, that the opinions above expressed, accord in substance, with those entertained by a larger majority of the people of the non-slave holding States than has ever before existed in those States on a public question of equal magnitude. It is also due to them to say, that their sentiments on this subject spring out of considerations of too high a character, and look to consequences of too solemn import, to be shaken by slight causes. With only a generous confidence on the part of the South in their brethren of the North, and a firm determination on the part of each, to visit with their severest displeasure, any attempt to connect the subject with party politics, those sentiments cannot be overturned. All future attempts on the part of the abolitionists to do so, will then only serve to accumulate and concentrate public odium on themselves. That there are persons at the North who are far from concurring in the prevailing sentiment I have described, is certainly true; but their numbers, when compared with the rest of the community, are very inconsiderable; and if the condition of things be not greatly aggravated by imprudence, many of them, I have

no doubt, will ultimately adopt sounder views of the subject; and the efforts of those who may persist in the work of agitation, may be overcome by reason, or rendered inoperative by constitutional remedies.

To one class of those who have hitherto petitioned Congress for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, I cannot forbear to refer: I allude to the society of Friends, or the people usually denominated Quakers. The uniformity of their course upon this subject, the temperate manner in which it has been manifested, and the marked excellence of their conduct and character, appear to have conciliated respect for their motives, even from those who differ from them in opinion. As far as my observation has enabled me to judge, it is due to them to say, that as there has been no indication of any change of opinion upon their part during the present excitement, so has there been no evidence of a disposition to lend themselves to the undue agitations of the public mind attempted by others. There is certainly no class of people in this country, who have a deeper interest in the preservation of the Union and of the happy system of Government which it upholds, than they; and it has now become very apparent to all reflecting and observing minds, that the question of Slavery in the District of Columbia cannot be pressed to the result they desire, with safety to those paramount objects. Do not these considerations justify the hope, that from them, at least, we may reasonably expect for the future, a mode of dealing with the subject, which, whilst it does no injustice to their principles, shall repress instead of increasing agitation, and not endanger the great interests to which I have referred? To doubt it, would be to distrust the influence which industry, morality, intelligence and republican habits—qualities which all admit them to possess in a high degree—are calculated, in great emergencies, to exert upon the conduct of their possessors. And for the like reason, it may certainly be expected, that well disposed persons of other religious denominations, who, without a full consideration of the difficulties which surround this subject, and of the dangerous consequences to which the efforts of the Abolitionists so evidently tend to have lent to those efforts: the influence of their names and character, will be careful hereafter to avoid the repetition of an error so unfortunate and mischievous.

In every view of the subject, therefore, it does appear to me, that, although there certainly is, in the present condition of the country in relation to it, sufficient to excite the most serious attention, there is nothing in the state of public opinion in the United States, to justify that panic in the public mind which invariably disqualifies those who partake of it, from dealing wisely or successfully with the circumstances by which it is produced. From abroad we have, I think, some right to expect less interference than heretofore. We shall, I am confident, for some time at least, have no more foreign agents to enlighten us on the subject. Recent results here, and the discussions with which they have been attended, cannot fail to attract the attention of the reading and reflecting portion of the Foreign Public. By these means they will be made to understand our real condition in this respect, and they will know that the unchangeable law of that condition is, that the slave question must be left to the control of the slave-holding States themselves, without molestation or interference from any quarter; that foreign interference of every description, can only be injurious to the slave, without benefit to any interest, and will not be endured by any section of our country; and that any interference, coming from even the non-slave-holding portions of our own territory, is calculated to endanger the perpetuity, and if sanctioned by the General Government, would inevitably occasion the dissolution of our happy Union. Seeing the subject in this, its true aspect, and conscious as they must be, that the downfall of this Republic would be the severest blow that the cause of liberty and self-government could receive, and from which its recovery would be hopeless, the wise and the good amongst them—those who are really guided by the principles of justice and humanity—will pause and acknowledge, that they have misapprehended the true bearings of this question. Instead of accusing our countrymen who hold property in slaves, with disregarding the General principles of liberty and the dictates of a pure religion, they will recognize, in this class of our citizens, as sincere friends to the happiness of mankind as any others, and will become sensible that this species of property, the result of causes over which they had no control, is an inheritance which they only know how to dispose of. Instead of charging the people of the non-slave-holding States, as has often been done, with hypocrisy in professing an ardent love of freedom, they will find that the free citizens of the North are only acting upon the principles of fidelity, to their most solemn engagements; that if they were to attempt the accomplishment of what is desired of them by those who regard slavery as inconsistent with the equal rights on which our institutions are founded, they will involve themselves in the odium, either of seeking to invade a compact which was the means and the pledge of our national existence, or of availing themselves of their present power and unexampled prosperity, to dissolve a connection with their Southern brethren formed at a period of mutual adversity, for a cause which was then not only known to exist, but the continuance of which was expressly recognized in the bond of their Union.

I have thus gentlemen, been compelled to extend my remarks considerably further than I intend, when I commenced to answer your enquiry. As, however, the subject was delicate and important, I feel that I have not trespassed farther upon your time in its examination than was proper to enable you to comprehend the views I entertain of it, or than was respectful to the considerations which justified your call for those views. And I feel assured, whatever may be the difference of opinion, if any, which exists between myself and any other portion of my fellow citizens, that the issue of this matter as of all preceding questions which have agitated the public mind, and have been thought to be pregnant with danger, will, in their hands, be such as to strengthen the bonds of their Union, and to increase those fraternal and patriotic affections, which our past National history has so often and so honorably illustrated.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
M. VAN BUREN.
Messrs. Junius Amis, Isaac Hall, John Wall, C. Yellowby, Samuel B. Spicill, and James W. Poizinn, Jackson, N. C.

Marvellous.—A lunatic recently jumped from a third story window, at Richmond, Virginia, on to the cellar door below, and thence rebounded into the gutter, without experiencing the slightest injury.—N. Y. Star.