

Selections.

From the Dundee and Perth (Scottish) Advertiser.
ANTI-SLAVERY MEETING.

On Wednesday evening, a meeting was held in Bell street Hall, for the purpose of denouncing the American Fugitive Slave Bill, and hearing addresses on the subject of American slavery by Messrs. Wm. Brown, Wm. Craft, and others. The meeting was numerously attended, the spacious hall being filled in every quarter; and a great number had to leave, as they could not obtain admission.

On the platform there appeared—Provost Thoms; Bailie Low; Mrs. Ellen Craft; Dr. Dick; Rev. Messrs. G. Gilfillan and Cook; Messrs. William Thoms, Laing, Rough, Benvie, Arthur Begg, Easson, Smith, &c. Provost Thoms presided.

After some remarks by the Provost as to the nature of American slavery and its glaring injustice, he called on Rev. Mr. Gilfillan to move the first resolution.

The Rev. Mr. GILFILLAN said—I shall not trespass long on the patience of the meeting, nor need I, for the resolution speaks for itself. Perhaps I may be met at the commencement by a question, What have we to do with American slavery, or American fugitive slaves? Are not Americans wise and intelligent enough themselves to manage their own matters? Is not the American republic of ago, and able to walk apart from our leading-strings? I have my doubts, sir, as to this. When I read the report of a recent meeting where George Thompson was prevented from speaking by tumult, I am compelled to say that a display of more unmanly insolence and childish fury was never made. I cannot believe that the republic is of age on this question. Indeed, its conduct and its language resemble those of a monomaniac. You know that many people, very rational on all other subjects, have some particular point on which they are insane. And this particular point with Americans is slavery. There they lose all self-possession—all command of temper—all their candor—and all their Christianity. Manage their own matters, indeed! If a Fugitive Slave Bill be a specimen of their management, I fear they are managing them very ill. They have managed already to disgrace the name of liberty—to discolor their national flag—to degrade their national character—to endanger their national existence—and now they have managed, to use the language of a Glasgow clergyman, 'to force the whole nation to become one huge pack of blood-hounds, to track the steps of every man, woman or child, who essays to escape from the iron fangs of slavery, and dares to be free! What a managing-republic! Could it be much worse for taking a little of our British advice when we tell them to try—just to try a different course of management—the management of justice, mercy, and brotherly kindness to the poor slaves of the South, as well as to the persecuted abolitionists of the North? But I meet with those who object to our interference on higher ground. They may ask, in the spirit of Cain, 'Are we our brothers' keepers?' I answer—We are, or ought to be. The Americans are our brethren. They are sprung from the same noble Anglo-Saxon stock. They speak the same language—they profess the same faith—they are connected with us by a myriad ties of commerce, relationship, and intercourse. If a brother walketh disorderly, is it not a brotherly and Christian part to point out his errors, and to protest against his crimes? And whether, I ask, do those love the Americans best, who justify them in their national crime of slavery, who tell us that we should leave them alone to manage it, or those who would, by argument and expostulation, induce them to forsake it? A blind man is staggering near a precipice—one cries, let him alone—another rushes forward to save him—who is his friend? A maniac is applying a torch to his own house—one cries, it is only a temporary aberration, let him alone—another snatches the torch from his hand—who is the true friend of the unfortunate man? You are aware that the slaves of the United States, sadly ignorant and indifferent to the blessings of that 'peculiar institution' of slavery, are in the habit of displaying their ingratitude by flight. They actually run away from bondage with all its comforts, fixing their eyes upon the North star—the star of liberty—their hearts beating for the first time with the feeling of conscious humanity—their feet wing-

ed, as it were, with eager desire—the sound of the lash waxing fainter and fainter in the distance behind—they less run than bound, and fly toward the land of freedom. Can you blame them? Would you not do the same? Lives there a Briton who does not sympathize with the poor fugitive slave, or who would not, if his house lay in his path, open the door to receive him, feed his hunger, clothe his nakedness, anoint his torn and bleeding feet, and give him, at once, a shelter, a shield, and a hiding-place under his roof? And yet a bill has lately passed the American Legislature, enacting that whosoever shall harbor or conceal such fugitive shall be subject to a fine not exceeding 1000 dollars, and imprisonment not exceeding six months, and shall moreover forfeit and pay, by the way of civil damages to the party injured by such illegal conduct, the sum of 1000 dollars for each fugitive so lost. Such is a sample of this bill. There was a time, sir, when it was accounted a sin to betray the innocent blood. One man has obtained immortal infamy by doing so for thirty pieces of silver. But now, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, the Legislature of a Christian country has indirectly and inferentially proclaimed that act a virtue, and sentenced to fine and imprisonment those who disdain such treachery. Time forbids me enlarging.

I may merely say, in support of another part of the resolution, that I honor from my heart the abolitionists of America. They have been abused, indeed, by many, by man-stealers, by fribbles and bigots, by those calm, callous, cold-blooded creatures, whose sole gods are expediency, policy, and pride; but by men of every country, and by Christians of almost every name, they have been and are held in honor—an honor that shall deepen as ages roll on. I do not know them all, but I know some of them. I know Frederick Douglass, the most powerful of natural orators, the self-taught giant, the Burns of the African race. I know of Wendell Phillips, one of the most accomplished and eloquent men in America. I know of Mrs. Chapman, that noblest of all Amazons, the Deborah of the Western World. I know of Lowell, one of the most gifted of American poets, and an abolitionist to the teeth. I know of Whittier, also a true poet, and who has consecrated his genius entirely to this cause. I know something, too, of the late Dr. Channing, one of the best and bravest men the world ever produced, and who, ere he died, lent to the cause of abolitionism his powerful aid. And I not only know of, but know our noble friends with us this evening. And lastly, I know William Lloyd Garrison, one whose name futuro ages shall rank with those of Wilberforce, Howard, and Clarkson.

Mr. Gilfillan concluded by moving a resolution to the effect, that the meeting express their abhorrence of the Fugitive Slave Bill recently passed by the American Legislature, as in itself unjust and oppressive, as a flagrant contradiction of the celebrated Declaration of Independence adopted by the United States, and as inconsistent with the great principles of religion, humanity and freedom; and further, that the meeting express their continued hatred of the entire system of slavery, and look forward to the time when it shall come to an end. The reverend gentleman sat down amidst great applause, a compliment which was frequently paid him during the delivery of his speech.

The Rev. Mr. Cook said he would second the adoption of the resolution which had been proposed. Slavery, or any system which deprived man of his liberty, was direct robbery. In reference to the compromise which had been effected in America by the passing of the Slave Trade Bill, there could be but one opinion in this country. It was one of the laws which were contrary to the law of God, and therefore could not be reconciled to it by any species of logic. He welcomed the lady and the two gentlemen who appeared on the platform, who had escaped from slavery, and he heartily wished them success in their labors in this country. (Cheers.) He should say no more but that he seconded the resolution.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Brown, one of the fugitive slaves, to the meeting, who was received with much applause. In concluding his able speech, he said—

The name of the United States is becoming a hissing and a by-word in the mouths of the inhabitants of every clime. My country is indeed the land of oppression. There is not a rood of territory over which the stars and stripes fly, on which William and Ellen Craft, or myself, could be protected by law. Wherever the American flag is seen flying on the continent of the New World; it points us out as slaves; and we enjoy to-night a degree of freedom in your town that we could not, if we were in the land of our birth. I often speak of America as my country, but in point of fact I have no country. In the language of one of the noblest of the negro's champions in the United States—

'My country is the wide, wide world;
My countrymen are all mankind.'

Yes—wherever the liberty of man is most respected, that is my country. It should be a humiliating thing to the people of the U. S., that the English Government furnishes the only asylum on the American continent for the poor and oppressed negro; and I hope, for one, that that place of refuge will never be broken up as long as the system of slavery continues. Let there be one spot in America where the slave can be free, if it must be furnished by monarchical England.

The speaker concluded his eloquent address in the midst of great applause.

Mr. WILLIAM CRAFT then presented himself, and was received with loud cheering. The audience listened to the narration of his escape, with his wife, with intense interest.

Mr. EASSON said, that at this late hour he would not detain them by any remarks. He should simply move the adoption of the following resolution:—

That the meeting should express their cordial sympathy with Mr. Brown, and with Mr. and Mrs. Craft, under their sufferings, and their high gratification at their deliverance from the bondage in which they are unjustly held.

The resolution was then put and carried amidst acclamation.

On the motion of Mr. Brown, a hearty vote of thanks was given to Provost Thoms for his conduct in the chair.

The Provost acknowledged the compliment in suitable terms.

When the meeting was about to disperse, a general wish was expressed that Mrs. Craft, who was seated on the platform, should present herself to the audience. She seemed rather reluctant to do so, but on the persuasion of the Provost and several other gentlemen, she consented to occupy a standing position on the left side of the former. She was most enthusiastically received. At first she seemed abashed; but the cheering having continued, she courtesied gracefully, and retired. She is an intelligent and delicate good-looking woman. From her color and contour of features, no one would have thought that she had any African blood in her veins. The meeting then dispersed.

We have reason to know that the following article, from the London Patriot, is from the pen of one of the most devoted and able friends of the anti-slavery cause in Great Britain.

THE AMERICAN FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT.

Sir,—Perceiving by the last *Anti-Slavery Reporter* that a public meeting of the friends of negro emancipation will be held shortly in London, may I be indulged with the permission, through your columns, of addressing a few words to your readers upon the present very interesting position of the Slavery question of America.

A crisis in this matter has occurred in the United States. One of that series of struggles which must ensue before the dreadful institution of slavery is finally overthrown, has commenced. All the people are now called upon to take an open and decided part either for or against the slave. The recent Fugitive Slave Bill is compelling masses of the inhabitants of the free States, who have long striven to avoid running counter to the prejudices and to the pecuniary and political interests of the community, by merely professing their hostility to slavery without doing anything to oppose it, to leave the neutral ground they had taken. The question has become one of conscience. According to the present law of Christian America, if a trembling slave-mother with her young infant, shivering with cold, exhausted by fatigue and hunger, and frantic with terror of her pursuers, should present herself at the door of a charitable and opulent citizen of the North, that poor fugitive must be spurned from the house, or subject its owner to a fine and imprisonment!

To the propriety of this cruel law, the majority of the inhabitants of the free States cordially assent. Among the remainder, in whose breasts humanity is not extinguished, some maintain that the Federal Government has exceeded its powers in thus interfering with the rights and laws of the independent States of the Union, and, consequently, that the new bill is 'unconstitutional'; but a larger number take higher ground; they declare that this law of the land is contrary to the law of God, and that they will obey God rather than man. As might be expected, that portion of the religious press of America not under the influence of slaveholders, is speaking out with much decision on the subject. Many journals, hitherto silent upon the wrongs of slavery, find they have no alternative but to condemn and advise resistance to an ordinance demanding a direct violation of Christian duty. The *New York Independent* (a paper of extensive circulation—the organ of the Congregationalists) has incurred much odium from the commercial community of New York for the firm manner in which it has advocated the mild and gentle precepts of love and benevolence inculcated by our Saviour, in opposition to the selfish, money-getting, and cruel spirit of the New York public. Numerous are the instances in which ministers of the Gospel, and citizens of all callings and stations, have publicly declared that they will rather suffer fine and imprisonment than withhold that charitable aid and sympathy from a colored supplicant, which they would refuse to afford to a distressed brother of a fair complexion.

This state of affairs is well depicted by the New York correspondent of the *Times*, who, in a letter inserted in that journal of the 19th ult., particularly deploras the perverted state of mind which exists in his city,—such devotion to humanity, but such faithlessness to the interests of New York and to the law of Congress! He especially points to the mischief-making 'ministers of the Gospel,' who, he says, 'have made themselves heard, and, though styling themselves preachers of peace, have preached and printed anything but that blessed doctrine, as has been their general wont in this country when induced to meddle with politics.' Referring to certain tradesmen in New York, who refused to sign a call for a meeting in support of the 'Fugitive Slave Bill,' (and who were held up as persons who ought to be punished by the system of exclusive dealing,) this American 'Correspondent' actually has the effrontery to applaud their being pointed out for public odium, to teach them the lesson, 'that among their civil rights they must not enumerate that of differing in opinion from the majority!'

Such being the position of the anti-slavery struggle in the United States at the present moment, I trust that a public assembly of Englishmen, desirous of promoting the interests of humanity in relation to three millions of their fellow-men in cruel bondage, will not be allowed to terminate in resolution of merely sentimental sighing; so characteristic of our anti-slavery documents, but that some decided course of action may be determined upon by the arrangers of the proceedings, or by those who attend the meeting.

There need be no difficulty in finding out measures that may be resorted to. The influence of the opinion of this country upon our American brethren is well known to be very powerful; that opinion may be expressed in various ways. An Address might be signed by the friends to the anti-slavery cause throughout the country, or every town might be advised to send a separate one to America. Valuable aid to the cause would be exerted, were the various religious bodies of this country to remonstrate with those societies in the United States with whom they sympathize in church organization.

I trust some will be present who will fearlessly denounce the slaveholder, in his true character. It might be well for some resolutions to be passed, that would have a tendency to make slaveholders feel that, while engaged in their unallowed course of claiming as their property the bodies of their fellow-men, robbing them of their earnings, and shutting out from their souls the light of Revelation, they must not expect to be regarded when in this country as holding a higher moral position than pirates of Borneo, or than that class in more civilized society, whose profession is robbery and dishonesty.

It would not be amiss to warn those who may come to the Exhibition in 1851, upon no account to visit Barclay and Perkins's brewery; for if an Austrian 'woman-whipper' met with so little mercy at the hands of the draymen, what may not the whole-sale women-whippers from a Republic that declares 'all to be free and equal,' and 'possessing an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' expect from those sympathisers with the oppressed? And, lastly, I would suggest, that as in consequence of the late cruel bill, a large number of fugitives who had long been comfortably settled with their wives and families in the free States, sacrificing the little property they had saved in order to escape, have fled in alarm at this ineluctable season to Canada, for safety; and are there suffering extreme privation, the approaching meeting would be a suitable occasion for making a collection in behalf of this unhappy and ill-used people.

I am, Sir, your obliged servant,

AN ABOLITIONIST.

We sincerely hope that the suggestions of our transatlantic coadjutor will be fully carried out, especially in the multiplication of testimonies against the Fugitive Slave Bill and its abettors. Let the indignation of civilized Europe be brought to bear with effect upon all who in any way uphold it.