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'The Inextinguishable Struggle Between North and South,' American Sectionalism in the British Mind, 1832-1863

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'The Inextinguishable Struggle Between North and South,' American Sectionalism in the British Mind, 1832-1863

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Abstract of Thesis

Working within the field of nineteenth century transatlantic history this thesis takes as its starting point British attempts to engage with the American Civil War. It emphasizes the historiographical oversights within the current scholarship on this topic which have tended to downplay the significance of antebellum British commentators in constructing an image of the United States for their readers which was highly regionalized, and which have failed to recognize the antebellum heritage of the tropes deployed during the Civil War to describe the Union and Confederacy.

Drawing on the accounts of over fifty British pre-war commentators and supplemented by the political press, monthly magazines and personal correspondence, in addition to significant amounts of Civil War propaganda this thesis contends that the understanding of the British literate classes of the conflict was part of a continuum. It equally emphasizes that by measuring the reception of texts among the literate public it is possible to ascertain the levels of British understanding of different aspects of the American nation and its sections in this period. It aims to demonstrate that any attempt to understand the conflict in a British context must adequately reflect the long-standing image of the United States as being characterized by discrete regions with particular social, cultural, economic and political identities. At the same time, it makes clear that pre-war discussions of the United States as a nation did not preclude the use of sectional identities; in fact the tropes of the pre-war United States themselves came to be highly sectionalized during the conflict. This thesis, therefore, places the American Civil War in both a transatlantic framework and emphasizes the extensive chronological span of British engagements with American sectionalism in order to explain the occasionally counter-intuitive and often confusing attitude of the British towards the conflict.

Contents

Contents of Illustrations

Acknowledgments

I also wish to tip my hat to the staff of the various archives used during this study, I found them to be enthusiastic, knowledgeable and helpful beyond anything I could have expected.

Finally I would like to thank my family. My parents, Alma and Steven who supported me through my studies at all levels as well as my grandparents Jimmy and Alma, my Uncles Raymond and Peter and my Auntie Christine. Finally I wish to give particular thanks to my partner Carly Simpson.

<u>Declaration</u>

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Word Count- 85,468

'The Inextinguishable Struggle Between North and South,' American Sectionalism in the British Mind, 1832-1863, An Introduction

On the 7th October 1862 William Ewart Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer under Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, gave a speech in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne which caused a political and diplomatic furore. Despite the moves against slavery made by the Union in the summer and early autumn, and its victory at the Battle of Antietam three weeks before, Gladstone told those listening that Confederate President Jefferson Davis, had 'made a nation,' implying that it was time for Her Majesty's government to recognise that fact.[1] Given the backdrop of this speech it is natural to ask why Gladstone, the doyen of mid-Victorian liberalism and an avowed opponent of slavery, would come out in favour of the Confederacy being admitted into the family of nations given its status as a slaveholding state. Diplomatic and political historians have combed the archives for information on the Anglo-American relationship during the US Civil War and have advanced a variety of explanations for the views held by members of the British government and the British people. In doing so they have considered tariffs, national pride, the demand for cotton and, of course, slavery as central to the British understanding of the conflict. However, if we are to comprehend Gladstone's apparently contradictory reactions to the war we need to look elsewhere. Furthermore, understanding this speech can shed light not only on Gladstone but also on the Anglo-American relationship more broadly since he was a genuinely representative figure. In fact, Gladstone was simply the most visible advocate of a set of complex British ideas about the United States which contributed to the British reaction to the Civil War; recognition of which should force historians to re-think the Anglo-American connections of the period.

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[1] Thesis title quotation taken from John F.T Crampton to Lord Clarendon, 7th Feb 1853 in James J. Barnes & Patience P. Barnes (eds.), *Private and Confidential: Letters from British Ministers in Washington to The Foreign Secretaries in London, 1844-67* (London & Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1993); *Morning Post*, 9th October 1862; Whether or not Gladstone was aware of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation when he made his Newcastle speech is difficult to ascertain. The first press reports of Lincoln's announcement appear on the same day that Gladstone's speech was given (7th October) however his diary makes no note of having read these reports; Gladstone had a family connection to the slave trade see Roland Quinault, 'Gladstone and Slavery,' *The Historical Journal*, 52.2, (2009), 363-383; Quinault does make clear that Gladstone was no pro-slavery advocate and leaned towards a gradualist abolitionism from the 1840s.

This thesis therefore undertakes the task of re-thinking the Anglo-American relationship by giving a broader and deeper scope to the study of Britain and the American Civil War, emphasizing that British understanding of the American North and South was part of a continuous discourse which predated the conflict by at least thirty years. This British discourse of American sectionalism had been constructed by a disparate group of intellectuals from across the middle and upper echelons of Victorian society and drawn from across the nation. In this period these men and women produced travel narratives about, set novels in, and published philosophical musings on, the United States. It is in the pages of these works and by considering their reception by readers that we can discover the depth of British engagement with sectionalism and begin to comprehend how it was that Gladstone could adopt a position of opposing slavery but supporting the Confederacy. This study will ultimately explain more fully the British reaction to America's bloodiest conflict; a reaction which was often as puzzling and contradictory as Gladstone's own.

The investigations of historians and literary scholars into British cultural products dealing with the United States during the Victorian era all indicate the existence of a culturally constructed 'America' in the British mind. Too often though, historians have been content to place this view within simplified political categories and draw conclusions without understanding that 'North', 'South' and indeed 'America' were contested categories in British discourse. By examining how commentators constructed ideas about the United States we can see that sectional differentiation was not simply a war-time phenomenon but part of a continuum of cultural discussions which encompassed both regional identity and the national characteristics of the United States. In fact, according to the historian James Epstein, America itself was '[a] "real" place where ones [that is an individual either writing or reading about America] imagined hopes, fears and desires could be tested.'[2] America was therefore

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[2] Some of the complexities of national images are discussed in William W. Freehling, *The South Vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Edward Pessen, 'How Different from each other were the Antebellum North and South?,' *American Historical Review*, 85.5 (1980), 1119-1149; Susan-Mary Grant, *North over*

both a factual and fictional location for the British, combining the familiar as well as the strange and providing a space for cultural and political figures to experiment and speculate.

The significance of Britain's constructed image of the United States as it effected the Civil War has received little scholarly attention from historians. The most common approach taken in attempting to examine the Anglo-American connection in the nineteenth century has, for the most part, involved using the works produced by British cultural commentators in only a very limited way. This does not mean, however, that historians have entirely ignored the period in a broader sense. The ground of the Anglo-American connection both before and during the Civil War has been well covered in the works of scholars including Jay Sexton, Phillip E. Myers, Howard Jones, Duncan Andrew Campbell and many others, all of whom have developed scholarly understanding of the complex connections between Britain and the USA and the influence of both international and domestic factors on events. Within a specifically Civil War context various aspects of the relationship between the two nations have been subjected to historical scrutiny; from Kenneth Bourne's analysis of the logistics of military preparations in Canada, to the examinations of war-time economic policy undertaken by Stanley Lebergott and Judith Fenner Gentry, as well as the relationship between the British working classes and events in America as considered by Mary Ellison and Frank L. Owsley. While these areas of enquiry have produced innovative studies and stimulated productive debate they all tend to play down the simple fact that the information about the United States received by most of the British population was mediated by individuals and institutions; be they journalists, politicians or writers. Therefore, empirical facts such as trade figures and passenger numbers do not fully explain British public opinion toward America and its regions. After all, mistaken assumptions about the nature of the United States could have as much of an impact on British perceptions as verifiable truths. In the introduction to their

South: Northern Nationalism and American Identity in the Antebellum Era (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000); James Epstein, "'America' in the Victorian Cultural Imagination', in Fred M. Levanthal & Roland Quinault (eds.), *The Anglo-American Attitudes from Revolution to Partnership* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 120.

2000 edited collection on Anglo-American attitudes, Fred M. Levanthal and Roland Quinault highlighted these flaws in historical research as they reviewed the current literature, and concluded that 'there has been a serious lack of historical investigation of Anglo-American attitudes in the widest sense of the phrase. While many studies of 'Anglo-American relations' exist, they have focused primarily on diplomatic and government-to-government contacts rather than on social, economic, intellectual, or cultural connections.'[3]

Diplomatic historians have seen the Civil War as something which raised the tensions between Britain and the United States to a level not seen since the war of 1812. The lucrative cotton trade and attempts by the North to blockade it, as well as the smuggling efforts of the South and the British to relieve the so-called 'Cotton Famine' have stimulated debate and shed light on the almost symbiotic relationship between the economies of the nations, and the political power those in the industry attempted to exert. Similarly, diplomatic tensions heightened during the war, and in assessing the political controversies over Queen Victoria's Declaration of Neutrality on behalf of her government or Gladstone's Newcastle speech or the *Trent* affair, scholars have analysed what motivated individuals to take up a cause during a conflict which was raging three thousand miles away. The study which essentially began serious historical debate on the relationship between Britain and the United States during the

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[3] Some of the most significant works in the area of government to government and diplomatic Anglo-American history include Kenneth Bourne, *Britain and the Balance of Power in North America 1815-1908* (London: Longman's, 1967); David. L. Dykstra, *The Shifting Balance of Power: American-British Diplomacy in North America 1842-1848* (Lanham, New York & Oxford: University Press of America, 1999); Jay Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy: Finance and American Foreign Relations in the Civil War Era, 1837-1873* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); Phillip E. Myers, *Caution and Cooperation: The American Civil War in British-American Relations* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2008); Dean B. Mahin, *One War at a Time: The International Dimensions of the American Civil War* (Washington DC: Brassey's, 1999); Charles S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement: The United States and Great Britain, 1783-1900* (New York, London, Sydney, Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1974); Reginald C. Stuart, *United States Expansionism and British North America, 1775-1871* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Martin P. Claussen, 'Peace Factors in Anglo-American Relations, 1861-1865,' *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26.4 (March 1940), 511-522; Kenneth Bourne, 'British Preparations for War with the North, 1861-1862,' *English Historical Review* 76 (October 1961), 600-632; Stanley Lebergott, 'Through the Blockade: The Profitability and Extent of Cotton Smuggling, 1861-1865', *Journal of Economic History* 41.4 (December 1961) 867-888; Judith Fenner Gentry, 'A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan,' *Journal of Southern History* 36.2 (May 1970) 157-188; Mary Ellison*, Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1972); Frank Lawrence Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy: Foreign Relations of the Confederate States of America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931); Fred M. Levanthal & Roland Quinault, 'Introduction', in *Anglo-American Attitudes*, 1.

Civil War was E.D Adams's classic two volume 1925 book *Great Britain and the American Civil War.* Adams's work, combined with a journal article written by Joseph H. Park the previous year acted as the point of departure for scholarly engagement with the Anglo-American connection, a field of investigation which Frank Lawrence Owsley's 1931 book *King Cotton Diplomacy* developed further. Two schools eventually emerged; those such as Park and later Phillip Foner who contended that the cause of the Union was intimately associated with liberalism and radical working class politics, and those who maintained the opposite. These included Mary Ellison and Joseph M. Hernon, the latter of whom confidently concluded that 'from the available evidence one can say that a great many British workingmen, and possibly a majority, shared Gladstone's sympathy with Confederate independence.'[4] These works, however, could not offer an adequate explanation to the question of why certain individuals supported the Confederacy and others the Union. This is a particular issue when applied to somebody like John Arthur Roebuck. If Foner and Park were correct, how could the former Chartist and the committed radical MP for Sheffield become so active in the British pro-Confederate lobby?

Two of the most recent studies of Britain and the American Civil War have shown themselves to be much more sensitive to the contradictions in these traditionalist paradigms. In the 2001 book *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War,* the historian R J M Blackett presented an image of Britain as divided down to a very local level, with, for example, the Lancashire town of Preston having a strong pro-Confederate presence while Rochdale, a mere twenty-five miles away, was a pro-Union stronghold. Duncan Andrew Campbell's 2003 work *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War* combines an analysis of ideologies and practical political and economic pressures to present a fluid impression of support which in many ways builds on the work of Blackett (although they differ

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[4] E.D Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War* [Two Volumes] (London: Longman's, Green's and Co., 1925); Joseph H. Park, 'The English Workingmen and the America Civil War,' *Political Science Quarterly* 39.3 (September 1924) 432-457; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*; Philip S. Foner, *British Labor and the American Civil War* (New York & London: Holmes & Meier, 1981); Ellison, *Support for Secession*; Joseph M. Hernon, 'British Sympathies in the American Civil War: A Reconsideration', *Journal of Southern History* 33.3 (August 1967) 356-367, 362.

significantly on many points). For Campbell, only a committed few, such as John Bright, Richard Cobden, James Spence and William Schaw Lindsay consistently and vocally advocated the cause of a party in the conflict. By contrast for the vast majority in Britain the Civil War was of limited interest and commitment to a side was lukewarm if it existed at all.[5]

While it is clear that all of these approaches to the Anglo-American political relationship offer a great deal in terms of understanding how America fitted into explicitly political debates in Britain, they nonetheless all tend to try and comprehend British interactions with the United States in political terminologies such as Liberal, Radical or Tory rather reflecting the true intellectual complexity of British opinion. This is an opinion which, if Campbell is correct about the general apathy among British society, owed more to popular culture than to an in-depth understanding of the nuances of American sectionalism. Overlooking this level of complexity is a serious omission in the current scholarship, since a recognition of the depth of what was going on ideologically and intellectually and the way that ideas about sectionalism were constructed and negotiated before the war, and then transmitted to an apathetic public, can help to explain why the anti-slavery Gladstone might speak out publically in favour of the South or why Lindsay, a Liberal MP and close friend of Cobden, was an active member of the Southern Independence Association (SIA). Cases which attempts to equate domestic political opinion with an individual's stance on the Civil War have been unable to account for.

The diverse scholarship on the Anglo-American connection throughout the early and mid-nineteenth century allows us to understand the many complex threads of diplomacy, ideology, economics and politics that ran between Britain and the United States in the period. It nonetheless ignores, or pays very little attention, to a major element of the Anglo-American story. The tendency of these histories is to focus on the overtly political and therefore to often

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[5] R.J.M Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 2001); Duncan Andrew Campbell, *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2003); Overall Campbell is highly critical of Blackett's work.

miss the important cultural influences on British views of America and its distinctive regions. Blackett's *Divided Hearts,* for example, makes no mention of Charles Dickens or his novel, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit,* despite the fact that this text offered a commentary on various aspects of America's sectional issues which literate members of the British public were certainly aware of at the outbreak of the Civil War. The literary scholar Andrew Sanders has explained the relevance of texts such as these to their intended audience and noted, with reference to historical novels particularly, that they 'are not, as a rule, escapes into a romantic past, but an attempt to prove that man and his society develop as part of a process which includes and envelopes the present,' something applicable to the genre more broadly. Even in the case of a relatively apolitical writer like William Makepeace Thackeray, Sanders has been careful to emphasize how much his writing reflected contemporary concerns. Similarly, in considering Dickens's work on America, Malcolm Bradbury highlights his use of the United States to pass comment on important contemporary issues including democracy, a free press, greed and the morality of modernity. Thackeray, Dickens, Anthony Trollope, Frances Trollope, Sir Charles Lyell and Harriet Martineau are just a few of the significant British intellectuals who critiqued America in this period and while literary scholars are far ahead of historians in terms of recognizing their influence on British opinion, their role in fostering a British understanding of sectionalism and the repercussions of their publications during the Civil War has only begun to be explored.[6]

Although many academic studies have failed to engage adequately with the central role played by British cultural commentators in the development of an American image, a number of texts by both historians and literary scholars have examined this rich source of evidence. Max Berger's studies emphasized the possible utility of the travel narrative as a

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[6] The terminology of 'literary politicians' applies to many of these figures. The term has usually been used to describe 'public intellectuals who saw deeply into the politics of their day without taking a direct role (for whatever reason) [and who] were vitally important contributors to both the political and literary discourse of their day' see Brent E. Kinser, *The American Civil War and the Shaping of British Democracy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Andrew Sanders, *The Victorian Historical Novel, 1840-1880* (London & Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1978), 11, 99-102; Malcolm Bradbury*, Dangerous Pilgrimages: Trans-Atlantic Mythologies and the Novel* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1995), 84-118.

historical source in understanding the Anglo-American relationship and subsequent

investigations have continued his work. A similar tradition is identifiable when it comes to the

use of the novel as a source of potential information on the relationship between the two

nations, particularly in the field of literary scholarship, and in more limited sense by historians.

Even within the context of the Civil War some of these sources have been utilized (most

notably in Sheldon Vanauken's 1988 book *The Glittering Illusion* and in journal articles by

Charles E. Shain and Donald Bellows). The emphasis on cultural commentators in these

works is useful but they still suffer from numerous drawbacks. Vanauken for instance drew

broad inferences from limited evidence particularly in his confident description of Britain as 'a

proud and intensely pro-Southern nation.' Both Shain and Bellows, in concentrating their

analysis solely on the Civil War, exposed a shortcoming, not only in their specific studies, but

in scholarly attempts to comprehend the Anglo-American dimensions on the conflict more

generally.[7]

In contrast to Shain and Bellows express purpose of this study is to consider Anglo-

American relations over the *longue duree* and place an emphasis on the role of cultural

commentators in the Anglo-American information network. By concentrating on the pre-Civil

War discourse which dealt with sectionalism in the United States and its reception among the

literate classes, this study will emphasize the importance of the intellectual framework of

'America' created by cultural commentators in British interpretations of the conflict. In doing

this it will demonstrate that the issues discussed by both journalists and propagandists during

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[7] Max Berger, 'American Slavery as seen by British Visitors, 1836-1860,' *Journal of Negro History* 30.2 (April 1945), 203-219; Max Berger, *The British Traveller in America, 1836-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); Susan Balee, 'English Critics, American Crisis and the Sensation Novel,' *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 12.2 (1993), 125-143; Deborah A. Thomas, *Thackeray and Slavery* (Athens, 1993); Arthur A. Adrian, 'Dickens on American Slavery: A Carlylean Slant,' *PMLA,* 67.4 (June 1952), 315-329; Bradbury, *Dangerous Pilgrimages*; Donald Bellows, 'A Study of British Conservative Reaction to the American Civil War,' *Journal of Southern History* 51.4 (November 1985); Sheldon Vanauken, *The Glittering Illusion: English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy* (Worthing: Churchman Publishing, 1988) 137; Charles E. Shain, 'The English Novelists and the American Civil War,' *American Quarterly,* 14.3 (Autumn 1962), 399-421; Christopher Mulvey, *Anglo-American Landscapes: A Study of 19th Century Anglo-American Travel Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

the Civil War did not simply blindside an unsuspecting public but drew on a range of pre-existing ideas.

Beginning an analysis from the perspective of British politics in the early 1860s (as so many scholars have) is also a partial explanation for the under-appreciation of the level of British awareness of American sectionalism prior to the Civil War years; something which is implicit in much of the historiography on the conflict. Two quotes, one from the historian Frank Thistlethwaite and another from Martin Crawford, written nearly thirty years later, neatly sum this up. For Thistlethwaite, 'the South had her own contacts with Britain; but they were with a Tory world, tenuous, ambivalent, sentimental and waning in force,' while Crawford stated that 'a glance through any leading British newspaper will confirm how underrepresented the slave states had become within the Anglo-American information network.' When considering political and business affairs, these statements are doubtless justified given the extensive connections between political and trade organizations based in the mercantile North and British industrial leaders. This connection is something Jay Sexton has highlighted through his recognition that 85 percent of chartered banks were located in the North prior to the Civil War, while the South lacked any true financial infrastructure. Taking into account the complex relationship between finance and politics, it is unsurprising that the North might seem to have preoccupied British imaginations. However, Crawford also makes the point that *The Times* did not simply disregard the slave states and their concerns. In 1856, Thomas H. Gladstone was sent by the paper to cover the bleeding Kansas controversy, a significant dispute with obvious implications for sectional relations, and George Bancroft Davis and Louis Fillmore toured the Southern states on behalf of the newspaper in 1857. Despite this recognition among those who have considered British opinion there is often an oversimplification of both the knowledge and viewpoint of the British population which stems from a lack of appreciation of British engagement with both the South and the United States in a broader sense. When discussing the war for example, Kenneth Bourne asserted that Britain had a natural antipathy towards the Confederacy because of slavery, but he never really explored this claim. What

Bourne failed to take into consideration was the fact that the southern states were not necessarily defined exclusively by slavery in the British imagination; the region possessed a far more complex image prior to secession. In addition, a small but influential intellectual community in Britain which included Thomas Carlyle, Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin, far from being abolitionists, saw slavery, if not as a positive good, then at least as a justifiable evil.[8] Bourne's oversight on the slavery topic typifies a common theme in much of the existing scholarship of this period: the oversimplification of pre-existing ideas which the British held about sectionalism and a lack of recognition of the complexity which the issues at stake in the sectional conflict had for the British.

Emphasizing the pre-Civil War roots of British interpretations of sectionalism is also an important addition to the history of Anglo-American relations given the vast historiography dealing with the development of sectional identities in the United States itself. Building significantly on the early works of academics such as W.J. Cash and William R. Taylor, research into the nature of southern nationalism has proved incredibly fruitful, with more recent texts including those by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese, as well as Michael O'Brien, providing a history of southern sectionalism which traced its roots back well before the outbreak of the Civil War. The antebellum North has also begun to receive the requisite attention with a greater appreciation among historians such as Susan-Mary Grant of the importance of identity in the northern states well before the election of Abraham Lincoln.[9]

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[8] Frank Thistlethwaite *The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959) 173; Martin Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis of the Mid-Nineteenth Century: The Times and America, 1850-1862* (Athens & London: University of Georgia Press, 1987); Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 134; Bourne, *Britain and the Balance* of Power, 243; Bellows, 'A Study of British Conservative Reaction.'

[9] The historiography dealing with American sectionalism and the development of distinctive national identities in the North and South is vast. For an illustration of the issues see Maurice G. Baxter, *One and Inseparable, Daniel Webster and the Union* (Cambridge, Mass: University of Harvard Press, 1984); W.J Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: Random House, 1941); Avery O. Craven, *The Growth of Southern Nationalism, 1848-1861* (Baton Rouge: University of Louisiana Press, 1953); Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988); H.R Floan, *The South in Northern Eyes 1831 to 1861* (New York: Haskell House, 1973); George M. Frederickson, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union* (1993 repr, Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1965); Eugene D. Genovese, *The Southern Front: History and Politics in the Cultural War* (Columbia &

In America, therefore, the history of sectionalism has long been a topic of debate, yet there is little in any of these works which engages with the extent to which these sectional identities crossed the Atlantic and influenced the way the British looked at the United States, despite an increased emphasis in Civil War scholarship highlighting the international dimensions of the conflict.

Taking the disparity between American studies of sectionalism and transatlantic studies of the phenomenon as its main focus this thesis will extend the current scholarship of the Anglo-American connection in the mid-Victorian era by illustrating the roots of British debates over sectionalism and national identity going back to 1832. In so doing, it highlights the necessity of comprehending British engagement with the American Civil War as part of a discourse which predated the conflict. The works of Martin Crawford on *The Times* and Jay Sexton on transatlantic finance offer some of the most insightful analysis of this period precisely because they transcend the chronological boundaries of the American Civil War. Crawford rightly noted in the introduction to his work on *The Times* during the 1850s and early 1860s that a lack of chronological diversity in the work of scholars had resulted in a 'failure to appreciate the process of Anglo-American conflict . . . by focusing their studies heavily on the years 1861 to 1865 . . . historians have remained largely impervious to developments that, by the time of secession, were fashioning new levels of cooperation and

London: University of Missouri Press, 1995); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese & Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders Worldview* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); For a review of the works undertaken by the Genovese's see Adam Rothman, 'Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Eugene Genovese, and the Proslavery Worldview', *Reviews in American History*, 41.3 (Sept 2013), 563-569; Grant, *North Over South*; Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue and Progress: Northerners and their War for the Union* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); Clayton D. James, *Antebellum Natchez* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968); John McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalists and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860* (New York & London: W.W Norton & Co, 1979); Michael O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860* [Two Volumes] (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Rollin G. Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949); Lewis O. Saum, *The Popular Mood in Pre-Civil War America*, (Westport, Conn & London: Greenwood Press, 1980); Lewis P. Simpson, *The Man of Letters in New England and the South: Essays on the History of the Literary Vocation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character* (New York: George Braziller, 1961); Eric H. Walther, *The Fire-Eaters* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

understanding across the Atlantic divide.' As Crawford also pointed out, this omission is bizarre since 'the years 1861 to 1865 reveal no independent identity for attitudes towards the United States.' While he does regularly touch on sectional issues, his work is not the specific examination of sectionalism in an Anglo-American context which is so clearly needed, as his explicit intention was 'to redefine the Anglo-American crisis of the mid-nineteenth century through an examination of the processes of mutual criticism between the two countries.' It is here, therefore, that this study diverges sharply from that of Crawford. For him sectional differentiation was a side-show whereas this study contends that it was central to the pre-war era.[10]

Although sectional discourse was at its clearest and most powerful in the works of cultural commentators of the period and it is by understanding their works that scholars can better comprehend the depth of the British engagement with sectionalism, this is not a project solely devoted to the published texts- however important the commentators were. By gauging the reception of these published works we can begin to identify the prevalent tropes of sectionalism and place them alongside images of the American nation as they were understood by educated Britons in order to trace their usage during the Civil War. The gauging of the reception of printed texts in the period following the Great Reform Act can be a notoriously difficult task. The contemporary publisher and author Charles Knight reported that the price of a complete book fell from 16s (shillings) down to 4s. 41/2d (pence) between 1828 and 1832 which, although it continued to limit books to a minority of the population, certainly increased the size of this minority. Actually quantifying this fully is an almost impossible challenge however since, as Richard Altick pointed out, Victorian census data on literacy was deeply unreliable since to qualify as literate for census purposes an individual only needed to have signed their marriage license. Despite the problems of providing figures, most literary scholars and historians agree on the general increase in the reading public during this period, and while the price of literature did put it beyond the reach of many, a distinct class of literary

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[10] Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 5, preface; Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*.

consumers existed in Britain. This literate class, with some disposable income and leisure time, read the works of Charles Dickens or Thomas Carlyle, not merely to escape reality, but with the eye of informed contemporary observers. As Robert A. Colby has described the process with reference to the novel, 'nineteenth century readers were expected to chew and digest them, not swallow them like puddings.' Similarly, while Brent E. Kinser concedes that 'it may be impossible to determine exactly how much influence [politically aware writers of the period] had on the shape of the British polity,' he also asserts that 'whether or not people agreed with Carlyle, they listened.' It was men and women like Carlyle who set the terms of the debate on America and in many cases had direct access to the halls of power since 'politicians and men of letters mingled in the same class, the same salons and the same country house parties.' The book historian Jonathan Rose has rightly warned against trying to 'discern the ideological messages that books transmit to readers,' in any over simplified way such as assuming the uncritical transfer of political ideas between text and reader. This thesis, however, by considering a large corpus of literature, will attempt to demonstrate the development of a broad set of ideas rather than the specific interaction of author and reader. What is more it considers the reception side of the reader/writer equation by frequently engaging with the ideas of non-commentators which have the unmistakable hallmarks of being influenced by popular published accounts.[11]

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[11] Charles Knight quoted in Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957) 286; For information on the price shifts of the period see Simon Eliot 'Some Trends in British Production, 1800-1919,' in John O. Jordan & Robert L. Patten (eds.), *Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 39-41; James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c. 1815-1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 206: Although establishing literacy figures is difficult, readership figures can point to the size of a potential audience, for example if we use Altick's own figures for monthly periodicals between 1859-1862 we can see *All The Year Round* selling between 120,000 and 185,000 copies and *Cornhill Magazine* averaging around 84,000 in the same period. These figures refer to the more popular monthlies and indicate a significant number of people reading for the purposes of leisure; Ibid., 169-170; For more on the literacy debate see David Vincent, *The Rise of Mass Literacy: Reading and Writing in Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000); Robert K. Webb, 'Working Class Readers in Early Victorian England', *The English Historical Review*, 65.256, (July 1950), 333-351; George H. Fleming, *George Alfred Lawrence and the Victorian Sensation Novel* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1952) 34-38. Fleming puts the increase down to a combination of education, improved printing techniques and falling prices. J.A Sutherland, *Victorian Novelists and Publishers* (London: Athlone Press, 1976) 62-64. Sutherland highlighted the 1850s as a key point in

Even if, as historians, we cannot always empirically demonstrate the influence of a given text, we do have certain tools which allow us to indicate a text's influence on the intellectual climate. In an article entitled 'a New Model for the Study of the Book', Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker give a potential model, recognizing four areas in which reception can be measured, (meaning, in this context, the public impact of a given text). The first is direct documentation, specifically reviews and personal records in which a text is the subject; the second is popularity based on immediate reprints; the third is the later reprinting of a text and the final element is the appropriation of passages or concepts in other texts.[12] For the methodological purposes of this study, these are practical ways of assessing reception. Although records may be patchy in some areas, there is enough evidence which can be discovered in newspapers adverts and reviews as well as the references within the published materials themselves to make a claim that a text had a public impact and offer a compelling analysis given that these writers had a formative influence on British ideas about the United States. There are, for instance, references to fictional characters from novels and short stories on America in the British press as well as more general recurring motifs in descriptions of rural plantations or the political culture of New York City in travelogues and propaganda.

In terms of the sources examined in this work and the audience who consumed them, the emphasis here is on the views of America constructed through a cultural lens rather than those with an explicit political purpose. For the sake of pragmatism this examination will

the development of mass literacy among the middle and upper working classes due to a combination of wage increases and the falling price of books as a consequence of a reduction in various taxes; Robert A. Colby, '"Rational Amusement": Fiction Vs Useful Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century' in James R. Kincaid & Robert J. Kuhn (eds.), *Victorian Literature and Society: Essay's Presented to Richard D. Altick* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1984) 59; Kinser, *The American Civil War*, 10, 14; William Thomas, 'Religion and Politics in the *Quarterly Review* 1809-1853,' in Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore & Brian Young (eds.), *History, Religion and Culture, British Intellectual History, 1750-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 136; Jonathan Rose, 'Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53.1 (Jan-Mar, 1992), 47-70, 48.
[12] Thomas R. Adams & Nicolas Barker, 'A New Model for the Study of the Book' in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society',* David Finkelstein & Alistair McCleery (eds.), *The Book History Reader* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 58-60.

therefore classify all fiction, travel narratives and published political pamphlets as well as general socio-political philosophy as being cultural, in the sense that they were not written with the express purpose of fundamentally altering government policy on the United States unlike, for instance the content of a cabinet meeting or parliamentary debate. In terms of forming distinctions between sources purporting to be fact, and those recognizably fictive (i.e. novels and short stories) this thesis treats them interchangeably. As the literary scholar Christopher Mulvey noted in his 1990 book *Transatlantic Manners,* 'travel literature is in many respects a form of fiction,' a view this thesis adopts. Despite an emphasis on the cultural sphere, this work will not simply disregard political discourse, on the contrary, political discourse is integral. Instead of examining politics in microscopic detail for underappreciated elements of policy, however, the aim here is to understand mainstream political discourse about the United States as being at least partially constructed by cultural commentators. The historian, James Epstein, in his study, '"America" in the Victorian Cultural Imagination," presents a concise rationale for this in explaining his own intention to suggest how 'America' was put into discourse, offering often elusive points for debate and anxiety about Britain's own future as a modern polity and society.' Although Epstein concentrates his analysis on the work of Dickens and Matthew Arnold, he is able to effectively fulfil this aim within his limited scope, providing a useful model to understand the relationship between the political and cultural views of 'America.'[13] This work builds on that of Epstein methodologically, while at the same time offering an analysis of a considerably more comprehensive corpus of literature

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[13] The term culture itself is a contested one. In fact Raymond Williams has described it as 'one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.' Williams identified it as: '(i) the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development from the 18th Century; (ii) the independent noun, whether used generally and specifically, which indicates a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general, from Herder and Klemm [and] (iii) the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity.' For the debate and difficulties over the notion of culture see: Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Science and Culture* (London: Fontana Press, 1976); Christopher Mulvey, *Transatlantic Manners, Social Patterns in Nineteenth Century Anglo-American Travel Literature* (Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sydney: University of Cambridge Press, 1990) 7; Epstein, '"America' in the Victorian Cultural Imagination,' 107-120, quote taken from 107.

with the express purpose of emphasizing the image of sectionalism running through it and the consequences this had for British engagement with the Civil War.

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of cultural commentators in the development of the image of the United States in Great Britain in the years before the Civil War. Intellectual heavyweights of the period such as the novelists Charles Dickens, Frances Trollope and William Makepeace Thackeray, the scientists Sir Charles Lyell and George Combe and political reformers including Joseph Sturge and Harriet Martineau all published works which were eagerly purchased and read by a rapidly expanding and politically aware middle and upper class literati. In the pages of these books readers simply did not find a coherent nation which they could neatly classify as the United States. Instead, they were introduced to a nation divided by sectional differences which, even though these differences did incorporate slavery, were not limited to the distinction between slaveholding and non-slaveholding states. Authors presented readers with images of North and South as divided in terms of their political institutions, their social norms and their ethnic complexion. Moreover, they increasingly found themselves being provided with positive images of the one section at the expense of the other all of which went alongside various images of the national identity of the United States. Key cultural commentators therefore established a distinctly British discourse of American sectionalism which became central to the way that British people understood the United States between 1832 and 1861.

A word must be said here about chronology, particularly since this thesis concludes 1863, as opposed to 1865. This study self-consciously eschews the notion that the period 1861-1865 represented a discrete era of Anglo-American understanding and instead makes the case for a different set of chronological boundaries being employed. The year 1832 provides an obvious starting point, since during this year the most significance travel narrative of the pre-war period was published (Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*) and the Great Reform Act was passed, changing the nature of British politics, while in the

United States itself the nullification controversy raged. Additionally, in the following year, the British abolished slavery all of which meant that the early years of the 1830s fundamentally altered attitudes both to the United States and to relevant ideas which were, or would be, intimately associated with it. Ending in 1863 appears, at first sight, to be less intuitive given that the American Civil War carried on for two more years. However the Emancipation Proclamation fundamentally altered British perceptions of the conflict and for this reason its official adoption on 1st January 1863 marked the beginning of a new phase of British engagement with the United States and American sectionalism.[14]

Chapter one examines the issues of race, slavery and labour as British commentators saw them within the context of American sectionalism in order to illustrate the lack of a dominant, coherent discourse presenting the South as a region defined by an adherence to slavery enforced by violence and the North as populated by abolitionists with a benevolent attitude towards black Americans. This distinction challenges the sometimes implicit assumption common in the existing scholarship on British reactions to the American Civil War which conflates Britain and abolition as one and the same. Instead, it contends that while most British people disliked slavery as an abstract idea, many described the conditions of slaves in the South as mitigated in one form or another and were shocked at the treatment of free blacks in northern cities such as New York and Philadelphia. Chapter two concentrates on the ethnic and cultural connections which reached across the Atlantic. It demonstrates the sectional and national complexion of British ideas about the ethnic make-up of the United States before the Civil War. It also considers the extent to which areas of the United States aped British cultural practices and the forms their culture took, as well as the Anglophila (or lack thereof) of the population and the rhetoric of Anglophobia in the United States nationally

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[14] Stephen B. Oates 'Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,' *Historian* 27 (1965), 131-154,152,145-146; Lonnie A. Burnett, *Henry Hotze: Confederate Propagandist, Selected Writings on Revolution, Recognition and Race* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 26; Myers, *Caution and Cooperation*, 6; Duncan Andrew Campbell, *Unlikely Allies: Britain, America and the Victorian Origins of the Special Relationship* (London & New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), 158, 160; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 32; Douglas A. Lorimer 'The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War,' *The Historical Journal* 19.2, (1976), 405-420, 420.

during this period. It demonstrates how the ethnically and culturally non-British areas of America, particularly Pennsylvania and New York, were perceived as embracing Anglophobia, while New England and the South became representatives of particular forms of Britishness in the hands of commentators. Chapter three examines the pre-war British engagement with the political side of the sectional debate and the increasing disillusionment with the American national polity. It illustrates British awareness of the differences between North and South and the two regions' incompatible aims reaching back to the early 1830s as well as the increasingly negative discourse around American national politics as a whole, something which Civil War propagandists explicitly sectionalized during the conflict. Each of these three chapters deals with a distinctive theme but does so utilizing a chronological structure in order to demonstrate the extent to which British commentators built upon the ideas of one another and consequently constructed a distinctly British sense of American sectionalism which had significant Civil War reverberations.

With the outbreak of the Civil War this pre-existing discourse of sectionalism, particularly when it was fused with 'sectionalized' national tropes (meaning ideas-usually negative- which were central to sectional propaganda despite having been national features before the conflict), became a crucial tool with which the British people attempted to comprehend the bloody conflict in the United States and a vital weapon in the propaganda battle waged by Union and Confederate advocates. It is this period of conflict which chapter four examines in order to illustrate how propagandists, journalists and politicians attempted to appropriate or subvert pre-existing ideas to emphasize either the justness of the Confederate nation, or the right of the Federal Government in acting to reunify the country. With all this in mind, we can once again return to Gladstone standing by a podium in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne on 7th October 1862 announcing to the world that Jefferson Davis had 'made a nation.' Historians have so far found this sentiment difficult to explain, however, that is because they have ignored the breadth and depth of British engagement with sectionalism in the United States. In a sense, Gladstone's sentiment cannot be traced simply to the *Trent* affair, or the

tariff policy of the Confederacy. Rather its roots lay much further back in the past when at twenty-three years old Gladstone settled down to read Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*.[15]

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[15] M.R.D Foot (ed.), *The Gladstone Diaries Volume One* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) 581. Gladstone's diary entry for the 19th October 1832 specifically mentions him reading Trollope's book.

Chapter One: 'A Blight Over Everything' Race and Slavery in British views of the American Sections

The fact that the twenty-three year old W.E Gladstone, having recently graduated from Christ Church College Oxford, read Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners*, is a particularly pertinent one when it comes to understanding his stance on the Confederate States of America. Logic would dictate that this archetypal liberal statesman would have no sympathy with the cause of the South after its secession from the Union. Certainly for him, and many like him, the position of the millions of African Americans held in bondage in the South had a profound influence on the way they saw the region both before and during the war. The first Confederate commissioners to Britain, William L. Yancey, Dudley Mann and Pierre Rost described in very clear terms the British attitude to slavery when they noted that, 'the anti-slavery sentiment [is] universally prevalent in England.' The fact that Gladstone's Newcastle speech of the 7th October 1862 encouraged the official recognition of the slave-holding Confederacy, however, suggests that Yancey, Mann and Rost failed to understand the complexity of British opinion on slavery and sectionalism. In order to comprehend the apparent paradox of the Civil War, during which a number of British mainstream liberals and abolitionists failed to side with the North, the intellectual climate needs to be examined in depth. In the case of Gladstone, the fact that as a young man he had read the self-identifying liberal, Frances Trollope, describe how 'the State of a domestic slave in a gentleman's family [is] preferable to that of an American "help"' (meaning free domestic labour in this context) we begin to understand the various ideological strands which influenced British mainstream opinion.[16] The roots of the complex relationship between British views of slavery and sectionalism extend back at least as far as the 1830s and by understanding them in this broader chronology we can begin to engage more fruitfully with British attitudes toward

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[16] Title quotation taken from William Rathbone VI to Sam Rathbone, 13th May 1854, RPVX.3.57A, Rathbone Papers, University of Liverpool Library, [hereafter RP]; William L. Yancey, Pierre Rost & Dudley Mann to Robert Toombs, 14th August 1861 in James D. Richardson (eds.), *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy Including Diplomatic Correspondence, 1861-1865 Volume Two* (New York: Robert Hector, 1966); Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1984 repr. London: Century Publishing, 1839), 7-11.

American slavery and the impact of those attitudes on opinions toward the American Civil War.

It is clear that during the war the pro-Union lobby tried to make the causes of the Union and the abolition of slavery synonymous. Given the perceived commitment to abolition on the part of the British this seemed to be a sensible political move. Yet the connection between the Union war effort and abolition was not immediately apparent to many in Britain, particularly before President Lincoln issued and enforced the Emancipation Proclamation. The reasons for the lack of consensus about the role of slavery in the conflict among the British literati are complex and have never been adequately explained. The primary reason for the limited belief in the link between ending slavery and the Civil War was that many pre-war British commentators on America did not hold the South solely responsible for the stain of the slave system. Therefore, to most, slavery was an American problem, not necessarily a southern one.[17] Before the war the British commonly recognized the South as a slave-holding region, yet the United States as a whole apparently benefited from the slave system, making

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[17] Richard Huzzey has recently published a study which emphasizes the complexity of anti-slavery heritage in Britain, he notes that while 'few voices in Britain took a neutral or friendly position towards slavery. . .Victorian Britons created the fragmentation of anti-slavery ideology with competing ideologies of freedom.' Huzzey also notes in passing the implications of this on British attitudes to the American Civil War since 'in the decades before the war, prejudice and segregation in the North struck some British visitors as equally gratuitous as the evils of Southern slavery. Lincoln had put very little emphasis on the anti-slavery dimension of the conflict in the opening stages of the war.' See Richard Huzzey *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithica & London: Cornell University Press, 2012) for these quotes see 208, 24. For more discussions of the topic of the British relationship with race and abolition both before and after the 1833 Act see R.J.M Blackett, *Building an Anti-Slavery Wall: Black Americans and the Atlantic Abolitionist Movement 1830-1860* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1983); Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo American Context 1830-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979); Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780-1850* (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); Betty Fladeland, *Men and Brothers: Anglo-American Anti-Slavery Co-operation* (Chicago & Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972); Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor and Politics in Jamaica and Britain 1832-1938* (Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1992); Edward Bartlett Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation: The Caribbean Roots of the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 2008); James Walvin, *Questioning Slavery* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996); Christine Bolt & Seymour Drescher, (eds.), *Anti-Slavery, Religion and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Anstey*, (Folkestone: Dawson, 1980); Alan J. Rice & Martin Crawford, (eds.), *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass and Transatlantic Reform* (Athens & Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1999); James Walvin, (ed.), *Slavery and British Society, 1776-1846* (London & Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1982); Shearer West, (ed.), *The Victorians and Race* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996); Izhak Gross, 'Parliament and the Abolition of negro Apprenticeship 1835-1838' *The Historical Journal* 23.1 (March 1980), 63-85.

the North equally as implicated in the eyes of many. Understanding this pre-war way of thinking about American slavery as ultimately, a national, rather than just a sectional phenomenon is a crucial precursor for understanding British reactions to the Civil War. It undermined the idea of a natural association between the cause of the Union and that of abolition. As a result it allowed even those who made it clear they rejected slavery, to take up the cause of the Confederacy. Following a chronological structure this chapter will trace the development of ideas about race, slavery, labour and American sectionalism in the works of some of the period's most renowned intellectuals and in doing so will demonstrate the complex history of British engagement with these themes up until the eve of the Civil War.

The 1830s: Frances Trollope to Charles Augustus Murray

One of the first observations made by the novelist Frances Trollope upon arriving in New Orleans in December 1827, and which she later recounted as part of her *Domestic Manners of the Americans,* provides an insight into the complex relationship between British views of slavery and sectionalism during the late 1820s and early 1830s. Almost immediately after stepping from the boat in the Crescent City, Trollope commented on the 'gentleness' she saw exhibited by a master to their slave, while she later made a more general observation that domestic slaves were 'tolerably well fed, and decently clothed.' In fact within the context of the United States, Trollope contended that 'the State of a domestic slave in a gentleman's family [is] preferable to that of an American "help".' All of these observations came despite the that fact that prior to her arrival in the United States she had made absolutely clear her revulsion of slavery in the abstract. Implicit in Trollope's descriptions of the 'gentleness' of New Orleans slaveholders, and absolutely integral to the underplaying of the evils of slavery in British discourse on the South, was the paternal connection between master and slave which the southern system of 'care' could apparently offer.[18]

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[18] Trollope, *Domestic Manners,* 6-7. In addition to mentions within the text an idea of the reception of the travel narratives and novels utilized in this study can be found in the footnotes. The first mention of each of these works is accompanied by a sample of newspaper citations which refer to

For Trollope, however, it was not just that southern slavery was not always as bad as slavery in the abstract, or as she had imagined it would be in practice. Freedom, just as desirable in principle as slavery was objectionable, could be underwhelming in the context of the American system. Trollope for example had direct access to a freed slave community established by her acquaintance, the British radical reformer Frances Wright, at Nashoba in Tennessee and found the successes of the settlement to be limited at best. Consequently, from her own experience in the South, Trollope concluded that 'to emancipate them [the slaves] entirely throughout the Union cannot, I conceive be thought, consistently with the safety of the country.'[19] These illustrations of the slave system emphasize the points which became absolutely central to the British understanding of sectionalism and slavery in the United States; the experience of southern slavery as a mitigated form of the system combined with a distinct lack of confidence in American abolition (in its various guises). Trollope's overall conclusion about the place of slavery in America reflected her experiences of the system as well as the position and achievements of freedmen and illustrate very clearly the sense of ambiguity she came to feel:

I am far from intending to advocate the system of slavery; I conceive it to be essentially wrong: but so far as my observation has extended, I think its influence *far less injurious to the manners and morals of the people [than] the fallacious ideas of equality* [my emphasis], which are so fondly cherished by the working classes of the white population of America.[20]

advertisements, reviews, editorial material, letters etc. which refer to the text under discussion. These have been identified through the (http://find.galegroup.com/bncn/start.do?prodId=BNCN&userGroupName=unn) database. N.B The newspapers listed in the footnote for each text do not constitute an exhaustive list. see *Examiner*, 4th March 1832, 29th June 1832, 21st Aug 1841; *Morning Chronicle*, 6th March 1832; *Caledonian Mercury*, 10th June 1833; *Morning Post*, 2nd Oct 1833, 26th Sept 1844; 16th Feb 1853; *Essex Standard, and Colchester and County Advertiser*, 31st March 1832; *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc*, 9th April 1832; *Derby Mercury*, 2nd May 1832; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 1st June 1839; *Poor Man's Guardian,* 16th June 1832.

[19] Trollope, *Domestic Manners,* 10-11, 207-212.

[20] Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 154. For the myth of paternalism in southern slaveholding see Genovese & Fox Genovese, *Mind of the Master Class*; Eugene D. Genovese & Elizabeth Fox-Genovese *Fatal Self-Deception Slaveholding Paternalism in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); James Oakes, *The Ruling Race A History of American Slaveholders* (London & New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982); Lacy K. Ford, *Deliver Us From Evil The Slavery*

The impression of Trollope was therefore one in which slavery was actually the lesser of the two key evils which she identified in the United States.

In addition to her descriptions of political equality she presented a sanitized version of slavery in which the solution to the slave problem was not necessarily abolition but merely the amelioration of conditions. Implicit in all of this, and absolutely central to the British image of southern slavery as being in some way mitigated, was the notion of racial hierarchy.[21] Other commentators would go on to make this more explicit in their observations. However, even in Trollope's work slavery was made more palatable by the supposed existence of a paternal connection between master and slave. At its best, Trollope's southern slave-holder fulfilled the paternal duty thrust upon him and took care of members of a 'lower' race. Certainly Trollope considered abolition as an ultimate good as her fictional companion piece, *The Refugee in America*, made clear with its frequent critiques of the slave system, something taken a step further in her later, overtly abolitionist novel *Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw*. But within the social make-up of the region and the current context of the South the 'gentleness' of some planters impressed her.[22]

Question in the Old South (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Jeffrey Robert Young, *Domesticating Slavery The Master Class in Georgia and South Carolina*, 1670-1837 (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999); William Dusinberre, *Them Dark Days: Slavery in the American Rice Swamps* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Edward E. Baptist-'"Cuffy," "Fancy Maids," and "One-Eyed Men": Rape, Commodification, and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States,' *The American Historical Review* 106.5 (December 2001), 1619-1650; For some useful specific examples of slaveholders deploying the rhetoric of paternalism see Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*, (London & Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), 22-24, 28-30, 35-38; William Dusinberre, *Slavemaster President: The Double Career of James Polk* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 21, 71-72, 76, 88-89, 171-172. For more on the significance of political equality on an American model for the British see chapter three.

[21] For a contemporary discussion of the racial capacities and hierarchy debate see *Leeds Mercury*, 23rd February 1833; On the development of racialist theories primarily in ethnographical and anthropological terms in the 1840s and subsequently in pseudo-biology terms see Curtin *The Image of Africa*; Paul Stock '"Almost a Separate Race": Racial Thought and the Idea of Europe in British Encyclopaedias and Histories, 1771-1830,' *Modern Intellectual History* 8.1 (2011), 3-29; For a discussion of the differences between attitudes towards race in Britain and America see J.S Bratton, 'English Ethiopians: British Audiences and Black-Face Acts, 1835-1865,' *Yearbook of English Studies*, 11, Special Number Literature and its Audience II, (1981), 127-142.

[22] Frances Trollope, *The Refugee in America Volume Two* (London: Whittaker, Treacher & Co. 1832), 166, 196-197. For a sample of the newspaper reviews, adverts etc for this text see *Morning Post*, 24th Aug 1832, 16th Dec 1832; *Examiner*, 2nd Sept 1832, *Bury & Norwich Post, & East Anglian: Or Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, Cambridge, and Ely Intelligencer*, 27th Nov 1833; Frances Trollope, *The Life and*

Trollope's observations were typical of the mainstream liberal perspective in Britain with her rejection of slavery as a labour system yet her recognition that within an idealized southern context it could be mitigated. American abolition in this period sat uneasily with British views of the subject. From a pragmatic point of view the different approaches which were evident in the two nations probably stemmed from the difference between imperial and domestic slavery, but the British also recognized the sectional tensions inherent in American slavery and abolition which added a further complication. The controversial work of the American Colonization Society (ACS) during the 1830s in Britain is illustrative of the difficulties of taking particular abolitionist policies across the Atlantic and the way they informed the debate on sectionalism. According to Mr. T.J. Buckton, speaking in front of the Hull Literary and Philosophical Society as part of a critique of the ACS, it was 'well known that the free citizens of America were the vilest slave-dealers on the face of the earth.' Similarly, a Sheffield newspaper writing on the same topic the following year stated that 'the grand object of the Society [ACS] is, in fact, nothing less than to banish, from the land of their birth to the pestilent shores of Africa, the intelligent, free coloured people, in order, with greater impunity, to bind the yoke of slavery more firmly on the necks of their brethren.' As well as domestic opinion, the press drew on various sources which presented the free black American perspective on the race issue and colonization in the United States. Here the sectional implications (or lack thereof) of the ACS and British concerns about American anti-slavery became clear with one source commenting how 'in *every* [my emphasis] part of the United States, there is a broad and impassible line of demarcation between every man that has *one drop of African blood in his veins* [original emphasis].' In a positive review of the French

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Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw, or Scenes on the Mississippi (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1836). This abolitionist novel came after the British Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 and after this date Trollope's writing took on a more explicitly anti-slavery form. She even went as far as to add a preface to her original text of *Domestic Manners* in which she claimed that the narrative had failed to adequately criticize slavery, something she regretted, see 'Preface to the Fifth Edition, 27th April 1837.' Kathleen Burk has claimed that Trollope's text was the first abolitionist novel see Kathleen Burk, *Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the Beginning* (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 293; For a sample of the review, adverts etc of *Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw* see *Standard*, 30th April 1846, 2nd Sept 1836, 23rd Aug 1838, 25th July 1836; *Morning Post*, 3rd May 1836, 6th Sept 1836, 5th July 1836; *Caledonian Mercury*, 30th May 1836, 15th Sept 1836, 26th Jan 1837; *Morning Chronicle*, 22nd June 1836, 10th Jan 1837; *London Dispatch and People's Political and Social Reformer*, 8th Oct 1836.

aristocrat Achille Murat's *The Letters of Achille Murat* in 1833, the *Morning Chronicle* not only thoroughly recommended the text to its readers for its 'depth of observations,' and 'perfect freedom from prejudice,' but quoted the work at length including a section in which it was suggested that, on the whole, the North was content with colonization schemes and that 'the hypocritical sympathy which a certain class of men in the North affect for our slaves will not hasten their emancipation by a single day.' These debates about slavery and abolition in the context of the United States all went ahead against the backdrop of British anti-slavery discussions. Crucially, however, even those who rabidly attacked slavery in its southern form did not necessarily emphasize the role of northerners in combating the labour system. On the contrary, most Americans in the North were seen as equally complicit in slavery. An editorial in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1833 summed this up succinctly when it noted that 'the great majority of the white inhabitants and legislature seem all but insensible of the existence of this tremendous evil [slavery].'[23]

The lack of any clear anti-southern campaign in Britain in the mid to late 1830s, at the height of the British abolition movement, can be better understood if the difference between the act of slave-holding and the endorsement of slavery is recognized. Certainly southerners held men, women and children in bondage, but, as was evident in Trollope's work, the British rarely saw the northern states as committed to abolition and the region was actively criticized for its hypocrisy when it came to the treatment of free blacks. In March 1832 for instance, the *Leicester Chronicle or Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser* drew its readers attention to the fact that 'in New York, any barber who should shave or dress a *black man* [original emphasis] would be sure to lose the custom of all white ones.' This same anecdote was

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[23] For a biography of Trollope see Johanna Johnston *The Life, Manners and Travels of Fanny Trollope: A Biography* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1978); For her American experiences see Jesper Gulddal 'The most hateful land: Romanticism and the birth of modern anti-Americanism', *Journal of European Studies*, (2009), 39, ,419-454; Elsie B. Michie 'Morbidity in Fairyland: Frances Trollope, Charles Dickens, and the Rhetoric of Abolition' *Partial Answers*, 9/2, (2011), 233-251; Tim Worth '"An Extraordinary Species of Tyranny"': Fanny Trollope and the Domestic Manners of the Americans', *Symbiosis*, (2001), 17-32; *Hull Packet & Humber Mercury,* 27nd November 1832; *Morning Chronicle*, 29th April 1833; *Sheffield Independent & Yorkshire and Derbyshire Advertiser*, 18th May 1833, 8th December 1832; quoted in *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 28th February 1833; *Examiner*, 2nd June 1833.

printed in the *Morning Chronicle*, a popular national liberal newspaper, while later in the same year an edition noted that 'in the free states, the coloured people are by no means exempt from the effects of the most unjustifiable prejudice.' The complex relationship between race and slavery in the United States even made an appearance in the British parliamentary debate about abolition in 1833. Both Robert Peel and William Cobbett presented the free black population in the North as proof of the lack of development of freed slaves and therefore an argument against British abolition based on the notion of inherently different capacities of the races. The extreme-Tory newspaper *John Bull* placed the national hypocrisy and racism of the US in some of the starkest terms in 1833 when it informed its readers that an American always viewed any amount of 'negro blood,' as tainting a person.[24] Although only the southern states actually held slaves, the image of the North was overwhelmingly that of a region with an aggressive racial prejudice running through its society.

This lack of a definite sectional division on the subject of slavery was similarly noted by William Lyon Mackenzie who published *Sketches of the United States and Canada* in 1833. Mackenzie was a Scottish born emigrant to Canada who went on to publish a liberal newspaper out of York (Toronto). His account of North America emphasized one of the most powerful negative images which would undermine the arguments made by partisans of the northern states during the Civil War (that they were fighting against slavery), namely that 'in all parts of the Union, and by all classes of white society, their ebony brethren are treated as a degraded caste, inferior by nature, whether learned or unlearned, rich or poor, virtuous or vicious.' Mackenzie also quoted a member of the ACS who noted 'that there are now 300,000 free persons of colour in the Union, where they are held to be a separate caste. . .there are more applications from coloured people desirous to go to Liberia than the Society's (ACS) funds can remove.' In terms of the issue of slavery in a sectional context, Mackenzie, and the

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[24] *Leicester Chronicle or Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 31st March 1832; *Morning Chronicle*, 24th August 1832; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 31st March 1833; *Morning Chronicle* 1st August 1833; *John Bull*, 23rd September 1833; Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press Volume One* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981), 37-38, 42, 49.

press writing around the time of emancipation in the British Empire, placed an emphasis on the lack of a coherent division between North and South in the sense that neither section had a committed abolition movement when compared to the British. Indeed, as historian Seymour Drescher has noted, the sort of abolitionism which flourished in Britain during the late 1820s and 1830s did not have an American equivalent until the 1850s. This was something British observers of the early 1830s were patently aware of.[25]

The growing canon of material which linked slavery with a more general American hypocrisy for which the whole nation was responsible was strengthened by a rejection among many mainstream intellectuals of what Charles Dickens would subsequently classify in his novel *Bleak House* (1853), as 'telescopic philanthropy.' This term essentially denoted the philanthropic impulse which drove people to advocate benevolent action in an international context while ignoring domestic problems such as poverty. Twenty years prior to Dickens's use of the term, the radical publisher William Cobbett had characterized American anti-slavery in somewhat similar language in his *Weekly Political Register* pointing out to his readers that 'the deluded people [have been] engaged in some many years in bawling about negro slavery, while a great part of them were in much greater slavery than the negroes themselves.' This notion of misplaced sympathy continued to have purchase, particularly among British political radicals of the 1830s including Joseph Rayner Stephens and the Chartist James 'Bronterre' O'Brien, for whom slavery on the American model was the lesser

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[25] William L. Mackenzie, *Sketches of Canada and the United States* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1833), 24, 209. For popular coverage of the work see *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 4th June 1833; *Morning Chronicle,* 20th June 1833; *Examiner,* 23rd June 1833. For the British abolition movement and its Victorian heritage see Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Anti-Slavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press: 2009); Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom*: *Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); Seymour Drescher, *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor Versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (London & Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1986); Blackett *Building an Anti-Slavery Wall*; David Brion Davis *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966); Holt *The Problem of Freedom*; Catherine Hall 'Troubling Memories: Nineteenth-Century Histories of the Slave Trade and Slavery,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 21 (Dec 2011), 147-169; Christopher Petley 'New Perspectives on Slavery and Emancipation in the British Caribbean,' *The Historical Journal* 54.3 (2011), 855-880; Howard Temperley 'Capitalism, Slavery and Ideology,' *Past and Present* 75 (1977), 94-118.

of two evils when compared to British urban labour. O'Brien's fellow Chartist Peter McDouall claimed he would prefer being a 'slave of the West Indies and possess all the physical benefits of real slavery, than be the white factory slave of England, and possess all the hardships of an unreal freedom.'[26] The early 1830s, therefore, although they saw the British abolish slavery, did not see the beginnings of a coherent image of the United States which divided the South from the North in terms of slavery versus freedom. From the editors of *John Bull* to Chartists, slavery and the hypocrisy of American equality were national problems, not peculiarly southern ones. At the same time, the immediatist argument for abolition came into question from those who emphasized other social problems from which abolition apparently provided a distraction, a mode of thinking which was made even more powerful when combined with the paternal image of the southern slaveholder, something becoming more prevalent in British discourse.

The difficult relationship between sectionalism, racism and slavery for British commentators in the 1830s was presented in its most complex form in the work of the novelist, abolitionist and early feminist, Harriet Martineau, who published a three volume travelogue in 1837 entitled *Society in America*. As a committed advocate of abolition Martineau was uncompromisingly negative about southern slavery. However she did not draw a distinct barrier along the Mason-Dixon Line in terms of culpability for slavery or attitudes to race. Her descriptions of slavery itself played on familiar tropes about the negative implications of the system which had been established in the works of abolitionist novelists, including Frances Trollope, who had published *The Life and Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw, or Scenes on the Mississippi* the previous year. These familiar tropes included the violence of the slave system which Martineau described in graphic terms as

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[26] Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1853), 24; *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 15th June 1833; Blackett, *Building an Anti-Slavery Wall*, 24. For an overview of the Chartist movement see Malcolm Chase, *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2007). For the McDouall quote and the split within Chartism over abolition see Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, 90; For a recent examination of the role of America in the Chartist movement see Michael J. Turner 'Chartism, Bronterre O'Brien and the "Luminous Political Example of America",' *History* 97.325 (Jan 2012), 43-69.

involving 'the burning alive, cutting the heart out, sticking it on the point of a knife,' and the perversion of sexual relations which rendered the wives of slave holders 'as much slaves as their negroes.'[27]

It would be unfair, despite her peerless anti-slavery credentials, to accuse Martineau of simply rehashing familiar images of US slavery. Her travel account contained considerably more analysis and depth of understanding than that. What was most original about Martineau's work was how she dealt with the slaves themselves. Like many other travellers she visited the slave quarters on a plantation and reported to her readers about 'their dingy, untidy houses, their cribs, the children crouching round the fire, the animal deportment of the grown-up.'[28] In addition, and again like many other travellers, she also identified instances of kindness and mercy shown by masters and mistresses towards slaves. It is on this point, however, that her views diverged from the interpretation of someone like Trollope, at least as they had been presented in *Domestic Manners*. Martineau criticised paternalism as 'mercy, made a substitute for justice,' and explained that 'I was heart-sick of being told of the ingratitude of slaves, and weary of explaining that indulgence can never atone for injury: that the extremest [sic] of pampering, for a life-time, is no equivalent for rights withheld.'[29] In her

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[27] Harriet Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 329, 307. For biographical details on Martineau see R.K Webb *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Heinemann, 1960); Betty Fladeland, *Abolitionists and Working-Class Problems in the Age of Industrialization* (London & Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1984), 74-92; Deborah A. Logan 'The Redemption of a Heretic: Harriet Martineau and Anglo-American Abolitionism', in Kathryn Kish Sklar & James Brewer Stewart (eds.), *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007), 242-265; see *Standard*, 14th Dec 1836, 3rd Nov 1837, 9th Feb 1838; *Essex Standard, and Colchester, Chelmsford, Maldon, Harwich, and General County Advertiser*, 16th Dec 1836; *Sheffield Independent, and Yorkshire and Derbyshire Advertiser*, 17th Dec 1836; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian Royal Yacht Club Gazette, Southampton Town and County Herald, Isle of Wight Journal, Winchester Chronicle, and General Reporter*, 17th Dec 1836; *Morning Post*, 14th June 1837, 15th Feb 1838; *Brighton Patriot and South of England Free Press*, 23rd May 1837; *Cheshire Observer and General Advertiser for Cheshire and North Wales*, 19th June 1858. Martineau's work was even reviewed in the American South with the novelist William Gilmore Simms roundly criticizing it in an 1837 article in the *Southern Literary Messenger* drawing his readers attention to the fact that Martineau had been highly critical of South Carolinian slavery without ever having visited the state see McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation*, 150-151.

[28] Harriet Martineau, *Society in America Volume One* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 302; Max Berger 'American Slavery as Seen by British Visitors,' 192.

[29] Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 313-317 & Harriet Martineau*, Society in America Volume Three* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 192.

rejection of the notion, expressed even by anti-slaveryites in Britain, that the paternal care given by masters to slaves was commendable, Martineau implicitly endorsed the idea of racial capacity by her rejection of the assumption that slaves required some sort of paternal care. The implicit idea of racial equality was something which marked Martineau out among her intellectual contemporaries even those with strong anti-slavery credentials. She tackled head-on, therefore, a pillar of southern slavery as deployed by its British apologists, its supposed paternalism. Not only did Martineau attack this within the context of southern slavery, she also rejected in abstract terms the whole idea of anybody exerting 'absolute power,' as the southern slaveholder did.[30] She also suggested in a *Spectator* article from the same year that in the North the free black population was beginning to excel socially and economically since it had been given the chance to do so. In addition, she presented the northern states in positive language with regards to their racial outlook, which if not unique to her, was not typical, and which even she did not consistently propound throughout her work.[31] In these explanations of American sectionalism Martineau verged towards a serious division between North and South in which the differences were those between a slave section and an abolitionist one yet as will be subsequently shown, even her division was not as clear cut as it might first have appeared to her readers.

Martineau assaulted slavery on a number of fronts and incorporated the political and economic viability of the system into her analysis in addition to her moral critique. This consequently added to the complexity of her own free/slave state dichotomy. From the point of view of economics Martineau explained to her readers that not only was the 'shoe-business of New York State . . . of itself larger and more valuable than the entire commerce of Georgia, - the largest and richest of the southern states,' but also that slave agriculture reduced fertility forcing slaveholders to be aggressively expansionist. It is from this premise that Martineau moved her argument into the political sphere. Working from the assumption

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[30] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 299-300.
[31] *Spectator*, 21st October 1837.

that slavery required an expansive foreign policy, just as the *Examiner* had in 1833,

Martineau tied the demands for the annexation of Texas to the interests of the slaveholder in

terms of the need for virgin soil and in a political sense to ensure a slaveholding majority in

the national government. For Martineau, therefore, slavery created a sectional division in the

political sphere as the interests of slave-holders drove an expansive foreign policy. Taken as

a whole, Martineau was very clear in tracing the ills of the United States back to slavery,

something which was most obvious in her discussion of the tariff. Among the British

population generally, and for Martineau specifically, a protective tariff was both a commercial

and moral wrong. She, however, explicitly rejected the association between free trade and

the South. She claimed (incorrectly) that the original impetus behind the tariff came from

slaveholders, who, only after its consequences were clear 'became infuriated against the

tariff, not only on the reasonable ground of its badness of principle, but on the allegation that

it was the cause of all the woes of the south, and the prosperity, diversified by woes, of the

north. It has always been the method of the slaveholders to lay the blame of their sufferings

upon everything but the real cause.'[32] More so than almost any other pre-war commentator,

Martineau was critical of slavery in the South. She used it as a catch-all explanation to

underpin any aspect of the South she interpreted negatively and failed to offer the mitigation

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[32] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 107; Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two* 41-42; Martineau, Society in America Volume Two, 75-76. For Texan Independence see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 658-671; David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon and the Mexican War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973), 64-88; Bourne, *The Balance of Power*, 75-119; T.R Fehrenbach, *Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 247-267. For the subsequent annexation of Texas see Frederick Merk*, Slavery and the Annexation of Texas* (New York: Knopf, 1972); Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: a Reinterpretation* (New York: Knopf, 1963); Steven E. Woodworth, *Manifest Destinies: America's Westward Expansion and the Road to the Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2011); Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 671-700; William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion Volume One: Secessionists at Bay 1776-1854* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 355-452; Charles S. Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819-1848* (Louisiana State University Press, 1948), 321-325; Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement,* 49-73; Stuart, *United States Expansionism*, 77-166; Sam W. Haynes 'Anglophobia and the Annexation of Texas: The Quest for National Security' in Sam W. Haynes & Christopher Morris (eds.), *Manifest Destiny and Empire American Antebellum Expansionism* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1997); Bourne, *The Balance of Power*, 120-169; Kinley J. Brauer 'The United States and British Imperial Expansion, 1815-1860,' *Diplomatic History* 12.1 (Jan 1988), 19-37; Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 238-240. For an extensive discussion of the tariff in transatlantic context see chapter three.

coda which, for other writers, differentiated southern slavery from slavery as an abstract institution.

Although Martineau's rendering of American slavery was liberally sprinkled with illustrations of the sectional nature of the institution, it would be incorrect to conclude that her readers were provided with a clear division between the slave-holding South and liberal abolitionist North. One of the most striking ideas which ran throughout *Society in America* was the notion of slavery as permeating and receiving implicit support from groups all over the nation. As evidence of this national slavery Martineau cited not only state fugitive slave laws but also the near passage of John C. Calhoun's so- called Gag Rule in 1836, which attempted to prohibit any discussion of abolition in Congress. This was a measure which received major backing in the North and only failed to pass at its third reading. It was not only within the legislative process that slavery was a national issue, Martineau also saw the close commercial relationship between the cities of Boston and Charleston as an explanatory factor for the riots in the former city thereby conflating both in the slave economy. Similarly Martineau drew on her own experience in New York to emphasize a related point, noting 'a public meeting on behalf of the Texan adventurers, where high-sounding common-places had been played off about patriotism, fighting for the dearest rights of man, and so forth.' Martineau had personally connected slavery and the annexation of Texas, so her association between this cause and New York was particularly significant. Within South, the term she chose for the attitudes of whites towards blacks was 'hatred,' and even if her descriptions of the attitudes of northern whites might not be given in such stark language, her description of anti-abolition mobs in Boston and Cincinnati, as well as Charleston and Vicksburg leave no room for doubt as to how she interpreted the attitudes of many whites in northern as well as southern cities.[33]

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[33] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One,* 53-54, 61; Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 165-177; Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two,* 79-80; Martineau, Society in America Volume Two, 152-153; Martineau, Society in America Volume One, 163-164. For the Gag Rule controversy in the United States see Freehling, *The Road to Disunion Volume One*, 308-352; Leonard L. Richards,

Martineau went even further, however, and described how northern attitudes towards free blacks were becoming *less* accommodating than before:

I was told by a Boston gentleman that the people of colour in the New England States were perfectly well treated; that the children were educated in schools provided for them; and that their fathers freely exercised the franchise. This gentleman certainly believed he was telling me the truth. That he, a busy citizen of Boston, should know no better, is a striking exemplification of the state of the case to me as a correct representation of the facts would have been. There are two causes for his mistake. He was not aware that the schools for the coloured children of New England are, unless they escape by insignificance, shut up or pulled down . . . He was not aware of a gentleman of colour and his family being locked out of their own hired pew in a church, because their white brethren will not worship by their side.[34]

All of these illustrations emphasize one coherent point about sectionalism in the United States. While the southern states, as those which actively held slaves, came in for most of Martineau's criticism, the North was also implicated in the continuance of slavery through its commercial and political acquiescence on the subject as demonstrated by the business connections between North and South and national support for the Gag. This narrative in one

The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination 1780-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Jonathan H. Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery and the Politics of Free Soil 1824-1854*, (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 18, 80-85; Robert P. Ludlum, 'The Antislavery "Gag-Rule": History and Argument,' *Journal of Negro History* 26.2 (April 1941), 203-243; Daniel Wirls, '"The Only Mode of Avoiding Everlasting Debate": The Overlooked Senate Gag Rule for Antislavery Petitions,' *Journal of the Early Republic* 27.1 (Spring 2007), 115-138; Scott R. Meinke 'Slavery, Partisanship, and Procedure in the U.S. House: The Gag Rule, 1836-1845,' *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32.1 (February 2007), 33-57; James M. McPherson, 'The Fight Against the Gag Rule: Joshua Leavitt and Antislavery Insurgency in the Whig Party, 1839-1842,' *Journal of Negro History* 48.3 (July 1963), 177-195; Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism,* 233-235. For a more general discussion of the treatment of free blacks in the North see James Oliver Horton & Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest Among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Leonard P. Curry *The Free Black in Urban America 1800-1850: The Shadow of a Dream* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981); Joel H. Silbey, *The Partisan Imperative: The Dynamics of American Politics Before the Civil War* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 9; Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Lorman Ratner, *Powder Keg: Northern Opposition to the Antislavery Movement* (New York & London: Basic Books, 1968). Although not mentioned by Martineau one of the most prominent British abolitionists, George Thompson, was physically attacked by white mobs in northern cities during the early 1830s in Augusta (Maine), Concord (New Hampshire) and both Lynn and Boston (Massachusetts) see Leonard L. Richards, *"Gentlemen of Property and Standing": Anti-Abolition Mobs in Jacksonian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 63-64; Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation*, 182.
[34] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 193-194.

form or another became the dominant one in Britain before the war and in it we can see how pro-Confederates could viably criticize the anti-slavery credentials of the Union during the subsequent conflict.

While North and South were both culpable for the continued existence of slavery, the abolition movement as it existed in the United States was, in Martineau's account, very different from its British counterpart in the sense that it was not a national mass movement. Indeed, it was composed of a core group which Martineau described as a 'moral aristocracy' whose task was incredibly difficult since 'the mass of common men and women [are] despising, and disliking and fearing, and keeping down the coloured race.' She gave something of a regional complexion to her moral aristocracy, describing New England as being a particular hub of American abolition. The division was, however, far from being a clear cut one between North and South. On the contrary, according to her there existed 'certain timid slave-holders of the south, who send money for the support of abolition publications, and an earnest blessing.'[35] For Martineau, therefore, the sectional division in relation to slavery was not a clear or strong one and even though southerners held men in bondage, the North, with the exception of a committed group of abolitionists (focused in New England), had passively accepted the situation.

While Martineau travelled the United States and examined the nation with the eyes of a committed abolitionist, one of her fellow novelists, and subsequent diplomat in Egypt, Persia and Switzerland, Charles Augustus Murray, did not arrive in the United States with the same assumptions as her. Consequently, although Murray noted the existence of the paternalistic connection in some form when he explained that he 'was rather gratified than surprised to witness the comparative comfort and good usage enjoyed by slaves,' he made this point without the coda critiquing paternalism which Martineau offered. Where he was in agreement was on the racial attitudes of those in the North. He told his readers that 'if they

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[35] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 198; Martineau, Society in America Volume Two, 127.

[slaves] by any accident acquire their liberty and wandered into New York, or other of the free states, the curse of colour still clings to them; and not only are the doors of liberal employment and society closed against them, but even in theatres, churches and other places of public resort, they find themselves separated.'[36] The Tory novelist Frederick Marryat, who also published a travelogue in 1839, echoed Murray in his description of 'the singular . . . degree of contempt and dislike in which the free blacks are held in all the free states' while he offered an incredulous description of seeing the body of a black man in the water after an accident on a wharf in New York and recounted being told by a disdainful New Yorker that 'it's only a nigger.'[37] Charles Augustus Murray's contentions on the slavery problem offer a useful point from which to tease out the complex British understanding of sectionalism and slavery. For Murray, the southern slave system was not as bad as he had been led to believe while the treatment of free blacks in the North was considerably worse. In a sense this should have collapsed the distinction down between the regions, however, the

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[36] Charles Augustus Murray, *Travels in North America During the Years 1834, 1835, & 1836 Including a Summer Residence with the Pawnee tribe of Indians, in the Remote Prairies of the Missouri and a Visit to Cuba and the Azore Islands Volume One* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1839), 120; Charles Augustus Murray, *Travels in North America During the Years 1834, 1835, & 1836 Including a Summer Residence with the Pawnee tribe of Indians, in the Remote Prairies of the Missouri and a Visit to Cuba and the Azore Islands Volume Two* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1839), 203. For the a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Murray's work see *Standard*, 10th June 1839, 10th July 1839; *Morning Chronicle*, 27th June 1839, 15th Feb 1854; *Morning Post*, 10th July 1839, 16th April 1840, 5th Nov 1840, 25th March 1841; *Preston Chronicle*, 3rd Aug 1839; *Champion and Weekly Herald*, 1st Sept 1839; *Leicester Chronicle: Or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 14th Sept 1839; *Belfast News-Letter*, 1st Oct 1839; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 12th Oct 1839; *Blackburn Standard*, 16th Oct 1839; *Hull Packet*, 15th Jan 1841; *Caledonian Mercury*, 15th April 1841; *Examiner*, 4th Feb 1854; *Daily News*, 18th Dec 1854; Frederick Marryat, *Diary in America with Remarks on its Institutions* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1839) 106. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc of Marryat's work see *Examiner*, 17th Nov 1839, 7th July 1839; *The Era*, 14th July 1839; *Morning Chronicle*, 16th Dec 1839, 26th Sept 1840; *Standard*, 21st June 1839, 6th Nov 1840; *Preston Chronicle*, 20th July 1839; *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, 19th July 1839, 16th Aug 1839; *Manchester Times and Gazette*, 20th July 1839; *Morning Post*, 22nd July 1839, 3rd Nov 1840; *Blackburn Standard*, 24th July 1839; *Bristol Mercury*, 3rd Aug 1839; *The Charter*, 28th July 1839; *London Dispatch and People's Political and Social Reformer*, 4th Aug 1839; *York Herald and General Advertiser*, 10th Aug 1839; *Ipswich Journal*, 17th Aug 1839; *Champion and Weekly Herald*, 25th Aug 1839, 19th Jan 1839; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 31st Aug 1839; *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 31st Aug 1839, 21st March 1840; *Caledonian Mercury*, 7th Oct 1839; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 19th Oct 1839; *Bradford Observer*, 2nd Jan 1840; *Hull Packet*, 3rd Jan 1840; *Belfast News-Letter*, 17th Nov 1840; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 13th Sept 1843; *Bradford Observer; and Halifax, Huddersfield, and Keighley Reporter*, 8th Feb 1844. For a biography of Marryat see David Hannay, *Life of Frederick Marryat* (London: Walter Scott, 1889).

[37] Some Americans in the North saw slavery in national as opposed to sectional terms, for example the *New York Tribune* noted that 'the Whole country is chargeable with the guilt of American slavery,' see Grant, *North Over South*, 48; Howard C. Perkins 'The Defense of Slavery in the Northern Press on the Eve of the Civil War,' *The Journal of Southern History* 9.4 (Nov 1943), 501-531.

nomenclature of free and slave states understandably endured. Murray was not alone in his observations and the significance of this wealth of pre-war literature was that it established a platform upon which, during the Civil War, pro-Southerners could build the idea of the paternalistic, benevolent planter, while at the same time removing the moral high ground from the Union's cause.

The 1840s: Thomas Brothers to Thomas Carlyle

The differences in political perspective of published writers from Martineau to Murray to Marryat are indicative of the extent to which attitudes towards America crossed political boundaries. These divisions are further demonstrated by the existence of an account of America published in 1840 by Thomas Brothers, a politically radical Briton who had been resident in the United States for fifteen years before becoming disillusioned with the nation. His experience of American free and slave labour lead him to write *The United States of North America as they are; Not as they are generally Described: Being a Cure for Radicalism*. Brother presented his book as a series of letters to prominent British figures and in one chapter entitled 'to D. O'Connell, M.P., Joseph Sturge, Esqrs., and the other English Abolitionists of Negro Slavery,' he gave considerable credence to the paternal myth and the idea that it contributed to a mitigated form of slavery which in turn led him to conclude that 'from what I have seen in America . . . to free those who were born slaves, and who were fortunate enough to have for their owner a kind man, would be to inflict a curse, rather than bestow a blessing.' Brothers also rejected the idea that the population of the northern states had any interest in the cause of abolition, claiming that in Philadelphia, 'if a man is only suspected of sympathizing with the blacks, whether free or slaves, such a man finds it necessary to plead, in the most earnest manner, for his life and property.' In terms of the treatment of the free blacks in this city Brothers contended that 'I have seen such mobs march in order down to that part of the city of Philadelphia, which is principally inhabited by coloured people, and deliberately set about to murder them, destroy their houses, break up

their furniture, steal their money, or other valuable things that the poor creatures might possess.'[38] This was certainly not the image of the North which the pro-Union propagandists of the Civil War era wanted to evoke when they described the free states.

The noted phrenologist George Combe, who published a three volume collection of his experiences in the United States in 1841 was yet another British observer who, in a manner similar to Charles Murray, maintained a theoretical abhorrence of the slave system and a desire for abolition, but still showed sympathy toward the South. When he discussed the topic of slavery with a former Virginian planter who had freed his own chattels, Combe found that they 'had not profited by their freedom; the incapacity for self-action and self-control which slavery en genders [sic], renders emancipated Africans, in general, unfit to struggle successfully with the difficulties which surround them.' Although an active advocate of what he called 'universal emancipation,' Combe concluded that the current social system was unable to support individual or small groups of freed slaves. He also drew some clear distinctions about the attitudes towards abolition in the different regions of the North noting that the 'Abolition of Negro Slavery excites much interest among the New Englanders,' while in contrast, in Pennsylvania, 'persons of colour resident in the State, although free, and assessed, and paying taxes, are denied the privilege of voting.'[39] The comparison between

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[38] Thomas Brothers, *The United States of North America as they are; Not as they are generally Described: Being a Cure for Radicalism* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1840), 196-198. For a sample of the review, adverts etc. of this work see *Morning Post*, 27th Jan 1840, 29th Jan 1840, 31st Jan 1840; *Standard*, 29th Jan 1840, 31st Jan 1840. For the use of America in radical political discourse and the process of disillusion see Turner 'Chartism, Bronterre O'Brien.' For anti-abolition mobs and racially motivated violence in the United States see Michael Feldberg, *The Turbulent Era: Riot & Disorder in Jacksonian America* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University, 1980); Richards, *"Gentlemen of Property and Standing"*; David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828-1861: Toward Civil War*, (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery & the Politics of Free Soil,* 21, 30.
[39] George Combe, *Notes on the United States of North America During a Phrenological Visit in 1838-9-40 Volume Three* (Edinburgh: Maclachlan, Stewart & Company, 1841), 337; George Combe, *Notes on the United States of North America During a Phrenological Visit in 1838-9-40 Volume One* (Edinburgh: Maclachlan, Stewart & Company, 1841), 52, 298. For a sample of the review, adverts etc. of Combe see *Examiner*, 6th Dec 1840, 17th Jan 1841. In its obituary for Combe the *Manchester Times* described his text as 'one of the most just and faithful estimates ever furnished by the British traveller' see *Manchester Times*, 21st Aug 1858. Quaker involvement in the American anti-slavery movement was in itself considerable see Hugh Barbour & J. William Frost, *The Quakers* (New York, Westport, London: Greenwood Press, 1988); Thomas E. Drake *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950); Thomas D. Hamm *The Transformation of American Quakerism, Orthodox*

New England and Pennsylvania here is not direct, yet it invoked a growing conception of the complexion of abolition in the United States. It was not a debate between North and South, it was national in scope, and only New England could claim any sort of engrained abolitionism, and even then the connection was complex.

While Combe had travelled to the United States as something of a tourist, the following year a book was published by the Quaker businessman and reformer Joseph Sturge. His work was evidently coloured by the political intentions he had in undertaking his transatlantic trip; the development of Anglo-American abolition. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Sturge had a great deal to say on the slave system in his published 1842 account, *A Visit to the United States in 1841*. For Sturge, the moral implications of slavery were clear in the slaves themselves. He explained for example that in the slave market, 'some of the younger ones were dancing to a fiddle, an affecting proof, in their situation of the degrading effect of slavery. There were, on the other hand, others who seemed a prey to silent dejection.' In addition to his descriptive passages, Sturge also reprinted a letter he had sent to President John Tyler in which he drew attention to the regularity with which the slave trade broke up families. These moral condemnations of slavery are essentially what would be expected from Sturge. At the same time, however, his discussion of its sectional nature did not display a clear division since he failed to draw a demarcation between the racial attitudes of those in the North and South. He reported, for example, that in the juvenile correction facility in Philadelphia 'the prejudice of colour intrudes, even here, no children of that class being admitted in the Refuge. Coloured delinquency is left to ripen into crime, with little interference' and while he did report that abolitionist activities had softened racist attitudes in the North, he highlighted the lack of an aggressive all-pervading pro-slavery among southerners just as Martineau, another abolitionist had. On this subject he ranged from the activities of the South Carolina born abolitionists Sarah and Angelina Grimkè, to anonymous planters and slave

Friends, 1800-1907 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Thomas D. Hamm, 'Hicksite Quakers and the Antebellum Nonresistance Movement,' *Church History* 63.4 (December 1994), 557-569.

dealers, none of who were happy with the system.[40] In Sturge's rendering, therefore, just as the North was no section of committed abolitionists, the South was not just a collection of rabid slaveholders: regional and personal variations undermined any simple moral division of this sort.

Another notable member of the British non-conformist community, William Rathbone VI, also travelled to the United States in the same year as Sturge and wrote back to his family with impressions which echo those of the Birmingham businessman. Rathbone, a member of an important Liverpool shipping family who had been involved in abolition at least since 1826, and who maintained a good relationship with the abolitionist and reformer John Bright, sent regular letters back to members of his family while on business trips to both the North and South. As part of the correspondence with his brother, Rathbone made very clear that he had no truck with slavery rejecting it as a 'blight over everything.' Despite an apparently clear viewpoint, Rathbone appeared to have little confidence in freedman in the event of immediate emancipation, a view which he expressed in racialized language and which contributed to him baulking at the notion of freed slaves gaining political rights. In his 1964 book *The Image of Africa*, the historian Philip Curtin outlined a number of changes in the intellectual climate which help to explain the sort of outlook typified by Rathbone. The growth of scientific theories of natural selection and their appropriation by the disciplines of ethnography, anthropology and history in the 1840s and 50s by figures such as Samuel George Morton, Dr

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[40] Joseph Sturge, *A Visit to the United States in 1841* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co. 1842), 77, 85, 71, 56, 23, 1-2, 31; Berger, 'American Slavery as seen by British', 192. Sturge was one of the most active members of the abolitionist community in Britain to publish a travelogue during this period, for his political life see Howard Temperley, *British Antislavery, 1833-1870* (London: Longman, 1972); Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*; Alex Tyrrell, *Joseph Sturge and the Moral Radical Party in Early Victorian Britain* (London: Christopher Helm, 1987); Fladeland, *Abolitionists and Working-Class Problems*, 49-73. The outpouring of British literature on the United States in the early 1840s is, in some senses remarkable, both in terms of the quantity of commentary published and the eminence of those writing. Two factors in all likelihood help to account for this. In the first place the popularity of the American topic encouraged writers to undertake the subject for commercial reasons, while at the same time this period was characterized by distinctly frosty transatlantic relations which kept the topic of the United States firmly in the public mind. For the diplomatic tensions of this period see Howard Jones & Donald A. Rakestraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny: Anglo-American Relations in the 1840s* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1997); Wilbur Devereux Jones *The American Problem in British Diplomacy, 1841-1861* (Macmillan, London: Macmillan, 1974).

Robert Knox and Thomas Arnold, allowed political progressives (such as William Rathbone) to embrace a worldview rejecting racial equality and which could be used by others justify southern slavery. In the following year Rathbone wrote another letter, this one from Richmond (Virginia) to his mother, informing her that the southerners themselves disliked slavery, a description very telling, especially coming from a British abolitionist. Rathbone's case provides a useful illustration of the simple fact that the South was not necessarily understood in Britain as a region defined solely by slavery.[41]

In the same year that Rathbone sent his private thoughts back to his family in Britain, another notable British public figure published an account of the United States based on an extensive trip across the nation. The figure in question here was James Silk Buckingham, a novelist and reforming MP for Sheffield. Buckingham was one of the most significant British commentators on the pre-war United States, producing five volumes split over two books, *America* and *The Slaves States*. Buckingham himself was an abolitionist and his reputation apparently preceded him given the fact that he received a letter while in Washington on the 5th March 1838 which noted that 'Mr. Buckingham is an abolitionist; and if so, he will not meet with a good reception. . .even a Northern man could not defend abolition sentiment south of Pennsylvania, without hazarding personal safety.' Something of a sectional division can be seen in this missive which Buckingham chose to reprint, yet he did not see anything like a clear distinction on the slavery issue while in the United States. He, for example, noted a conversation with a group of Quakers in Saratoga (New York) who informed him that 'besides the southern planters, who might be expected to speak ill of the abolitionists, and the rich merchants of New York and Philadelphia, who fancy they have a pecuniary interest in

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[41] Draft Petition for Abolition, 1826 [RP] RPV3.2; for mentions of John Bright see Mary Thomas to William Rathbone 31st May 1847, [RP] RPV3.32; William Rathbone V to William Rathbone VI, 22nd August 1848, [RP] RPV3.35; William Rathbone VI to Sam Rathbone, 13th May 1841, [RP] RPVIX.3.54A; William Rathbone VI to Elizabeth Rathbone, 1st June 1842, [RP] RPVIX.3.67. For more on the Rathbone family see Fladeland, *Abolitionists and Working-Class Problems*, 17-48. For the so-called Manchester School liberals of which both John Bright and Richard Cobden were leading lights and for a discussion of the political thought of both see Miles Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism 1847-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 47-60. For a biography of Bright see Keith Robbins, *John Bright* (London, Boston & Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979); Curtin, *The Image of Africa.*

speaking well of the South, and excusing, if not justifying slavery, because their connexions in that quarter are too profitable to be endangered by appearing to side with the abolitionists; there were many clergymen here from different parts of the Union, who were as free in expressing their disapprobation of the course of the abolitionists, as any Southern person could be.' The only region to which Buckingham attached anything like particularly strong sympathy for abolition was New England which had, according to him, a pronounced anti-slavery heritage. He took care to note, for example, that in Massachusetts 'negroes are not only free, but enjoy the electoral suffrage, and take their part, and give their votes, in local and general elections, with all the freedom and independence of their white fellow citizens.' Buckingham concluded that 'it is hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that in this State [Massachusetts], the public sentiment in favour of abolition should increase, both in intensity and extent.'[42]

While abolitionism may have been growing in Massachusetts the dominant impression given by Buckingham of both the attitudes of northerners to abolition and the treatment of free blacks in the northern section was an extremely negative one. In New York, Buckingham did note the existence of 'a large though not an influential body of abolitionists,' yet he was also in the city at the same time that the abolitionist Reverend Elijah P. Lovejoy had been killed by a mob in Illinois. He pointed out that 'the great majority of the Whig papers, and some even of the Democratic, in New York and elsewhere, condemned the pertinacity and obstinacy, as they called it, of Mr. Lovejoy.' Buckingham also gave an account of an open air meeting held at Vauxhall Gardens in New York 'to express sympathy with the Canadian revolutionists' in

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[42] James Silk Buckingham, *America, Historical, Statistic and Descriptive Volume One* (London: Fisher & Son 1841), 279-280; James Silk Buckingham, *America, Historical, Statistic and Descriptive Volume Two* (London: Fisher & Son, 1841), 461-462; James Silk Buckingham, *America, Historical, Statistic and Descriptive Volume Three,* 291-292, 415-417. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Buckingham see *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, 14th April 1841, 24th April 1841; *Morning Post*, 27th April 1841; *Examiner*, 23rd May 1841; *Leeds Mercury*, 23rd Oct 1841, 6th Nov 1841; *Manchester Times and Gazette*, 20th Oct 1841, 6th Nov 1841; *York Herald, and General Advertiser*, 18th Dec 1841, 24th Dec 1841; *Bradford Observer; and Halifax, Huddersfield, and Keighley Reporter*, 12th May 1842; *Newcastle Courant*, 13th Jan 1843; *Daily News*, 21st May 1846, 19th May 1846; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 21st May 1842. For a biography of Buckingham see Ralph E. Turner, *James Silk Buckingham, 1786-1855: A Social Biography* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1934).

December 1837. He noted how, after one of the speakers, one Dr. Callaghan, had mentioned the name of the prominent politician Daniel O'Connell 'a scene of great uproar ensued, with cries of "No O'Connell! No O'Connell! he's an abolitionist!" "And so," exclaimed Mr. Callaghan, "am I an abolitionist;" upon which the uproar was increased, and mingled with cries of "Turn him out! Turn him out!".' This rejection of abolition as a political aim in New York was twinned with a rejection of social equality even for free blacks something Buckingham noted after visiting a house for juvenile delinquents and finding that 'the coloured are separated from the white delinquents; for even among criminals, this distinction of colour is rigidly observed.'[43]

New York was, however, not alone in the North in this regard. Buckingham described how in Philadelphia a group of abolitionists had been unable to procure a hall for a meeting simply because of the cause they advocated. Even in the case of Boston, he observed that 'the agitation at Boston about the same period as this outbreak at Philadelphia, originated in the same spirit of hatred to the abolitionists' with the issue at stake in this instance being a new church which proposed 'no formal separation of the white and coloured worshippers.' Buckingham was certainly aware of the centrality of slavery in a sectional sense and noted the significance of the institution to the South. He drew particular attention to the use of the 'positive good' thesis by southern politicians highlighting a speech by John C. Calhoun against a bill to abolish slavery in which the South Carolinian 'introduced a long series of resolutions, which embraced the whole subject of slavery, defending it as an institution favourable to the welfare of the country and the people it embraced.' Buckingham similarly pointed to a resolution by the Georgia Conference of the Methodist-Episcopal church which posited that 'slavery, as it exists in the United States, is not a moral evil.' Yet even with these

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[43] Buckingham, *America Volume One*, 78-81, 88-89, 149. For more on Elijah Lovejoy see Merton L. Dillon, *Elijah P. Lovejoy: Abolitionist Editor* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1961); Feldberg, *The Turbulent Era,* 47-49; Richards, *"Gentlemen of Property and Standing"*; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 433-434; Michael Kent Curtis, 'The 1837 Killing of Elijah Lovejoy by an Anti-Abolition Mob: Free Speech, Mobs, Republican Government, and the Privileges of American Citizens,' *UCLA Law Review* 44 (1997), 1109-1185. For Daniel O'Connell's relationship with slavery see Christine Kinealy, *Daniel O'Connell and the Anti-Slavery Movement* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010).

examples of southern slavery Buckingham drew his readers' attention to the system, depicting it not merely as a southern phenomenon, but an institution which had supporters across the whole nation. This was something which Buckingham saw as demonstrated by, among other things, 'the [anti] abolition riots of New York and Boston, and the still more recent burning of the Pennsylvania Hall at Philadelphia.'[44] The northern states were clearly no bastion of abolition to the pre-war British even though certain Union propagandists would attempt (with limited success) to claim an anti-slavery heritage for northerners during the conflict.

The ideas which Buckingham subsequently put forward in his second book on the United States, *The Slave States of America*, are essentially no different from those in *America*. However, they provide a greater depth of analysis since this work was dedicated solely to examining the South. Buckingham made it clear in both the dedication and preface to his work the significance he attached to abolition in Britain and his own point of view on the topic. He recognized 'the moral influence of England,' and in personal terms stated that he expected 'my full share of censure from a large section, at least, of the people of America, for daring to speak, as truth compels me to do, of the wretched condition of the great body of the African race throughout the South, and of the reckless indifference to human life, and human obligations of every kind, which the very system of slavery engenders in nearly all the white population.'[45] It is clear from these sentiments that Buckingham saw himself as an anti-slavery advocate and he believed himself to be no isolated eccentric among educated Britons in this regard.

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[44] Buckingham, *America Volume Two*, 92-94, 208, 83-84, 87; Buckingham, *America Volume Three,* 55-56. For the 'positive good' argument and the apologetics of proslavery southerners see Adam L. Tate, *Conservatism and Southern Intellectuals 1789-1861: Liberty, Tradition and the Good Society* (Columbia & London: University of Missouri Press, 2005), 136-245; Michael Perman, *The Southern Political Tradition*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012), 27-36; O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order*, *passim*; Rothman, 'Elizabeth Fox-Genovese', 563-569.
[45] J.S Buckingham, *The Slave States of America Volume One* (London: Fisher, Son & Co, 1842), Dedication & Preface.

Considering the manner in which Buckingham began his account of the South it is unsurprising that *The Slave States of America* was, at points at least, a catalogue of the evils of southern slavery. Buckingham, however, as seems almost customary among travellers, did note a level of mitigation in the slave system explaining that he did not doubt 'for a moment that there are many kind masters and mistresses, who do much to make the condition of their slaves easy and tolerable,' yet he maintained that 'the great mass of them are not treated so well as many of the brute creation.' Buckingham's descriptions of slavery also included regional variations across the South itself. In Augusta (Georgia), for instance, he reported that 'the inhabitants are generally . . . more kind in the treatment of their slaves, and less apprehensive of danger from insurrection than in Carolina.' Similarly he described in detail the situation in Richmond (Virginia) on a Sunday during which 'the slaves and servants are all at liberty after dinner, they move about in every public thoroughfare, and are generally more gaily dressed than the whites.' During his time in New Orleans, Buckingham provided a detailed account of both the condition of the slaves in the city and the attitude of whites towards them. He explained that 'some of the laws of Louisiana respecting slaves, are also humane and considerate,' as well as contending that 'there are many cases to make the situation of the domestic slave in New Orleans happier than in some other States.' He even compared the conditions of the slave population of the city favourably to Europe noting that 'the condition of the slaves is far from being miserable; they are upon the whole as well fed, better clad, and have much more leisure and less severe labour than the Irish peasant or the English hand-loom weaver.' Not only this but in comparison to the rest of the United States, New Orleans was presented as treating its black population in quite positive terms as he noted how 'the negro and coloured population are here, as everywhere else throughout the United States, the proscribed class. On the whole, however, they are better off at New Orleans than in the cities of the North.'[46]

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[46] Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume One*, 64-65, 168, 355-357, 376; Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume Two*, 427.

For all of these mitigating factors, and in a manner typical of the British commentator on southern slavery, Buckingham was galled by the 'positive good' defence of slavery which he found some southerners using. In one instance he described the defence provided by a group of slave holders of the system after they had heard his wife sigh as she watched a gang of slaves heading to work. These southerners described the slaves as 'among the happiest of human beings', a claim which Buckingham made very clear that he doubted. This 'positive good' argument in favour of slavery was combined in the South by an active campaign to discourage abolition and as evidence of these twin pillars of the section Buckingham quoted the work of the southern academic Thomas Cooper who had offered a Biblical defence for slavery. Buckingham further expanded on the subject of the 'positive good' theory by noting an oration given at the South Carolina Society for the Advancement of Learning in December 1838 during which slavery had been described as a 'cherished institution.' Later on his travels through Charleston and then in Georgia, he found that the topic of slavery was essentially a taboo one, particularly for a foreigner to broach and described the 'violence of the measures taken against the few who from time to time venture to express themselves in favour of Abolition.' Buckingham's overall conclusion about southern abolition, therefore, was that 'the prejudices of the whites all over the South, appear to me to be so rooted and so strong against even entertaining any proposition on the subject of emancipation, that one might as well attempt to still the tempest by reason, as to move them even to discuss the question. . .all support each other in the assurance that "the slaves are far better off than the working population of Europe," and all contend "that they are so happy that they would not have their freedom, if offered to them".'[47]

James Silk Buckingham was clearly no pro-southerner and on the topic of slavery in particular he was, at times within both *America* and *The Slave States,* a merciless critic of the institution in a manner reminiscent of Harriet Martineau. Yet, even he failed to create an

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[47] Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume Two*, 7-8, 280; Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume One*, 58, 61, 131, 183, 570-571. For Thomas Cooper see O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order*, passim.

absolute division between North and South. The southern section held slaves while the North did not, and much to his disgust some eminent southerners claimed that this was a preferable social arrangement, yet the North was no abolitionist paradise. The section had a population which turned a blind eye to the institution and in some cases actively prevented abolition.

The image of a distinct lack of abolitionist sentiment in the northern states was similarly noted by one of the most popular of the British commentators on the United States, the novelist Charles Dickens. In 1842 Dickens published *American Notes for General Circulation,* a searing attack on the United States, but the most striking of his observations on the subject of slavery were found in his later novel *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. This novel was published in full in 1844 and the narrative contained a section set in the United States which saw Martin Chuzzlewit and his servant Mark Tapley move from New York to the western settlement of Eden (based on Dickens own observations of Cairo, Illinois) in an attempt to begin a new life, before becoming wholly disillusioned with the nation and returning to Britain. While not one of Dickens's best-sellers *Martin Chuzzlewit* still averaged sales of 23,000 parts per month when it was published. Within the novel Dickens made clear that he saw slavery as an example American national hypocrisy, with the key term here being *national*, as opposed to sectional. In New York, the only sympathetic character which the British travellers, Martin and Mark, meet is Mr. Bevan, the sole American in possession of moral scruples within the whole novel. Bevan is a Bostonian visiting New York City on business and cautions Martin about expecting New York to be particularly tolerant on race and emancipation despite it being a free state. The lack of toleration in New York is made evident after a meeting between Martin and the Norris family, about whom it 'appeared that all the [family] were abolitionists.' After finding this fact out Martin 'expressed his sympathy with the oppressed and wretched blacks,' but found the Norris family less than receptive to this view, which they roundly derided since, according to Mr. Norris 'there is a

natural antipathy between the races.'[48] Dickens provides another example of a vocal and popular liberal who rejected the image of the United States as neatly sectionally divided by slavery alone. One section may have held men in bondage but the other offered nothing in the way of coherent resistance to the peculiar institution.

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[48] Charles Dickens, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (1997 repr. London: Wordsworth Classics, 1844), 276-279, 281. Many biographies of Dickens exist however two of the more detailed and valuable are Michael Slater *Charles Dickens* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009); Peter Ackroyd, *Dickens* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson 1990). See also Joseph Gold *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), For a study of Dickens's relationship with the United States see Jerome Meckier, *Innocent Abroad: Charles Dickens's American Engagements* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990). Dickens was already well read in Anglo-American travel literature prior to leaving for the United States, attesting to the significance of the genre in transatlantic understanding see Amanda Claybaugh 'Toward a New Transatlanticism: Dickens in the United States,' *Victorian Studies* 48.3 (Spring 2006), 439-460; Sylvere Monod, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (London, George Allen & Unwin, 1985), 11; Adrian, 'Dickens on American Slavery'; Harry Stone 'Dickens' Use of His American Experiences in Martin Chuzzlewit,' *PMLA* 72.3 (June 1957), 464-478; Anny Sadrin, (ed.)*, Dickens, Europe and the New Worlds* (London; Macmillan Press, 1999); Larisa T. Castillo 'Natural Authority in Charles Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit and the Copyright Act of 1842,' *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 62.4 (March 2008); Stuart Curran, 'The Lost Paradise of Martin Chuzzlewit,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 25.1 (June 1970), 51-67; Juliet John '"A body without a head": The Idea of Mass Culture in Dicken's American Notes (1842),' *Journal of Victorian Culture* 12.2 (Autumn 2007), 173-202; Chris Louttit 'Lowell Revisited: Dickens and the Working Girl,' *Dickens Quarterly* 24.1 (May 2007); Yael Maurer '"Rubbing "that wonderful lamp within": Reading Martin Chuzzlewit,' *Dickens Quarterly* 28.2 (June 2011). For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. for *Martin Chuzzlewit* see *Examiner*, 3rd Dec 1842, 26th Oct 1844, 7th May 1853, 15th Dec 1860; *Morning Post*, 10th Jan 1844, 10th July 1844, 16th May 1857, 4th Jan 1843, 22nd July 1857; *Derby Mercury*, 14th Dec 1842, 31st March 1847; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 17th Dec 1842, 18th Feb 1843, 14th June 1851; *Bury and Norwich Post and East Anglian*, 21st Dec 1842; *Caledonian Mercury*, 29th Dec 1842, 21st Aug 1843, 12th June 1851; *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser*, 29th Dec 1842, 8th Aug 1844; 29th May 1851; *Preston Chronicle*, 31st Dec 1842; *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 31st Dec 1842, 6th July 1844, 2nd Sept 1843, 6th July 1844, 22nd Jan 1848; *Standard*, 2nd Jan 1843, 12th Aug 1843, 4th April 1863; *Morning Chronicle*, 12th Jan 1743, 15th Sept 1847, 8th Jan 1859; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 19th Jan 1843, 28th Dec 1843, 11th July 1844, 18th March 1847; *Leeds Mercury*, 28th Jan 1843; *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, 24th Feb 1843; *Hull Packet & East Riding Times*, 7th April 1843, 23rd March 1849; *Newcastle Courant*, 9th June 1843; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 27th July 1843, 26th March 1847; *The Era*, 13th Aug 1843; *Lancaster Gazette and General Advertiser, for Lancashire, Westmorland*, 2nd Sept 1843, 6th April 1844; *Manchester Times and Gazette*, 11th Nov 1843, 6th July 1844, 19th March 1847; *Liverpool Mercury*, 24th Nov 1843; *Bradford Observer; and Halifax, Huddersfield and Keighley Reporter*, 7th Dec 1843; *The York Herald, and General Advertiser*, 16th Dec 1843, 13th March 1843, 20th March 1847; *Dundee Courier*, 13th Feb 1844, 16th July 1844, 4th June 1851; *Ipswich Journal*, 2nd March 1844, 6th July 1844, 6th Nov 1852; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 6th July 1844; *Bristol Mercury*, 13th March 1847, 18th May 1850; *Belfast News-Letter*, 16th March 1847; *Aberdeen Journal*, 21st June 1848; *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 12th April 1851, 18th Sept 1852; *Daily News*, 3rd Nov 1852, 7th Fen 1862; *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 12th Nov 1852; *Birmingham Daily Post*, 3rd May 1858, 22nd June 1859, 12th July 1864; *Glasgow Herald*, 27th Oct 1862; Dickens's novel was even adapted into a stage play see *Morning Post*, 8th July 1844, 9th July 1844, 30th July 1844, 2nd Aug 1844; *Morning Chronicle*, 31st July 1844, 3rd Aug 1844; *The Era*, 14th July 1844; *Ipswich Journal*, 13th April 1844. Dickens's decision to emphasize that Mr. Bevan was a New Englander was not an incidental one. He found the New England states to be the most to his taste while in the United States see Arnold Whitridge 'Dickens and Thackeray in America,' *New York Historical Society Quarterly* 52 (1978), 219-237, 223-224.

This lack of uniformity on the part of the northern population when it came to the topic of slavery was emphasized once again in the 1844 American travelogue of the political reformer John Robert Godley. Godley observed that 'the mobs in the northern states are very much divided upon this subject [abolition], but the majority (including all the Irish) are in most places anti-abolitionist, entirely from hatred to the blacks, and fear lest abolition in the South might be followed by a large immigration of negroes to the North.' New England, however, in Godley's work had a genuine commitment to ending slavery. As he noted: 'I had no idea of the strength of feeling which exists upon this subject in New England; the number of those who even go to the length of advocating a dissolution of the Union upon this ground is considerable, and among the higher classes of Whigs I have hardly met one man who does not express himself upon the subject more strongly than people are accustomed to in England.' The problem that Godley identified was that 'the more the abolitionists exert themselves to disseminate their principles, the farther "the Southrons" commit themselves in a contrary direction.' As an illustration of this Godley pointed to 'Mr. Calhoun, who may be called the head and representative of the slave-holders, and who will be on the "first favourites" for the next presidency' noting that he had 'gone the length of saying lately that he considered slavery as a "glorious institution, the corner-stone of a free and democratic government, and that he hoped and prayed it might endure forever".' Godley contended that this speech 'would not have been ventured upon twenty years ago' and explained to his readers that 'I must repeat that, considering the ground which has been taken, and the means which have been employed by the abolitionists, I neither wonder at nor blame the jealousy and soreness felt by the South upon this subject: it is with them a question, not simply of property, but of life and death.'[49]

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[49] John Robert Godley, *Letters from America Volume Two* (London: John Murray, 1844), 70, 67-68, 72-75. Godley emphasized the significance of the travelogue genre in the preface. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Godley see *Glasgow Herald*, 1st April 1844, 8th April 1844, 26th April 1844; *Bradford Observer; and Halifax, Huddersfield, and Keighley Reporter*, 11th April 1844, 9th May 1844, 4th July 1844; *Leeds Mercury*, 13th April 1844; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 27th April 1844; *Leicester Chronicle: or Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 4th May 1833; *Morning Post*, 17th May 1844, 1st July 1844; *Aberdeen Journal*, 22nd May 1844; *Standard*, 29th June 1844; *Northern Star*

After arriving in the South later in his travels, Godley reaffirmed his anti-slavery views and reported that he had been 'disappointed at the physical condition of the negroes' noting that 'both in Richmond and in the country they presented what would, not only amongst the white American peasantry, but anywhere else, be called a very miserable appearance. . .their clothing and lodging appear to me no better than one finds among the poorest labourers in the worst parts of Europe.' Godley expanded further on the topic and undermined one of the pillars of the 'positive good' argument by stating that he was 'inclined, too, to judge very unfavourably of their moral and religious condition. . .they are seldom married by a priest, nor do many of them appear to attach any idea of sacredness or even permanence to the connexion. When a man is tired of a woman he leaves her.' Despite these deeply negative features, Godley also observed that 'those slaves who are brought up as domestic servants are much better off, and many of them become greatly attached to their masters, who, of course, instruct them in their moral and religious duties.' Looking back on his period in the South, Godley concluded that 'on the whole, I came away decidedly more impressed with a conviction of the evils of slavery than when I entered the slave-states.'[50]

Despite this negative experience it was the gradual abolition doctrine of Henry Clay, as opposed to the immediatist cause, which grabbed Godley's attention. He noted that Clay 'acknowledges that slavery is a great evil, that a country can hardly prosper under its influence, and that interest as well as morality would counsel its extinction, if a practicable and safe method for effecting it could be discovered. He maintains, however, that deportation and abolition must go hand in hand.' Godley concluded his thoughts on the slavery topic with a quote from Thomas Jefferson who 'said, many years ago, "nothing is more clearly written in the book of destiny than the emancipation of the blacks," it may be so, but at present it appears as far off as when he spoke; nor do I see any prospect of it, except through the

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and *Leeds General Advertiser*, 13th July 1844; *Dundee Courier*, 3rd Sept 1844. For more on the Irish in the North see chapter two.
[50] Godley, *Letters from America Volume Two*, 204-209.

agency of foreign invasion, or a dissolution of the Union.'[51] Godley's analysis of American slavery in a sectional context provides yet more evidence of the nuances in British discourse on the topic. Godley was explicitly anti-slavery and had little positive to say about the South, yet he saw a level of indifference on the topic among northerners, and (crucially in hindsight) speculated that the division of the Union offered the best chance for abolition, an argument vocally utilized by anti-slavery supporters of the Confederacy in Britain during the Civil War.

While making fewer of the wholesale criticisms of southern slavery which characterized Godley's work another traveller of the same era, the geologist and diplomatist G.W Featherstonhaugh, made observations which were not entirely different to those of Godley in his 1844 text *Excursions Through the Slave States*. The first thing to be clear about are the explicit racial underpinnings of Featherstonhaugh's thinking (they are implicit in many other works by Britons of this period) which are typified by his assertion that 'the poor negro slave is naturally a cheerful, laughing animal, and even when driven through the wilderness in chains, if he is well fed and kindly treated, is seldom melancholy . . . it is only when he is ill-treated and roused to desperation, that his vindictive and savage nature breaks out.' In a conversation with a southern slaveholder which Featherstonhaugh recounted at length he was informed that 'the working of the institution of slavery (so he dignified this bondage) was not understood outside of the slave states; that it elevated the character of the master. . .that the dignity of character which had belonged to the southern gentlemen, from Washington down to the present times, was unknown to the men of the northern states.' This same southerner informed him that 'the slaves were not an unhappy race of men; they were well fed, well clothed; and if there has been a necessity for it in the late dispute with the United States government, the slaves would have shown to a man their well-known fidelity to their masters.' Featherstonhaugh was, however, sceptical of these contentions, just as James Silk Buckingham had been, since he 'was struck with this justification of slavery, which, notwithstanding its excluding humanity, benevolence, and justice from the list of our duties to

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[51] Ibid., 211-212, 216.

others, would seem to qualify white men in a very high degree for the enjoyment of the compulsory labour of men of a different colour.'[52]

In his report of the southern commitment to slavery, however, Featherstonhaugh also thought he saw a strong anti-slavery impulse within the South since 'all Christian men must unite in the wish that slavery was extinguished in every part of the world, and from my personal knowledge of the sentiments of many of the leading gentlemen in the Southern States, I am persuaded that they look to the ultimate abolition of slavery with satisfaction.' He specifically discussed the views of former President James Madison who 'has told me more than once that he could not die in peace if he believed that so great a disgrace to his country was not to be blotted out some day or other.' Featherstonhaugh further reported that Madison 'once informed me that he had assembled all his slaves- and they were numerous- and offered to manumit them immediately; but they instantly declined it, alleging that they had been born on his estate, had always been provided for by him with raiment and food, in sickness and in health, and if they were made free they would have no home to go to, and no friend to protect and care for them. They preferred, therefore, to live and die as his slaves, who had always been a kind master to them.' Featherstonhaugh decided that Madison's position was indicative 'no doubt . . . [of] the situation of many humane right-thinking proprietors in the Southern States' and accused 'the Abolitionists of the Free States, when they denounce slavery and call for its immediate abolition,' of ignoring 'the conditions upon which alone it could be effected.' He maintained that on the sectional relationship between abolition and slavery, 'the uncompromising obloquy which has been cast at the Southern planters, by their too scrupulous adversaries, is therefore not deserved by them; and it is but fair to consider them as only indirectly responsible for such scenes as arise out of the

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[52] G.W Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slaves States, from Washington on the Potomac to the Frontier of Mexico; With Sketches of Popular Manners and Geological Notices Volume One* (London: John Murray, 1844), 123; G.W Featherstonehaugh, *Excursion Through the Slaves States, from Washington on the Potomac to the Frontier of Mexico; With Sketches of Popular Manners and Geological Notices Volume Two* (London: John Murray, 1844), 342-344. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Featherstonhaugh's account see *Examiner,* 25th May 1844, 1st June 1844, 16th Nov 1844; *Standard,* 3rd June 1844; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 18th July 1844; *Blackburn Standard*, 5th March 1845.

revolting human traffic.'[53] Featherstonhaugh, as a consequence of spending his time in the South, was concerned primarily with the system of slavery and the attitudes of southerners towards it, as opposed to northern abolitionism, and, building on the premise of a racial hierarchy, contended that slavery in the South played a necessary socio-economic role. He also maintained that southerners themselves wished for its eventual abolition rejecting the notion that the South united behind a 'positive good' view of slavery and claiming that most of the residents of the section sincerely wanted to rid themselves of the system.

While Featherstonhaugh ploughed the furrow which contended that slavery in the South was not as bad as most Britons expected it to be, his fellow geologist Sir Charles Lyell discussed another of the now well-known aspects of sectionalism and slavery in his 1845 work, *Travels in North America*. Within his book Lyell highlighted the hypocrisy of the North, which nominally offered equality to free blacks since 'in many states, the free blacks have votes, and exert privileges at elections,' but which undermined it in practice: 'there is not an instance of a single man of colour, although eligible by law, having been chosen a member of any state legislature.' In addition to this, Lyell highlighted a specific instance of a black businessman in Philadelphia, whose two sons had been unable to speak at a public meeting on a topic of direct relevance to the family trade. Despite these criticisms, Lyell was clearly not an advocate of immediate abolition. He raised doubts, referring to the British experience of emancipation in the West Indies, about any change in the status of former slaves in the short term. What is most telling, in terms of portrayals of the American sections in Britain, however, was his comparison between the racial attitudes of whites in the North and South. Not only were free blacks in the North political and economically at a disadvantage, they were also social pariahs and, at least for Lyell, it was actually in the South that whites were more comfortable interacting with blacks on a regular basis.[54] For this eminent and influential

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[53] Featherstonhaugh, *Excursions Through the Slave States, Volume One*, 126-128.
[54] Sir Charles Lyell, *Travels in North America; with Geological Observations on the United States, Canada and Nova Scotia Volume One* (London: John Murray, 1845), 208-213. For more on Lyell discussing American slavery see Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, 25-26. For a sample of the review,

scientist, as was the case for so many other commentators from Britain, when they saw the sectional side of slavery and race, the difference between North and South did not lend itself to a simple division into good and evil. In many ways the North was no better than the South, and while the latter might preach slavery and the former equality, in British eyes, northern hypocrisy undermined its claims to moral superiority over the slave South. This was a powerful observation which could be used to negatively characterize the whole United States before the conflict and which during the Civil War had a sectional potency in undermining Union claims in Great Britain that the conflict was one about slavery.

A consequence of these characterizations among those who helped to form British opinion was that, while the North was placed somewhere between well-meaning but flawed to down-right hypocritical, the South was objectionable in theory, but often considerably more sympathetic in reality. Lyell, for example, concluded that 'the negroes [in the South], so far as I have seen them, whether in domestic service or on the farms, appear very cheerful and free from care, better fed than a large part of the labouring classes in Europe.' He also indicated what he saw to be a strong sense of paternalism underpinning slavery which the slaves themselves reciprocated towards their masters. He described how 'we asked a woman in Georgia, whether she was the slave of a family in our acquaintance. She replied merrily "Yes, I belong to them, and they belong to me.' Similarly, he noted instances of slaves bragging about the richness of their masters and of their own monetary value to their owners. Although Lyell did make clear that this form of vanity should be considered 'evidence of extreme social degradation' it still presented evidence of the material contentment of slaves in the South, and consequently added his voice to those who rejected (at least in the context of the South),

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adverts etc. of *Travels in North America* see *Examiner*, 12th April 1845, 24th Oct 1846, 22nd Oct 1853, 19th July 1845; *Morning Chronicle*, 19th June 1845, 30th Aug 1845; *Glasgow Herald*, 4th July 1845; *Manchester Times and Gazette*, 26th July 1845; *Bradford Observer; and Halifax, Huddersfield, and Keighley Reporter*, 31st July 1845; *Blackburn Standard*, 6th Aug 1845, 22nd Oct 1845; *Morning Post*, 12th Aug 1845, 14th Nov 1845; *Preston Guardian Etc.,* 30th August 1845; *Cornwall Royal Gazette, Falmouth Packet and Plymouth Journal*, 5th Sept 1845; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 6th Sept 1845; *Dundee Courier*, 16th Sept 1845, 13th Jan 1846; *Northern Star and National Trades Journal*, 1st Nov 1845; *Standard*, 31st Dec 1845, 25th Nov 1846; *Daily News*, 7th Feb 1846, 12th Oct 1853; *Manchester Times*, 8th Feb 1851.

the brutality so frequently associated with the slave system. In this description violent

compulsion to labour was replaced with something at least vaguely paternal and reciprocal.[55]

In a manner reminiscent of Lyell, in terms of placing an emphasis on slavery as evil

but as a system mitigated in the South, were the descriptions of the novelist and travel writer

Charlotte Matilda Houstoun who published her travelogue *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico* in

1846. Houstoun made her distaste towards slavery clear in particularly pronounced language

when she noted how 'the almost absolute dominion which a slave-owner, at least in the

plantations, possesses over his human property, must tend, in the abstract, to render a

master tyrannical and unmerciful.' But despite this observation, her depictions of slavery were

not simply catalogues of misery. She described areas of the South in which 'during our drives

through the streets, especially on Sundays, the display of negro finery and taste was very

remarkable . . . I saw such persecuted negro slaves frequently; they appeared to have no

other occupation than that of flourishing about their gold-headed canes, and fixing a glass in

their eye.' The sarcastic use of the terms "persecuted" and descriptions of slaves apparently

living in luxury were obviously intended to undermine the image of the slave living in

desperation, long a feature of abolitionist literature. The paternalist connection was integral to

the mitigated slave system as Houstoun described it since:

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[55] Lyell, *Travels in North America Volume One*, 169, 181-183. Lyell's experiences are noted in James *Antebellum Natchez*, 124, 154. For an account of the significance of paternalism in British political discourse and its history see A.P. Thornton, *The Habit of Authority: Paternalism in British History* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966); David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (London: Croom Helm, 1979); Frances Trollope's *Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw* represents the archetype of the British authored abolitionist novel which emphasized the realism of the slave system and gave clear descriptions of its violence. For more on nineteenth century depictions of slavery see Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*. The emphasis on brutality was a distinctive change from anti-slavery literature which had dominated the campaigns against the slave trade in Britain and had been characterized by romanticism and sentimentality. For an introduction to this topic see 'Introduction' in *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation: Writings in the British Romantic Period Volume Six: Fiction*, (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999); Bryechan Carey, Markman Ellis, and Sara Salih, (eds.), *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition Britain and its Colonies, 1760-1838* (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 2004). The slave narrative genre gained considerably popularity in Britain in this period, and tended to emphasis the brutality of the slave system for a concise and informative discussion of this genre in Britain see Blackett, *Building an Antislavery Wall*; Fladeland, *Men and Brothers*; Walvin, *Slavery and British Society*; Audrey Fisch, (ed.), *The African American Slave Narrative* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

the owner of a slave, when he purchases him, enters into an agreement, understood though not expressed, that his services will be repaid by food, lodging, and decent clothing; that he will be allowed sufficient intervals of rest, and a certain portion of time in which he may work for himself; and also he may look forward to eventual independence if he is able to earn it, or if his own good conduct may render him deserving of the boon. The life of the slave is protected by the laws, and his good treatment is to a certain degree secured by the powerful argument, that it is contrary to his owner's interest to ill-use him. All this I believe to be true, as also the fact that young children are not separated from their parents.[56]

This paternalism was contrasted to the plight of freed slave: 'if there is any truth in the supposed degrading, and enervating influence of slave-owning, there is still more reason for believing that the forced servitude in which he is kept, together with the strong prejudice which exists against his race and colour, render the freed slave, in his present state of mind, education, &c., incapable of valuing his free position properly.'[57] In a sectional context, therefore, the descriptions of slavery which Houstoun gave contributed further to the school of thought which contended that southern slavery, for all its faults was not simply a system of mindless violence, but a complex social system in which white and black played 'appropriate' roles.

In the account of his second visit to the United States, Sir Charles Lyell offered further evidence for the existence of a paternalistic, mitigated slavery in the South. He noted in Virginia that 'the negroes here have certainly not the manners of an oppressed race' and found on one plantation that 'when I inquired if, in reality, there were hundreds of runaway slaves in the woods, everyone laughed at the idea. As a general rule, they said, the negroes are well fed, and when they are so, will very rarely attempt to escape.' Lyell even rejected one of the most frequently deployed critiques of slavery, its tendency to break up families, something he saw little of 'owing to the kind feeling of the southern planter toward their "own

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[56] Houstoun, *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico; or, Yachting in the New World* (Philadelphia: G.B Zieber & Co. 1846), 236-238, 163-164. For a sample of the review, adverts etc for Houstoun's work see *Morning Post*, 28th Sept 1844; *Examiner*, 11th Jan 1845, 12th April 1845, 22nd July 1845.
[57] Ibid., 237-238.

people," as they call them.' He presented two cases as evidence of this including one in which a judge in Richmond had accepted a price below market value in order that his slaves might be sold to their preferred location. Later, upon seeing a group travelling from Alabama to Texas he described 'the cheerfulness with which these slaves are going they know not where with their owners, notwithstanding their usual dislike to quit the place they have been brought up in, [which] shows a strong bond of union between the master and "his people",' as well as commenting that in Alabama itself he 'witnessed no maltreatment of slaves.' On the mitigated form of slavery which Lyell reported to have found, he was informed by 'an Abolitionist in Massachusetts. . .the great pains [that] must have been taken by the planters to conceal from me the true state of things.' Lyell, however, maintained that his own experiences had given him an accurate impression of slavery and his conclusions had been 'borne out by that of a Scotch weaver, William Thomson, of Stonehaven, who travelled in the year 1841-42.' Lyell then quoted at length from a part of Thomson's account in which he had stated 'I can assert, without fear of contradiction from any man who has any knowledge of this subject that I have never witnessed [in the slave states] one-fifth of the real suffering that I have seen in manufacturing establishments in Great Britain.' At its most romanticized, Lyell's description of the labour system of the South possessed the quality of an almost feudal paternalism:

During a fortnight's stay at Hopeton [Georgia], we had an opportunity of seeing how the planters live in the South, and the condition and prospects of the negroes on a well-managed estate. The relation of the slaves to their owners resembles nothing in the Northern States. There is an hereditary regard and often attachment on both sides, more like that formerly existing between lords and their retainers in the old feudal times of Europe, than to anything now to be found in America. The slaves identify themselves with the master, and their sense of their own importance rises with his success in life. But

the responsibility of the owners is felt to be great, and to manage a plantation with profit is no easy task, so much judgment is required and such a mixture of firmness, forbearance and kindness.[58]

This could easily be contrasted to the North were Lyell claimed to 'have heard apologists in the North endeavouring to account for the degraded position which the negroes hold, socially and politically, in the Free States, by saying they belong to a race which is kept in a state of slavery in the South.' As far as Lyell was concerned, however, 'if they really desired to accelerate emancipation, they would begin by setting an example to the Southern States, and treating the black race with more respect and more on a footing of equality.'[59]

This lack of unequivocal condemnation of the South on the part of liberal British commentators like Lyell may be a surprise given his clear rejection of slavery in the abstract yet in truth it should not be. The British attitude towards race and slavery was not a clear and simple one, and became increasingly complex as the 1840s progressed, a fact which had obvious implications for how the British viewed the South and its peculiar institution. As far as most Britons were concerned fine gradations existed between different races and different forms of labour. These gradations effected ideas about the necessity of abolition, as well as when and how it should occur.[60]

One of the clearest illustrations of this lack of unanimity was provided in 1849 with the publication of Thomas Carlyle's *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question*. Carlyle, after his birth in a small village near Gretna in 1795, rose to the centre of Victorian intellectual life in Britain after the publication of his satirical novel *Sartor Resartus* in 1831. The 'sage of

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[58] Sir Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of North America Volume One* (London: John Murray, 1849), 277-278, 297, 252; Sir Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of North America Volume Two* (London: John Murray, 1850), 40, 61, 67, 93-94, 99; For a sample of the reviews etc. of this second text by Lyell see *Examiner*, 16th June 1849, 30th June 1849, 9th March 1850, 11th Aug 1849; *Standard*, 19th June 1849; *Bristol Mercury*, 7th July 1849; *Daily News*, 19th July 1849; *Morning Chronicle*, 12th Sept 1849; *Aberdeen Journal*, 7th Nov 1849; *Derby Mercury*, 24th April 1850.
[58] Richard Huzzey, 'The Moral Geography of British Anti-Slavery Responsibilities,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (Dec 2012), 111-139. For a discussion of the distinctions drawn between slavery and wage slavery by intellectuals in a transatlantic context see Paul Giles *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2002), 39.
[59] Lyell, *A Second Visit Volume Two*, 99.

Chelsea' (as he became known) counted among his disciples at various times John Stuart Mill, Charles Dickens and John Ruskin and as one of his biographers shrewdly noted 'it is impossible to understand the Victorians without understanding Carlyle first.' Although concerned primarily with the effects of West Indian Emancipation, Carlyle's *Occasional Discourse* and the response offered to it by the political philosopher John Stuart Mill provides an insight into the complexity of racial attitudes in Britain and what this meant for attitudes toward the American sections. In a domestic context Carlyle criticized 'Exeter-Hall Philanthropy and the Dismal Science,' a choice of phrase loaded with meaning given his personal aversion to middle class telescopic philanthropy and liberal political economy. Essentially Carlyle rejected out of hand the utilitarianism of his former pupil Mill and the liberalism of men like Richard Cobden and John Bright, which was frequently associated with political economy and the reform meetings of Exeter Hall on the Strand in London, home to various abolitionist societies. Instead of this sort of urban liberalism, Carlyle embraced a romantic political outlook which centred on the image of the 'great man,' in the mould of Oliver Cromwell, or Frederick the Great. The literary scholar Patrick Brantlinger has noted the disillusionment in the intellectual mainstream with Benthamite concepts of reform by figures such as Carlyle and Dickens and a polarization between Manchester School laissez-faire liberalism, and a Christian-influenced Tory paternalism which emphasized moral reform as a precursor to social change as being a hallmark of the period.[61] This division had obvious consequences for the way that the British engaged with both American sectionalism and the United States itself.

The premise Carlyle worked from philosophically in *Occasional Discourse* was of course a deeply racist one, based on the assumption that blacks would only work under compulsion and that compelling them to work (by violent means if necessary), was justified.

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[61] For the representative power of 'Exeter Hall' see Audrey Fisch, *American Slaves in Victorian England: Abolitionist Politics and Popular Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 18. Brent E. Kinser notes that pro-Southerners in Britain encouraged Carlyle to produce a pamphlet advocating their cause, he failed to act however something which Kinser explains as a consequence of a letter he received from his close friend, the American author Ralph Waldo Emerson, see Kinser, *The American Civil War*, 33-45.

Similarly, it was clear that a racialized social hierarchy was considered a positive arrangement in the ideal Carlylean society. Within his pamphlet Carlyle addressed American slaveholders directly, assuring them 'that your relation to the Negroes, in this thing called slavery (with such an emphasis upon the word) be actually fair, just and according to the facts;- fair, I say, not in the sight of New-England platforms, but of God Almighty.' This particular line merits attention because it locates abolition in New England, as opposed to in the North as a whole in a manner consistent with Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit* and connects the polarization of British ideas of society outlined above to American sectionalism. As one of the extreme poles of mainstream British intellectual opinion in the 1840s Carlyle highlights some of the fault lines around British interpretations of sectionalism. The romantic intellectual, regardless of political affiliation could, in theory, talk themselves into the idea of slavery in the South as being mitigated, while the practical utilitarian could not square slavery with their theoretical assumptions regardless of context. While Carlyle was undoubtedly an extremist, his voice was respected among the British literate classes across the country and in Westminster itself. As Brent E. Kinser succinctly put it 'whether or not people agreed with Carlyle, they listened.'[62]

The rebuttal which John Stuart Mill published in response to Carlyle, was similarly illustrative of the intellectual divisions which existed in British public opinion in this period. The context of the Carlyle/Mill debates makes clear that slavery and by extension sectionalism in

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[62] Thomas Carlyle, *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question*, in Eugene R. August, (ed.), *The Nigger Question: The Negro Question* (New York: Appleton 1971), 4, 24-25; Patrick Brantlinger, *The Spirit of Reform: British Literature and Politics, 1832-1867* (Cambridge, Mass, London: Harvard University Press, 1977), 1-33; John O. Waller, 'Charles Kingsley and the American Civil War,' *Studies in Philology* (July 1963), 554-568; Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr. 14th February 1862 in Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *A Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One* (London: Constable and Company, 1921). For Carlyle's politics and his emphasis on a natural hierarchy based on a feudal model of social relations see Simon Heffer *Moral Desperado: A Life of Thomas Carlyle* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1995); K J Fielding 'Carlyle and the Americans: "Eighteen Million Bores",' *Carlyle Studies Annual* (1997), 55-64; N. John Hall 'Trollope and Carlyle,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 27.2 (Sept 1972), 197-205; Iva G. Jones 'Trollope, Carlyle, and Mill on the Negro: An Episode in the History of Ideas,' *The Journal of Negro History* 52.3 (July 1967),185-199. Carlyle had originally used the title *Occasional Discourse on the Negro* question which he changed to *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question* when he revised the work see Julie M. Dugger, 'Black Ireland's Race: Thomas Carlyle and the Young Ireland Movement,' *Victorian Studies* 48.3 (Spring 2006), 461-485, 465; Kinser, *The American Civil War*, 14.

the United States can only properly be understood against the backdrop of British debates over liberal capitalism and Carlylean paternalism. Even as Mill critiqued Carlyle's view of slavery, however, he still noted the violent actions undertaken by urban mobs in New York and Philadelphia against known abolitionists, once against attesting to the complexity of slavery in American sectional relations from a British perspective.[63]

Mill, as a key liberal thinker of the era, may well have spoken for many who might not have been expected to embrace Carlyle, but he certainly did not speak for all. In fact, it would be incorrect to think his views even reflected a consensus among political liberals. The radical liberal MP for Sheffield, and utilitarian disciple of Mill, John Arthur Roebuck for example expressed his own annoyance at the 'telescopic philanthropy' of abolition, which he saw as coming at the cost of the British labouring classes. This was essentially a Carlylean outlook. Roebuck had something else in common with Carlyle in that they both maintained that the traditional rural gentry, when it was at its best, could act as a paternal force with a sincere desire to help the poor. While neither explicitly made the connection it is possible to see how this relationship might have been analogous to that of the southern planter to the slave in its mythologized, feudal form.[64] The intellectual fault lines so evident here, which intersected with issues impinging on American sectionalism with regularity illustrate the problems inherent in oversimplifying British ideas about American sectionalism. Mill, liberal abolitionist that he was, failed to draw an absolute division between North and South on the subject of American slavery and, bizarrely, Roebuck and Carlyle, the former Chartist and the arch-Tory of the Victorian era both ended up favouring the cause of the South.

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[63] John Stuart Mill, *The Negro Question* in August (ed.), *The Nigger Question;* Frank Prochaska, *Eminent Victorians on American Democracy The View from Albion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 31; Jon Roper, *Democracy and its Critics: Anglo-American Democratic Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Unwin Hyman: 1989), 177-178.

[64] John Arthur Roebuck, *Autobiography* in Robert Eadon Leader, (ed.), *Life and Letters of John Arthur Roebuck with Chapters of Autobiography* (London: Edward Arnold, 1897); Roebuck *Debate on the Bill Regulating Bleaching and Dye Works* in Leader, (ed.), *Life and Letters*, 283-284; O.F Christie, *The Transition from Aristocracy 1832-1867: An Account of the Passing of the Reform Bill, The Cause Which Led Up to It, and its Far Reaching Consequences on the Life & Manners of All Grades of Society* (London: Seeley, Service & Co,. 1927), 21-22; A F Cruikshank 'J A Roebuck M.P.: A Re-Appraisal of Liberalism in Sheffield, 1849-1879,' *Northern History* 16 (1980), 196-214; Taylor, *Decline of British Radicalism*, passim.

The 1850s: Charlotte Houstoun to Henry Ashworth

These sorts of complexities are similarly evident in Charlotte Houstoun's 1850 travelogue, *Hesperos*, a work within which she spent considerably more time on slavery than she had in the 1846 text *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico*. One of the most striking aspects of the descriptions provided in *Hesperos* are Houstoun's frequent critiques of the treatment of northern free blacks. She described for example how 'these poor outcasts of society are neither met with in railroad carriages nor in public rooms; in short, they are, to all intents and purposes, considered as creatures decidedly inferior to a domestic animal.' In a subsequent discussion Houstoun explained that 'the treatment of the negroes in the free states [is] sufficient to prove the injustice of the abolitionists, and when we consider that the latter profess to be actuated by the most philanthropic motives,- to have a horror of slavery, and to act upon the principle that 'all men equal,'- they would confer upon the slaves the blessings of freedom, we come at once upon the inconsistency of which I accuse them.'[65] Houstoun was evidently imbued with a strong sense of cynicism over northern abolition and she was not alone in this attitude.

The sort of racial assumptions which characterized the work of Thomas Carlyle were also used by Houstoun to underpin her arguments about the position of black Americans in North and South. One specific description which Houstoun gave encapsulated this: 'experience has, unfortunately, taught us that the negro race when left entirely to their own resources, and solely dependent on their own intelligence and industry, instead of rising, will rather retrograde than otherwise in the social scale.' It was not simply the idea of social development but the potential economic benefits which Houstoun emphasized and while she

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[65] Mrs Houstoun, *Hesperos: Or, Travels in the West Volume One* (London: John W. Parker, 1850), 195; Mrs Houstoun, *Hesperos: Or Travels in the West Volume Two* (London: John W. Parker, 1850), 205-208. For reactions to *Hesperos* see *Morning Post*, 12th Jan 1850, 20th March 1850, 13th Feb 1850; *Examiner*, 19th Jan 1850, 19th June 1850, 16th Feb 1850; *Bradford Observer*, 31st Jan 1850, 21st Feb 1850; *Standard*, 4th Feb 1850, 21st Feb 1850, 16th March 1850; *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire &c,* 9th Feb 1850; *Daily News*, 11th Feb 1850; *Aberdeen Journal*, 13th Feb 1850; *Morning Chronicle*, 19th March 1850, 24th April 1850, 2nd Oct 1850; *Nottinghamshire Guardian and Midland Advertiser*, 2nd May 1850; *Glasgow Herald*, 6th Dec 1850; *Newcastle Courant*, 21st May 1852.

recognized that 'the opinion is very prevalent, that slavery is injurious to the interests of the United States, and that its existence will probably lead at some future time to a dissolution of the Union. This opinion was at one time my own; but, since living in the country, I have taken quite another view of the case.' Houstoun claimed that the opposite was true and slavery 'is not only the main source of wealth of America, but that the advantages derived from it render the Northern States and those of the South so dependent on each other, that a separation would be the ruin of both.' Her views on this economic side of the question were couched in racial terms and connected to the British experience of West Indian Emancipation from which she concluded 'that the blacks, unless compelled to do so, will never work in a country where the liberal hand of nature, by supplying all their wants for a minimum of labour, would seem to offer a plea for . . . indolence.' This was something she claimed was 'sufficiently proved by the present state of our possessions in the West Indies, where, though the accessaries [sic] of life are not half so abundant as in the United States, it has been found impossible to induce the blacks to labour.'[66] Houstoun, therefore, drew heavily on the British experience of West Indian Emancipation and placed it within a sectional American context to demonstrate the necessity for paternal social relations in a multiracial society.

Like most observers, Houstoun demonstrated a desire for abolition in the long term. While it still existed, however, southern slavery was not solely characterized by brutality and upon entering Kentucky, Houstoun took the opportunity to compare the attitudes towards enslaved and free blacks in North and South explicitly. She contended that 'the people of Kentucky are so fully awake to these advantages [of long-term abolition], that they are now, I believe, quite unanimous in their desire that slavery should be abolished in their state.' While in order to further validate her claims she explained that 'the Kentucky slaves are, at length, beginning to understand that their condition is not so bad but that it might be worse, and that even in their fancied paradise, the Free States, they might find cause to regret the land of their bondage.' Houstoun's account was permeated then by descriptions of slavery which

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[66] Houstoun, *Hesperos Volume Two*, 199-201.

both noted its mitigation and described the commitment to anti-slavery as a long-term aim for southerners.[67]

Upon arriving in Natchez (Mississippi), Houstoun noted how 'it was pleasant to see the genuine and heartily-expressed joy of their negroes, who, being most of them old retainers of the family, came down in numbers to the river side to greet the return of their masters, and to be received by them with looks of pleasure, and by a hand cordially and kindly extended to each.' Similarly, she concluded that despite some fears over the idea of a slave uprising 'many of the slave-owners . . . trust implicitly to the good faith and affection of their negroes, and. . . are persuaded that, in case of any personal danger to themselves, their vassals would be ready to defend them with their lives. This seems a very agreeable conviction, and, in all probability, those who entertain this opinion are justified in doing so.' Later observations of plantations along the Mississippi seem to have confirmed Houstoun's suppositions given that she found a 'granary, storehouses, and workshops' in addition to 'the hospital for sick negroes.' As a result of having seen these facilities, she declared herself 'satisfied that, on the Mississippi at least, the slaves are invariably treated with kindness.' Houstoun also noted the kitchen gardens which the slaves in the region had and the time given for their tending before claiming that 'their produce is generally bought by their masters, who are certain to pay them twice as much as it is worth.' Again, the planters are portrayed as a benevolent class patronizing their social, and racial 'inferiors.' Houstoun made clear that her 'remarks apply more particularly to the State of Louisiana than to that of the slave States in general, about which [she was] not qualified as an eye-witness to speak,' and concluded that 'their bondage is not so irksome, or their situation half so unhappy as it is represented to be.' All of these factors allowed her to create the division between slavery in the abstract and southern slavery which most British readers would have been accustomed to:

During this, and my former visit to the United States, I have passed nearly a year in the South, and have had good opportunities of ascertaining the true condition of the negro race in this country. This

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[67] Houstoun, *Hesperos, Volume One*, 290-291.

being the case, I have come to the conclusion that the evil exists here in its most modified form, and that the domestic slaves are *the least unhappy menials in the world;* [my emphasis] moreover, I am convinced that they are very far from being so severely worked as most of the servants in free countries. The accounts of the atrocities committed in the plantations are, I have reason to believe, greatly exaggerated: that a great many shocking acts of cruelty and oppression are perpetrated by some of the slave-owners in the out of the way parts of Arkansas and the Red River Plantations, cannot, I fear, be denied; and moreover, that the lax state of morals is, in many parts of the South, painful to think upon; but these instances are the exception to the rule, and I have no hesitation in asserting that the universal public feeling in the South is on the side of humanity.[68]

Houstoun's explicit rejection of any systemic cruelty in the southern slave system in favour of a characterization of the southern slave-owner as a figure with a clear sense of morality posited a social relationship between black and white which mitigated a potentially objectionable labour system and contributed to the British understanding of the complex nature of American sectionalism.

Throughout the 1850s the complexities of the relationship between American sectionalism and slavery continued to be prominent features in British discussions of the United States. While each writer had their own nuances, certain features were common. The poet and travel writer Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, unlike most other commentators, described instances of free blacks receiving equal and compassionate treatment in the North in her 1851 narrative *Travels in the United States*.[69] It is worth noting, however, that even these free blacks with whom she was so impressed were still servants and that she also claimed to have found instances of the paternalistic relationship offering genuine mitigation to the conditions of slavery in the South. In fact, after spending time on the plantation of

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[68] Houstoun, *Hesperos Volume Two*, 52, 91-92, 137, 157-160, 195-196, 202-204.

[69] Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, *Travels in the United States Etc, during 1849 and 1850* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1851), 22; Muireann O'Cinneide, *Aristocratic Women and the Literary Nation* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 8-9, 66-67. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Stuart-Wortley's text see *Morning Post*, 17th March 1851, 4th June 1851; *Daily News*, 18th March 1851, 11th Aug 1851, 30th Sept 1851; *Examiner*, 22nd March 1851; *Morning Chronicle*, 28th April 1851, 30th April 1851, 11th May 1852, 27th Dec 1851; *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire &c.,* 19th July 1851; *Blackburn Standard*, 30th July 1851; *Standard*, 13th Dec 1851; *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 1st Jan 1853, 5th March 1853.

President Zachary Taylor in Natchez, she concluded that 'the slaves themselves were, as well fed, comfortably clothed, and kindly cared for in every way as possible, and seemed as thoroughly happy and contented.' Even while she recognized the role of violence in maintaining discipline, she explained that 'it is very rarely that negroes are ill-treated, except, as I was told by an American, occasionally by small farmers, emigrants, who have never had such power before and who are often led to abusing it.'[70]

Similarly, the agriculturalist James F.W Johnston, writing in the same year as Stuart-Wortley, presented instances of northern racism to his readers in the same way that his predecessors had done. Just like Carlyle and others before him, Johnston located the heart of American abolitionism in New England. He did not, however, form a clear North/South sectional division based on this. It was New England specifically which had an abolitionist agenda, rather than the North as a whole, and as an illustration of this difference Johnston drew his readers attention back to a riot in Philadelphia in 1834 during which mobs had physically driven free blacks out of their traditional roles as the cities unskilled labour force. This continued emphasis on the complex position of slavery in different areas of America was not simply a feature of popular published accounts it took on the status of orthodox opinion and entered into the discourse of high politics. British Minister John F. Crampton, for example, when discussing a dispute arising from the Negro Seaman Laws advised the Charleston consul George Buckley-Matthew on the 20th February 1852 that opposition to the act could stimulate a violent response 'not only in the South, but all over the United States.'[71]

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[70] Stuart-Wortley, *Travels in the United States*, 55-56.
[71] James F.W Johnston, *Notes on North America*: *Agricultural, Economical and Social Volume Two* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1851), 228 & 314. For a sample of the review, adverts etc. of Johnston's text see *Examiner*, 26th Oct 1850, 29th Nov 1851, 15th Dec 1855; *Standard*, 14th March 1851, 11th July 1851, 27th March 1851, 29th March 1851, 31st March 1851; *Dundee Courier*, 26th March 1851, 3rd Dec 1851; *The York Herald, and General Advertiser*, 29th March 1851; *Morning Post*, 22nd April 1851; *Morning Post*, 10th July 1851, 28th Nov 1851; *Preston Guardian etc.,* 31st May 1851; *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 31st May 1851, 27th Dec 1851, 22nd Sept 1855; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 7th June 1851, 21st June 1851, 28th June 1851; *Blackburn Standard*, 25th June 1851, 2nd July 1852, 26th Sept 1855; *Glasgow Herald*, 11th July 1851, 24th Sept 1851; *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire &c.,* 12th July 1851; *Daily News*, 17th July 1851; *Newcastle Courant,* 25th July 1851, 5th Sept 1851, 5th Dec 1851; *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 22nd Aug 1851;

Stuart-Wortley, Johnston and Crampton all, in various ways, continued to deploy recognizable tropes of slavery in the United States which undermined a clear division between North and South on the subject. None of these figures advocated the slave system, yet they all demonstrated that slavery was a national institution, and if any regionality could be attached to abolition it only applied to New England, rather than the free states as a whole.

In 1852, the eminent Irish-born lawyer Edward Sullivan gave further illustrations of the lack of division in British eyes between North and South on the subject of slavery. Sullivan was clearly aware of the idea of mitigated slavery in the South and conceded that the slaves 'seemed very happy. . . and chatted away like so many monkeys; the thoughtless happiness, however, of the American slaves, which is always in the mouth of the free and enlightened citizen as an argument in favour of slavery, is not the happiness of a human being, but that of an animal.' Sullivan, in a manner similar to Harriet Martineau was clearly concerned that this mitigated slavery was not underpinned by a sense of moral responsibility since 'profit, and profit at any cost, is all the slave-owner thinks of, and to that he will, if necessary, sacrifice the health and comfort, and even the life itself of his slaves.' Sullivan also emphasized the violence of slavery since 'a slave can get no protection from the cruelty of his master; the law, and what is of much more importance, public opinion, countenances the corporeal punishments of slaves,' while he rejected the idea of southerners frequently offering manumission to their chattels, informing his readers instead that 'many of the States have prohibited the emancipation of slaves, except under such heavy securities and liabilities as render it next to impossible.' Despite this catalogue of criticisms, Sullivan also made it clear that the situation was hardly better in the free states and that even though 'in the northern

Nottinghamshire Guardian, 27th Nov 1851; *Belfast News-Letter*, 28th Nov 1851, 12th Dec 1851; *Morning Chronicle*, 28th Nov 1851, 22nd Oct 1855; *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser*, 11th Dec 1851; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 29th Sept 1855. Crampton quoted in Crawford 'British Travellers', 218. For the Negro Seaman Laws see Philip M. Hamer, 'British Consuls and the Negro Seamen Acts, 1850-1860,' *Journal of Southern History* 1.2 May 1935, 138-168; Philip M. Hamer, 'Great Britain, the United States, and the Negro Seamen Acts, 1822-1848,' *Journal of Southern History* 1.1 (Feb 1935), 3-28; Leon F. Litwack, 'The Federal Government and the Free Negro, 1790-1860,' *Journal of Negro History* 43.4 Oct 1958, 261-278; Michael Alan Schoeppmer, 'Navigating the Dangerous Atlantic: Racial Quarantines, Black Sailors and United States Constitutionalism', PhD Thesis, University of Florida, 2010.

free States . . . he [the free black] has the legal position of a citizen, the right of voting. . .if he dared to avail himself of his privilege . . . he would be turned out as sure as possible.' Consequently, 'his social position in the south is better than in the north; he is treated equally as a dog in both, with this difference, that in the south he is sometimes a pet dog, whereas in the north his is always a cur, kicked and hooted on every occasion.' In terms of abolition the north appeared to have little to brag about, in fact Sullivan described abolitionists in the North as 'a small minority of loud-talking men, who are just tolerated.'[72] For Sullivan, not only did the North lack any true commitment to abolish slavery, but it was complicit in its maintenance.

On the subject of the Fugitive Slave Law, passed in 1850, which demanded the arrest of anyone thought to be a runaway slave in any state of the nation, and which had been accepted (albeit in some cases grudgingly or with some resistance) by northern politicians, Sullivan contended that it was 'the most iniquitous bill ever framed by human beings.' Interestingly enough the novelist Charles Kingsley, in discussing this same act, suggested that the Union should have broken up because of it, an idea which was not unique to him and had previous been discussed by Godley as a way to disconnect the free states from the slave system. Sullivan provided detail on the Fugitive Slave Law and described its passage as 'proof of the feeling of the country against the negro,' for which:

The abolitionists are quite as much to blame as the southern men; for at the same time that they hold white-chokered [sic] meetings, expressing in the strongest terms their abhorrence of slavery, and their commiseration, even affection, for anything black, and get up subscriptions to send tracts and red flannel waistcoats to the little negroes on the Gold coast, they yet, without the slightest attempt at

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[72] Edward Sullivan, *Rambles and Scrambles in North and South America* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852), 194-196, 199, 202-203, 208-210. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of *Rambles and Scrambles* see *Examiner*, 14th Aug 1852, 2nd Oct 1852; *Daily News*, 4th Sept 1852, 20th Oct 1852, 13th Nov 1852; *Standard*, 6th Sept 1852, 8th Sept 1852; *Morning Post*, 8th Sept 1852, 6th Dec 1852, 21st Oct 1857; *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire, &c.,* 9th Oct 1852; *Leeds Mercury*, 9th Oct 1852; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 16th Oct 1852; *Bradford Observer*, 25th Nov 1852; *Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 14th May 1853; *Morning Chronicle*, 1st June 1853, 28th Oct 1854.

resistance, suffer the poor slave that has escaped, and (trusting to their expressions of sympathy) has taken refuge among them, to be torn from his home, or carried back to an enraged master.[73]

In its review of Sullivan's work in December 1852 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* offered a valuable illustration of the reception given to the ambiguities of these texts. The reviewer bemoaned the brutality of slavery and maintained that the system must be abolished 'even if the negro is considered intellectually inferior to the white man.' However, in terms of the attitudes displayed towards free blacks in the sections the *Blackwood's* writer did not give his readers a neat sectional division, instead noting (in a manner consistent with Sullivan) that 'in the northern states, it is true, slavery does not exist; but in those states the social condition of the negro is hardly better than in the south.'[74]

This consistent message which rejected any close relationship between the northern section as a whole and abolitionism, while claiming a level of mitigation for the condition of slaves in the South, continued to be deployed and was usually underpinned in Britain by distinctive racial ideas. The novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, whose reputation was only second to Dickens in the period, provides an illustration of how sectionalism and British racial ideas were locked together. Thackeray visited the South in 1853, and although he

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[73] Sullivan, *Rambles and Scrambles,* 208-210. For Charles Kingsley's reaction see Waller 'Charles Kingsley and the American Civil War', 563. For more on the Fugitive Slave Law passed in 1850 see Stanley W. Campbell, *The Slave Catchers: Enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law 1850-1860* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968); Richards, *The Slave Power*; Robert Pierce Forbes, *The Missouri Compromise and its Aftermath: Slavery and the Meaning of America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 274-291; Timothy L. Wesley, *The Politics of Faith During the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013); Orville Vernon Burton, *The Age of Lincoln* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007), 62-75; Joanna Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860* (Ithica & London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 260-274; Homan Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict The Crisis and Compromise of 1850* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1964); David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis 1848-1861* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1976); Linck C. Johnson, '"Liberty Is Never Cheap": Emerson, "The Fugitive Slave Law," and the Antislavery Lecture Series at the Broadway Tabernacle,' *New England Quarterly* 76.4 (Dec 2003), 550-592; James Oliver Horton & Lois E. Horton, 'A Federal Assault: African Americans and the Impact of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850,' *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 68 (1993), 1179-1197; Bernard E. Powers Jr, '"The Worst of all Barbarism": Racial Anxiety and the Approach of Secession in the Palmetto State,' *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 112 3.3 (July-Oct 2011), 139-156; Leonard W. Levy, 'The Fugitive Slave Law in Boston in 1851', *Journal of Negro History* 35.1, (Jan 1950), 39-74; Charles H. Money, 'The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 in Indiana,' *Indiana Magazine of History* 17.2 (June 1921), 159-198.
[74] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 72.446, December 1852, 689-690; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 72.441, July 1852.

published no travelogue, his correspondence provides an insight into the connections, in the mind of a key British commentator, between race, slavery and sectionalism in the United States. Thackeray specifically rejected the notion of a human similarity between the races, writing that 'Sambo is not my man & my brother; the very aspect of his face is grotesque,' and even though he maintained the evil of slavery in theory he explained that 'the sum of unhappiness is as great among our wretched poor as it can be here; controversy has this good in it that it will pique black & white man-owners into generosity & I dare say better the labourers' condition in Dorsetshire as in Virginia,' while he described Richmond as 'the merriest little place and the most picturesque I have seen in America.' Thackeray would subsequently redeploy the racialized language of his letters in his later novel *Philip*, in which the mulatto Captain Woolcomb requests an audience to: 'VOTE FOR ME! AM I NOT A MAN AND A BRUDDER,' in mocking reference to the slogan of British abolition.[75] Thackeray's correspondence from the South was revealing about British opinion on the America sections illustrating, as it did, the power of the romantic paternal myth particularly to anyone subscribing (as Thackeray did) to the notion of a racial hierarchy. The South appeared to embody a paternal, feudal style social system which had many advantages over the industrial capitalism of Britain, contributing to the image of mitigated slavery in the South which would eventually be key to pro-Confederate propaganda in Britain.

The image of southern slavery being mitigated in the way that Thackeray seemed to suggest was not a mode of thinking solely identifiable among the literati, even those within the government failed to make the moral division between free and slave states which Union supporters during the Civil War would be so keen to convince the public had been at the root of the conflict. The British Ambassador John F.T Crampton wrote in 1853 that the North's 'social prejudice against negroes is just as strong as that of the South, and their hatred of the

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[75] William Makepeace Thackeray to Mrs Carmichael-Smyth, 13th February 1853 in Gordon N. Ray, (ed.), *The Letters and Private Papers of William Makepeace Thackeray in Four Volumes, Volume Three* (London: Oxford University Press, 1945); John Sutherland, 'Thackeray as Victorian Racialist,' *Essays in Criticism* 20 (1970), 441-445, 444; Thomas *Thackeray and Slavery*. For the growth of racialist ideas see Lorimer 'The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment'; for Thackeray's rejection of slavery but acceptance of paternal social relations see Whitridge, 'Dickens and Thackeray,' 236.

Southern Slavery rests upon other grounds than ours,' meaning that abolition in the United States was political in its nature, as opposed to moral.[76] For Crampton the US debate over slavery illustrated a difference in the sections in terms of political posturing as opposed to a moral division. At least as late as 1853 therefore, and among the highest echelons of the British Government, the northern states were not viewed as being inclined to abolition, a reality that would influence initial reactions to the Civil War in the corridors of British power.

The lack of equitable treatment for free black Americans was emphasized once again in the 1854 travelogue of the noted physiologist and social reformer Marshall Hall. He described for example how in Pennsylvania 'no one of this persecuted race may drive an omnibus,' and that in New York 'an African gentleman . . . may not take his seat in that public conveyance.' These examples of the treatment which free blacks suffered were described by Hall as a 'second slavery of prejudice and oppression,' a telling indication of the apparent lack of difference between the lives of blacks in the North and the South. He provided a particularly detailed account of free African-American communities in New York whose residents lived in a far from enviable state: '[In] Flushing and Jamaica, both in Long Island . . . there are two colonies of free Africans, of about three hundred and two hundred respectively, left by the abolition of slavery. They are in the most degraded and wretched condition.' Outside of the urban North-east he noted that 'Connecticut, Ohio and Illinois, of the free States, have most disgraced themselves in their legislation against the African race.' This did not mean, however, that Hall endorsed slavery. Instead he contended that 'when he [the slave] has escaped from the slavery of the land, he finds himself bowed down by a slavery of prejudice and oppression. One thing, and one alone can nobly emancipate him: it is a well-combined plan of education, discipline, elevation and wealth,' and as evidence of this he cited

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[76] John F.T Crampton to Lord Clarendon, 21st February 1853 in Barnes & Barnes, (eds.), *Private and Confidential.*

various examples of former slaves excelling in the right circumstances.[77] Hall's confidence

here and his apparent lack of belief in racial determinism attests to the fact that he held

distinctive opinions when compared to somebody such as Thackeray. Nevertheless in his

published account of the condition of free blacks he further contributed to a discourse which

would undermine British support for the cause of the North during the Civil War.

Hall juxtaposed his descriptions of the North with images of slavery in the South which

gave examples of the mitigated nature of the system. Interestingly, Hall published his

travelogue almost two years *after* a text which might have been expected to stimulate a clear

anti-southern reaction in Britain, the abolitionist writer Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle

Tom's Cabin*. This explicitly abolitionist book was written, at least partially, as an indictment of

the Fugitive Slave Law and followed the lives of the slave's Tom and Eliza as the latter was

sold down the river to the brutal Louisiana slaveholder, Simon Legree, and the former

attempted to escape slavery with her child. A prominent reviewer, the economist Nassau

William Senior, published an analysis of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the *Edinburgh Review,* a text

which was later extended and reprinted in the form of a pamphlet. Senior drew on a number

of well understood themes relating to slavery in the United States but he did so without

sugaring his criticisms with the positive interpretation of the southern slaveholder which some

writers had done. Interestingly, Senior also drew a distinct line between North and South on

the basis of slavery in a way which was reflected later in Civil War propaganda in Britain.

Unsurprisingly he claimed, that 'for the first two years after the passing of the Act [Fugitive

Slave Act], the lower classes in New York and Boston enjoyed the excitement of a negro hunt

as much as our rustics enjoy following a fox hunt.' However he claimed a unique influence for

Stowe's work, and although it was unlikely (in his view) 'that the mere reading of the novel

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[77] Marshall Hall, *The Two-Fold Slavery of the United States; With a Project for Self-Emancipation* (London: Adam Scott, 1854) 18, 137, 144, 93, 20, 22. For reviews and adverts of Hall's text see *Standard*, 11th Sept 1856, 15th Sept 1856.

would have much affected them . . . it was dramatized and acted in the Bowery theatre in New York.'[78]

Uncle Tom's Cabin was a publishing sensation in Britain and sold a million copies in its first year of circulation, reaching the highest levels of government and being read by both Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Despite its apparent popularity, however, the literary scholar Audrey Fisch has noted that reviewers (Senior notwithstanding) tended to have serious reservations about the text, feeling that it was irrational and irresponsible in its ideological foundations and sub-standard as literature. As *The Times* put it in September 1852 'we have little doubt at all . . . that the very readiest way to rivet the fetters of slavery in these critical times is to direct against all slaveholders in America to opprobrium and indignation which such works as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are sure to excite.'[79] Placing the criticisms of this novel in the context of the British views of sectionalism throws further light on complex position of slavery in British ideas of North and South. While a popular and influential indictment of slavery and a capable piece of abolitionist propaganda, for many in Britain Stowe's also work raised serious questions about American abolition and as the reaction of *The Times* demonstrates, continued to raise questions about whether the movement was helping or hindering abolition in the South.

Similarly, while Charles Dickens commended Stowe on her intentions with the work, he criticized its 'overstrained conclusions and violent extremes.' Understanding the complex

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[78] Sarah Meer, *Uncle Tom Mania: Slavery, Minstrelsy and Transatlantic Culture in the 1850s* (Athens & Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 168; Foreman, *A World on Fire*, 26-27; Nassau William Senior, *American Slavery: A Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin," of which a Portion was inserted in the 206th Number of the "Edinburgh Review;" and of Mr. Sumner's Speech on the 19th and 20th of May 1856, with a Notice of Events Which Followed that Speech* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1856) 30-34, 65-66, 28-29. For more on Senior see Marian Bowley, *Nassau Senior and Classical Economics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967).
[79] Fisch, *American Slaves in Victorian England*. In terms of popular anti-slavery during the early 1850s Fisch notes that while slave speakers and dioramas which emphasized the brutality of slavery tended to be received well in Britain, positive responses were not unanimous among the public. For example and echoing the opinion of some on *Uncle Tom*, the *Wolverhampton and Staffordshire Herald*, described an exhibition by the escaped slave William "Box" Brown on 17th March 1852 as a 'representation of slavery [which was] a gross and palpable exaggeration. For more on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Britain see Wendy F. Hamand, '"No Voice from England": Mrs. Stowe, Mr. Lincoln, and the British in the Civil War,' *New England Quarterly* 61.1 (March 1988), 3-24.

nature of reactions to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Britain helps to explain the apparent anomaly that two years after this seminal novel's publication the physician Marshall Hall could still contend that 'the African in the slavery of the United States is usually so well cared for, that he is for the most part, according to the expression of Henry Clay, 'fat and sleek,' and his numbers increase in a higher ratio than those of the European.' Hall compared this treatment directly to the situation in the free states in which the free black was 'so crushed by State legislation and popular prejudice' while emphasizing the close social relationship which existed between black and white in the South. He drew specific attention to the apparently paternal nature of the master/slave relationship describing having 'witnessed [it] myself with the utmost satisfaction' while he described how 'at Richmond, I was kindly invited to visit a gentleman, the hospitable owner of a plantation on the James River. I visited the "cabins" of the negro-slaves, and saw them at their daily occupations in the farm-yard and in the corn-fields. Their physical comfort and well-being appeared to me to be perfect.' For all these apparent examples of mitigation, however, Hall maintained that he was no apologist for slavery, he likened the treatment of the southern slave to that of the physical well-being of cattle, and conceded that the power which the slaveowners possessed over the lives of their chattels might allow cruelty to be a feature of the system in some instances. Hall also maintained that the very nature of the slavery system brought with it an inherent indignity, and after observing the violent punishment of a slave concluded that he 'felt indignant that one man should have the power and the heart so to treat another.' The solution to the problem of southern slavery would, however, as far as Hall was concerned, not come about as a result of northern abolition, in fact, 'the case of the poor slave has been aggravated by the violent but vain efforts of the abolitionist.' Hall's sentiment evoked the opinion of John Robert Godley from a decade in earlier by contending that any abolitionism which did exist in the North was having a detrimental influence on the lives of southern slaves. Even when its existence was

recognized by British observers therefore, the 'northern' abolition movement was still frequently described in less than complimentary terms.[80]

The contention of Hall, and many of those before him, that the condition of slavery was not as bad as might be expected continued to feature in the works of British commentators and ensured that the image of mitigated southern slavery endured through to the end of the 1850s. This was evident in the 1857 travel narrative of the writer Amelia M. Murray entitled *Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada*. Murray for instance quoted a work published in the South which presented slavery as the most appropriate labour solution based on the social makeup of the South. This work explained that 'slavery may not be the best system of labour, but it is the best for the negro in this country.' The image of the paternal southerner which had had such a significant history in British discourse of the South also ran throughout Murray's work, with her first experiences of slavery in Baltimore given in these terms, a mode of description which very much sets the scene for her subsequent depictions. Her later experiences were typified by the notion of slave and masters as deeply attached to one another, with slaves described as 'well-clothed, merry and content,' 'good-natured, and easy in their manner,' and observations of a group of slaves in New Orleans who considered 'Mr. L. more in the light of their father than their master.' Murray's most extensive experience came while staying on a plantation in Darien (Georgia), her account of which combined various references to her belief that 'the negro race is incapable of self-government' with the conclusion that 'a happy attached negro population surrounds this abode; I never saw servants or any old English family more comfortable, or more devoted; it is quite a relief to see anything so patriarchal, after the apparently uncomfortable relations of masters and servants in the Northern States.'[81]

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[80] Hall, *The Two-Fold Slavery*, 2, 17, 91, 147, 33-34, 118, 153, 52; Harry Stone, 'Charles Dickens and Harriet Beecher Stowe,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 12.3 (Dec 1957), 188-202; Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 56.

[81] Amelia M. Murray, *Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada* (New York: G.P Putnam & Company, 1857), 38-39; 206; 162; 164; 193-194; 206; 283; 219 see also her experience in Florida during which Murray reported being told by a free black named Old Dick that most slaves were unfit for

The views of slavery which Murray held and which seemingly crystalized in Darien are illustrative of an idealized form of southern slavery which some of the British liked to imagine existed in the section with its extensive paternal connections. Without saying so outright Murray came near, on a number of occasions, to suggesting that the paternal relationship between slave and master might actually be preferable to that of industrial worker and capitalist in both the northern states and Britain. In terms of the North, Murray classified the abolitionist movement (in manner somewhat similar to Hall), as represented by Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, as pursuing a desirable end. This was an almost obligatory sentiment since few Britons, whatever they made of the paternal connection, would subscribe to the 'positive good' thesis which would underpin any claim that slavery should not *eventually* be abolished. Murray, however, claimed that these abolitionists were unaware of the difficulties of the situation and in some cases were simply hypocritical: 'the patience, the consideration shown by white gentlemen and gentlewomen towards these "darkies," I could say to some anti-slavery people I have known, "Go thou and do likewise.' One of the few northerners with whom Murray appeared to be in agreement was New York Democrat, Horatio Seymour, who envisioned a plan for gradual emancipation 'not by stringent laws and ill-judged prohibitions, but by the introduction of free labour.'[82] This was a gradualist approach to abolition which saw the end of slavery coming as a slow process, a method which had considerable appeal for Murray. As she travelled around the Charleston area, she gave her own vision of the sanitized and paternal slave holder in the South, as well describing how the British should treat these men and women when she noted that:

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freedom in 234, 218; *Morning Post*, 25th Jan 1856; *Bradford Observer*, 31st Jan 1856; *Bristol Mercury*, 2nd Feb 1856; *Glasgow Herald*, 6th Feb 1856; *Daily News*, 7th Feb 1856; *Belfast News-Letter*, 9th May 1856; *Standard*, 30th May 1856; *Derby Mercury*, 25th June 1856; *Examiner*, 18th March 1865.
[82] Murray, *Letters from the United States*, 218, 283, 148, 198, 196, 225, 180-182. For the complexities in British anti-slavery thought which allowed Murray to subscribe to a gradualist emancipation doctrine see Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*. For the discussion of gradualism in the United States see Melish, *Disowning Slavery*; Anne C. Loveland, 'Evangelicalism and "Immediate Emancipation" in American Antislavery Thought,' *Journal of Southern History* 32.2 (May 1966), 172-188; Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War* (2005 repr. New York: Hill & Wang, 1992); *Divided Hearts*, 37; R.J.M Blackett 'Cracks in the Anti-Slavery Wall: Frederick Douglass's Second Visit to England (1859-1860) and the Coming of the Civil War', in Rice & Crawford, (eds.), *Liberating Sojourn*, 189-190.

I begin to mark cotton plantations, and my compassionate feelings are rapidly changing sides. It appears to me our benevolent intentions in England have taken a mistaken direction, and that we should bestow our compassion on the masters instead of the slaves. The former by no means enjoy the incubu with which circumstances have loaded them, and would be only too happy if they could supersede black labour by white; but as to the negroes, they are the merriest, and most contented set of people I ever saw; of course there are exceptions, but I am inclined to suspect that we have as much vice, and more suffering, than is caused by the unfortunate institution of Slavery [sic]; and I very much doubt if freedom will ever make the black population, in mass, anything more than a set of grown-up children. Even as to the matter of purchase and sale, it is disliked by masters; and I find compassion very much wasted on the objects of it.[83]

Murray's Charlestonian slave-holders were apparently therefore fulfilling a role in a paternal social setting, and what was more, were involved in the buying and selling of slaves not based on an abstract belief in its righteousness but simply as a function of operating within the pre-existing social structure.

The nuances within American slavery noted by British commentators such as Amelia Murray which differentiated between abstract slavery, southern slavery and abolition were obvious in another popular travelogue, James Stirling's 1857 *Letters from the Slave States*. Within his account of the South, Stirling drew the distinction between abstract slavery and mitigated forms of the system in clear terms. He described slavery itself as 'an accursed thing' and claimed that he pitied 'the white men who labour under this affliction, and to whom this plague has been handed down by their and our forefathers.' Stirling certainly had confidence in his convictions and before he had even arrived in the South maintained that 'even if the planters' stories were true, and the slaves were really as 'happy' as they would have us believe, it would alter my hatred of slavery not a jot.' Despite this confidence he conceded that 'on the whole, and taking the slave population of all the States, statistics prove incontestably that the treatment of the slaves must be reasonably good.' Stirling also reported

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[83] Murray, *Letters from the United States,* 197-198.

having been told by a number of slaves themselves that 'on the whole, their condition had decidedly improved of late years; and that especially in the towns, where the check of public opinion operates, they are considerately treated,' concluding that 'the slave-owning community have participated in the growing humanity of the age.' Interestingly, northern abolition was having a negative, rather than a positive effect on this development. Stirling reported that 'the present strife between North and South has been very prejudicial to the position of the slave, and has materially added to the rigour of his treatment. Indeed the South admits this, and makes it a charge against the abolitionist North.'[84]

Abolition and the treatment of free blacks in the North was the topic which Stirling, in a manner similar to previous observers, used to bridge the gap between the apparently obvious differences between slave and free states. His descriptions of the negative influence of northern abolition on the condition of slaves notwithstanding, Stirling claimed to have identified pro-abolition sentiments in the South and noted that 'a not inconsiderable class of men in the Southern States, especially in the more northern ones, and in all the commercial cities . . . see clearly the evils of slavery, and would fain see it done away with.' He further expanded upon this and stated that 'symptoms are not wanting of anti-slavery feeling in the frontier Slave States' and described how 'in Missouri and Kentucky, Abolitionist movements have already taken place; and perhaps, ere long, the grand 'Old Dominion' [Virginia] herself will re-assert the noble abhorrence of slavery that yet breathes and burns in the words of her wise men of olden times.' On the topic of long-term prospects Stirling confidently concluded that 'slavery cannot continue in the South. The governing class of the South is too highly-civilized to co-exist with slavery' this was something peculiarly southern as far as Stirling was concerned since 'slavery may subsist in Brazil or Cuba, among degenerate, sensual races,

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[84] James Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States* (London: John W. Parker & Son, 1857), 46-49, 285, 294. For a sample of reviews, adverts etc. for Stirling see *Glasgow Herald*, 31st July 1857, 5th Aug 1857; *Examiner*, 1st Aug 1857, 15th Aug 1857; *Standard*, 24th Aug 1857, 8th Sept 1857; *Blackburn Standard*, 23rd Sept 1857, 17th Feb 1857; *Morning Post*, 23rd Sept 1857, 15th Nov 1862, 17th Sept 1863; *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 25th Sept 1857; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 25th Oct 1857; *Bradford Observer*, 12th Nov 1857; *Aberdeen Journal*, 13th Jan 1858; *Daily News*, 11th Dec 1861, 18th Dec 1862.

but it cannot exist side by side with Anglo-Saxon civilization.'[85] As late as 1857 therefore it seems that British perceptions of the sectional disputes in the United States were fundamentally different from those which Civil War propagandists for the North would try to propound. The Mason-Dixon Line was an apparently permeable boundary between the regions and the observations of British figures in the public sphere such as Stirling made clear that no absolute division between freedom in the North and slavery in the South existed.

Echoing Stirling and those before him in many ways by rejecting a clear division between freedom and slavery following the Mason Dixon Line, was another work published in 1857, *American Slavery and Colour* by William Chambers. Chambers was one of the era's most successful and well-known publishers and boasted among his achievements the establishment of *Chambers Edinburgh Journal*, and the production of some of the first cheap editions of authors including Tobias Smollett, John Locke, Sir Walter Scott and Daniel Defoe. In his travelogue Chambers was consistently negative in the descriptions which he gave of the treatment of blacks in the free states. Speaking generally on the subject he contended that 'it is not possible to speak without indignation of the contumelies to which free coloured persons are exposed throughout the United States; and what is most offensive of all is, that more flagrant cases of maltreatment occur in the North [rather] than the South.' Chambers went on to give further illustrations of the attitudes he saw evinced towards free blacks and described how 'nothing is more common in the northern states than to hear the free people of colour spoke of disparagingly.' Similarly he contended that 'it was no unusual occurrence for an inoffensive man of colour, particularly if he was decently dressed, to be openly assaulted by white persons' and described 'riots of the most frightful nature [which] occurred in New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Cincinnati.' A certain level of regional variation was, however, in evidence in the free states, so while in New York and Philadelphia free blacks were

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[85] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States*, 88, 315-316, 343-344, 350.

excluded from colleges, 'in Boston coloured lawyers [are] practising at the bar,' and

Chambers also noted instances of 'coloured physicians, lecturers and manufacturers.'[86]

While he outlined these regional variations, it must also be noted that Chambers did

identify a coherent, if small, abolitionist movement in the free states broadly and gave

particular details about the American Anti-Slavery Society and Massachusetts Anti-Slavery

Society concluding that 'abolition principles are said to be making progress in the North.'

Interestingly, particularly given what would subsequently occur during the Civil War,

Chambers drew his readers' attention to the ideology of disunionists in the United States who

maintained that the ending of the Union was the only route to abolition.[87] This final image of

disunion hastening the end of slavery whether for the simple reason that the Union would no

longer be linked to the slave states, or because, as previous writers had contended, once the

political pressure of the North had been removed, southerners would be more open to

gradual abolition, still contributed to the same discourse in the context of the Civil War which

rejected a connection between the Union and anti-slavery.

Legally and politically, as William Chambers saw it, the North was heavily implicated

in the slave system. He described the Missouri Compromise as an illustration of northerners

'seeing slavery fortif[ied] and extend[ed], provided it keep within a certain limit,' while he

emphasized that even the clergy of New England 'made no objection to the Fugitive Slave

Law.' Speaking about slavery in sectional terms more broadly he informed his readers that

'but for the selfish compromises of the North, slavery must long since had been extinct' since

the northerners 'seek to conciliate the South, for the sake of selfish interests.' These selfish

interests combined both the basic need for southern raw materials in the North and the

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[86] William Chambers, *American Slavery and Colour* (London: W & R Chambers, 1857). 119-120, 126-128, 131-134. Chambers made specific mention of having read Joseph Sturge's earlier travelogue see 138. For a sample of reviews etc. of this work see *Examiner*, 28th March 1857, 4th April 1857; *Aberdeen Journal*, 17th July 1857. For an account of Chambers publishing activities see Aileen Fyfe, *Steam-Powered Knowledge: William Chambers and the Business of Publishing: 1830-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).
[87] Chambers, *American Slavery and Colour*, 116, 12, 9, 51, 2, 171-180. For disunion in a transatlantic context see W. Caleb McDaniel 'Repealing Unions: American Abolitionists, Irish Repeal, and the Origins of Garrisonian Disunionism,' *Journal of the Early Republic* 28.2 (Summer 2008), 243-269.

political compromise by which 'the South votes for Protection, and the North in return votes for Slavery' all of which meant that 'the question of slavery had never, as a general rule, been seriously entertained by the great northern orators in congress. The thing which was really fought for. . .was political power.'[88] The idea of a lack of commitment to the cause of abolition in the North, and the cynical politics which apparently existed behind the slavery debate, took on particular resonance during the Civil War. The lack of abolitionist heritage which Chambers emphasized here frequently undermined the attempts of pro-northern advocates in Britain during the Civil War to portray the cause of the Federal government as being that of abolition. Even when action was taken against slavery, as in the case of the Emancipation Proclamation, a cynical eye was cast over it by a British public who were accustomed to viewing slavery as a political, rather than a moral debate in American sectional politics.

As the 1850s came to a close and the prospect of war in the United States seemed more real to British observers, the complex relationship between slavery and sectionalism, which sat at the heart of the debate about the way the nation should react, was characterized by a lack of unanimity even among the British political classes. In the aftermath of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, the Secretary of the American Legation in London, Benjamin Moran noted in his diary how *The Times* had reacted to the event, reporting that the newspaper had drawn its readers attention to the desire of abolitionists to have 'the population of the southern states turned into a mixed race' as well as drawing comparisons with events in 'Hayti' [Haiti] and Costa Rica.' Lord Lyons wrote from Washington to Lord John Russell on the subject of John Brown's raid and informed him that 'the extraordinary excitement and alarm which exist [s] in Virginia since Harpers Ferry [is] not very confirmatory of the confidence which the Planters profess to feel in the "happy and attached Peasantry" by which euphonious appellation they love to designate their Slaves.' Lyons's use of this term

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[88] Chambers, *American Slavery and Colour*, 44, 140, 89, 92-94, 87. For the Missouri Compromise see Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 147-160; Freehling, *Road to Disunion Volume One*, 144-161; Forbes, *The Missouri Compromise*; Matthew H. Crocker, 'The Missouri Compromise, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Southern Strategy,' *Journal of the West* 43.3, (Summer 2004), 45-52.

and his cynicism over its truth takes us to the heart of British opinion of southern slavery on the eve of the Civil War.[89] The British were accustomed to the notion of the paternal planter and the racial ideas which underpinned it were well established by the end of the 1850s. This paternal myth was a central pillar of southern identity at the outbreak of the war for those in Britain attempting to advocate the cause of the Confederacy and there is plenty of evidence that this trope possessed a long history in Britain as something which mitigated slavery. Yet, the British had always been somewhat cynical about its accuracy and this consistent narrative undermining the race and slavery relationship in its most idealized form came to be key for pro-Union figures in Britain. It essentially gave these men and women space to engage with the idealized version of southern slavery and to undermine it.

As late as 1860 the cotton manufacturer and free trade activist Henry Ashworth gave a series of lectures at the Bolton (Lancashire) Mechanics' Institute in which he failed to draw a clear distinction between North and South on the slavery issue despite being a liberal and close friend of Richard Cobden. The fact that someone like Ashworth would see such a level of complexity in the debate over American abolition further attests to the sophistication of British engagement with sectionalism. While clearly opposed to slavery and personally shocked both by his experience at a slave auction in New Orleans and after being informed about the use of the slave system in Kentucky for 'the advantage to be derived from [the] sale of the offspring of slaves to the planters of the south,' Ashworth's description of southern slavery was not simple of list of brutalities. On the Sea Island plantations he found 'hospitals, with well-trained nurses in attendance [being] regularly provided by the planters.' He similarly noted In Mississippi that 'the slaves were regarded with the same sort of attention as in South Carolina; the hospitals and other arrangements for the sick were provided in the same

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[89] S.A Wallace & F.E Gillespie (eds)., *The Journal of Benjamin Moran 1857-1865 Volume One* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 28th December 1859; Lord Lyons to Lord John Russell, 22nd November 1859 in Barnes & Barnes (eds.), *Private and Confidential*.

manner; and the slaves had their garden plots.'[90] Ashworth therefore presented slavery not simply as an exploitative labour system characterized by violence, but as a reciprocal social arrangement on a paternal model.

He also noted how an unnamed Scottish born, South Carolina Sea Island planter drew a comparison for him between the recollections he had of 'the poor dependent classes in Great Britain and Ireland,' and the South Carolina slave, concluding that the latter 'was a gainer by the amount of care and attention which was daily exercised by his employer for his welfare.' Ashworth similarly informed his audience that further along in his travels he had met with a slave who 'was pleased to tell us of his allowance of rations,- how much pork, how much bread, and other articles he daily received. We inquired if he knew in what manner the old people were provided for in his own country. The poor fellow, with a loud laugh, and knowing look, exclaimed "no pork there, Massa!".' Ashworth also specifically dissociated the slaveholder from the accusations of violence which were a staple of abolitionist literature, explaining that 'we never saw any deadly weapon in the hands of any of the American planters, or their servants: the driver would carry a whip, but the whips did not appear very frightful to look upon.'[91] The liberal Ashworth was precisely the sort of figure one would assume would make a strong division between North and South on the basis of slaveholding, with a round denunciation of the latter, yet that was not the case. He may have disliked the idea of slavery but even in the months immediately before the war he still described the southern slaveholder as a being a paternal figure in many cases, just as Trollope, Brothers, Lyell, Houstoun and others had been doing for the previous thirty years.

To speak then of a dominant discourse neatly dividing the northern and southern states when it came to the topic of slavery before the American Civil War is an over-simplification. A close examination of the works of some of the periods' popular intellectuals

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[90] Henry Ashworth, *A Tour of the United States, Cuba, and Canada: A Course of Lectures Delivered Before the Members of the Bolton Mechanics' Institution* (London: A.W Bennett, 1861), [lectures given in 1860], 124, 40, 92; Genovese & Fox-Genovese *Fatal Self-Deception* 113.
[91] Ashworth, *A Tour of the United States,* 81, 41-42, 95; Genovese & Fox-Genovese *Fatal Self-Deception* 113.

highlights that any assumption of this sort is unsustainable. Rather, it is apparent that the distinction between the North and South on the subject of slavery was not something interchangeable with that which pro-Federals claimed existed between the Union and Confederacy during the war. At the same time, the terms slave-states and free-states were evidently common currency among British commentators when they described the regions and in this sense sectionalism and slavery interacted with British ideas about the United States. Yet, the dividing lines and the actual implications of the terminology were complicated. Certainly slavery was a central pillar of southern identity in British minds but this did not automatically imply sympathy with the northern states. This lack of affinity existed for a number of interrelated reasons. First, even though the owning of slaves was central to the southern divergence from the North, in British opinion at least, it was not the sole defining difference. For the thirty years prior to the Civil War the British public had read about southern abolitionists and pro-slavery northerners. Secondly and intimately related to this factor was the prevalent image of the North as heavily implicated in the slave system. The notion of free blacks in the North being treated appallingly despite the region's claims to social equality meant that for many in Britain the North was not on a higher moral ground than the South. Slavery, race and abolition in a sectional context therefore were often cast in terms of pure political expediency and as part of a northern attempt to enforce its economic vision over that of the South. American abolition was, consequently, not the moral crusade which the British regularly contended had driven their own campaign to abolish slavery. The image of 'the good North' was also subverted by the common division of it into sub regions with New England as the only one seen as having a moral commitment to abolition. In the longer term this undermined the image of a clear northern view of slavery which could be transferred to the cause of the Union during the Civil War.

Along with this more nuanced view of the American sections and slavery, the British intellectual context of the period with regard to race also played a role in undermining the use of slavery to single out and condemn the American South. R. J. M. Blackett has correctly

noted that racism in Britain gradually increased through the 1830s, '40s and '50s, and the perceived 'failure' of West Indian Emancipation, combined with the growing popularity of biological, anthropological and ethnographical theories of racial hierarchy all contributed to this change. With this development came ideas of a racial hierarchy in which different social and labouring roles were seen as appropriate to different races. Frequently this brought with it the conception of paternal relationships as being the ideal links between those in different racial groups. Thomas Carlyle might have taken this to its extreme in his justification of violently compelled labour in *Occasional Discourse*, but the underlying idea influenced the thinking of many in the intellectual mainstream and those from various political persuasions. Crucially, it had clear implications for the understanding of sectional relations in America. For somebody like William Makepeace Thackeray, who rejected the use of violence in labour relations, but also rejected the idea of racial equality, the South had the potential to represent a form of slavery which mitigated the worst effects of the labour system by embracing paternal responsibility.[92]

Qualifiers of this sort do not mean that many in Britain actively advocated slavery or did not frequently criticize the South. The true nature of the relationship between slavery and sectionalism for the British was a complex one since, between 1832 and the firing on Fort Sumter, the British public were bombarded with descriptions of the United States which offered images of the various interactions between race, slavery and sectionalism. Southern slavery was commonly seen as being mitigated by its apparent paternalism, which rendered it a pragmatic social system in the immediate term. Conversely the North was seen as being deeply implicated in the system (still objectionable in the abstract from a British perspective) as well as treating its free black population at least as bad, if not worse, than slaves. By the outbreak of the Civil War then there was no consensus image of the Union as crusading for abolition, and when the Lincoln government remained silent on the topic few in Britain had any reason to believe John Bright, when he informed an audience in Rochdale in December

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[92] Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 23, 54-57.

1861 that 'the conscience of the North [had never been] satisfied with the institution of slavery.'[93]

[93] *The Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 7th Dec 1861.

Chapter Two: 'Specimens of the Old English Gentlemen, descendants of the old English families': Seeing Britain in the American Sections

Almost a year after John Bright had attempted to tell the British public that the Union fought for abolition, a claim which went against British pre-war conceptions of the northern states, one of the most vitriolic of the pro-Confederate texts produced during the Civil War was published. D.W Mitchell's 1862 *Ten Years Residence in the United States,* which recalled its author's life in America in the wake of the 1848 revolutions in Europe, presented the positive aspects which southern advocates wished to disseminate to the British public in clear terms. He stated that 'to this day Old Virginia is more like Old England than is any part of New England or the true Yankeedom' as well as noting that 'there were few Irish in the South' in comparison to urban areas of the North. This was particularly true of New York, a city in which 'the Celtic Irish form a large [part], probably more than a third.'[94] This chapter contends that Mitchell was very much in line with established British ideas in his claims about ethnic links between the South and Britain. The sort of regional ethnic and cultural divisions which he highlighted had existed in the British imagination for at least thirty years before the outbreak of the Civil War. His book was a consequence of the work of the many travellers before him who gave the British public descriptions of the cultural and ethnic geography of each American section and who frequently used the relationship of a section to Britain itself as a point of reference. This 'seeing' of Britain in the cultural and ethnic traits of the northern

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[94] Title quotation from Marryat, *Diary in America*, 32; D.W Mitchell, *Ten Years Residence in the United States* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1862), 72, 60-61, 147. The actual levels of immigration to the city of New York (as well as other areas of the nation) are explored in Leo Hershkowitz 'Overview: The Irish and the Emerging City: Settlement to 1844' in Ronald H. Bayor & Timothy J. Meagher, (eds.), *The New York Irish* (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996); Paul A. Gilje, 'The Development of an Irish American Community in New York before the Great Migration,' in Bayor & Meagher, (eds.), *The New York Irish*; Hasia R. Diner, 'Overview: "The Most Irish City in the Union" The Era of Great Migration, 1844-1877' in Bayor & Meagher, (eds.), *The New York Irish*; Thomas H. O'Connor, *The Boston Irish: A Political History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995); Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). While popular perception held that Irish immigrants flocked to the North they did also have a presence in the South see David T. Gleeson, *The Irish in the South 1815-1877* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

and southern states had major political implications for the British relationship to America during the sectional crises of the 1860s.

The complex ethnic and cultural connections which contributed to a developing sense of Britishness and Americaness between 1832 and 1861 mean that the place of sectionalism in this narrative has often been obscured. In a way this is understandable since each nation was reorientating their sense of self with reference to one another in this period. Writing in the magazine *Table Talk* in 1833, the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge noted that, when it came to the British 'they [Americans] hate [us], no doubt, just as brothers hate.' Coleridge, in this simple sentiment, got to the heart of the apparent paradox of the transatlantic relationship in this period. The Anglo-American connection was often characterized by a recognition of the similarities between Britain and America but at the same time expressions of Anglophobia or anti-Americanism. Many historians have been aware of this phenomenon but it needs to be examined in the context of the sectional differences which British commentators identified. Key to understanding this sectional differentiation and its relationship to Anglophobia (that is Americans using explicitly anti-British rhetoric) and un-Britishness (meaning the use of non-British cultural, social and political practices) was the apparent proximity of both to non-British ethnic groups. The central group here was undoubtedly the Irish, and while conflating Irishness and Anglophobia together may be overly simplistic, historians of the Irish in the United States such as Kerby A. Miller and Hasia R. Diner have noted the significance of Anglophobic ideas in the rhetoric of Irish communities. Crucially the use of this anti-British language was not lost on British observers of American life.[95] This chapter therefore contends that ideas of Anglophobia in American politics were frequently linked to a lack of ethnic and cultural Britishness in particular parts of the United States. British observers often explicitly

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[95] *Table Talk*, Volume 78, 1833; Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 1. See also Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*. While noting the prevalence of Anglophobia in British ideas about the United States and its role in views of the Union during the Civil War, Campbell does not recognize the sectionalism of pre-Civil War Anglophobic discourse in any meaningful way; Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles,* 4, 311, 40; Diner, '"The Most Irish City in the Union"', 104; Scott Boltwood '"The Ineffaceable Curse of Cain": Race, Miscegenation, and the Victorian Staging of Irishness,' *Victorian Literature and Culture* (2001), 383-396.

sectionalized these connections, providing a framework for the identities of different regions which, when the Civil War broke out, became integral to the way the British understood both the Union and Confederacy. This sectionalizing developed into an understanding of three distinctive ethno-cultural enclaves in the United States; the British New England, the British South and the non-British mid-Atlantic. These regions were in turn often associated with either Anglophobia or Anglophilia by British observers.

Writing in her 1837 travelogue *Society in America* Harriet Martineau offered a sectional interpretation of the ethnic make-up of the United States which encapsulated the distinctive identities of the areas of the nation and, despite not following the Mason-Dixon Line, her regional demarcations had resonance during the Civil War. She described the New England states as being proud of their British roots and their 'population being homogenous in contrast to areas such as New York and Pennsylvania.' Seemingly related to this homogeneity was the fact that New England, according to Martineau, was the most Anglophile region of the United States. She told her readers that in New England 'the veneration of England is greater than I think one people ought to have for any other.' In truth, in terms of her views of emigration and ethnicity, Martineau represented a progressive position somewhat outside of the mainstream. Her maverick streak on intellectual subjects was typified on the ethnicity question in her belief that the United States should 'cherish their industrious Germans and Dutch; their hardy Irish; their intelligent Scotch; their kindly Africans, as well as the intellectual Yankee, the insouciant Southerner, and complacent Westerner,' an embracing of ethnic heterogeneity which was far from mainstream.[96] Even as Martineau appeared to extol the virtues of immigration, however, she also offered an image of sectional differences in these terms which provided grist to the mill of those who rejected the notion of

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[96] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 217; *Society in America Volume Three*, 23; *Society in America Volume One*, 217. New Englanders themselves claimed pride in this ethnic homogeneity and what they saw as the values which this brought with it: 'the Reformation and the sacred fire of Anglo-Saxon liberty,' see Kevin Phillips, *The Cousins War: Religion, Politics and the Triumph of Anglo-America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 395; Paul Goodman 'Ethics and Enterprise: The Values of a Boston Elite, 1800-1860,' *American Quarterly* 18.3 (Autumn 1966), 437-451; Numan V. Bartley 'The South and Sectionalism in American Politics,' *The Journal of Politics* 38.3 (Aug 1976), 239-257.

emigration having a positive influence on the United States. This was something particularly apparent in her discussion of New York politics.

Within the city of New York, which for many Britons became a negative proxy of the North as a whole, Martineau experienced the machinery of an election in a city which she herself recognized contained a significant population of Irish immigrants and was deeply disconcerted by her experience. She described 'the atrocious corruption of the New York elections, where an Irishman, just landed, and employed upon the drains, perjures himself, and votes nine times over,' she claimed, however, that this was 'chargeable, not upon immigration, nor yet upon universal suffrage, but upon the faults of the machinery itself.' While Martineau's criticism was explicitly directed towards New York politics, the simple mention of the Irish in these terms placed her descriptions within a British discourse which was highly critical of the influence of the Irish on American politics, an influence which, according to Martin Crawford had 'injected a new vociferous strain into the Anglophobic tradition.' Interestingly, even though she had elsewhere tried to undermine Hibernophobia, both in serious and satirical terms (Martineau mocked a conspiracy theory that 'the Catholics of America were employed by the Pope, in league with the emperor of Austria and the Irish to explode the Union'), she still employed tropes about the Irish in politics, especially in New York, which became standard in British works on the United States and developed a resonance with ideas of mob rule, Anglophobia and political corruption. Evidence of these images being used in a negative and somewhat sectional sense can be seen in the same year that Martineau published her travelogue when the *Morning Post* reprinted a report from New York entitled 'Irish traitors in America' which gave an account of a group called the 'Republican Sons of St. Patrick.'[97] Already, therefore, despite the various qualifiers and codas of Martineau, a negative association between the Irish and New York was developing alongside a sense of the ethnically homogenous New England region.

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[97] Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 96-97, *Society in America Volume Three*, 236; Martin Crawford 'British Travellers and the Anglo-American Relationship in the 1850s,' *Journal of American Studies* 12.2 (Aug 1978), 203-219, 213; *Morning Post*, 4th May 1837.

While her descriptions of the prevalence of different ethnic groups in various regions of the United States were fairly typical, Martineau was *atypical* in her positive views of some Irish immigrants. To the mid-Victorian British, Irishness was almost always used negatively. Historian Michael de Nie in his 2004 book *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* made the convincing claim that for most Britons of the period Irishness was essentially shorthand for inferiority in terms of social status, race and religion when compared to Britishness. This was an inferior status which could be transferred across the Atlantic as an article from the *Cork Constitution*, reprinted in the *Morning Post* on 28th January 1835 made clear describing how 'our countrymen [the Irish] seem likely to become as troublesome in America as they have long been in their own country.'[98] For this reason, even as Martineau attempted to undermine negative ideas about the Irish influence in the United States she still gave a description which associated the Irish with political corruption and with New York. These Irish immigrants apparently influenced New York to such an extent that Martineau and many other British commentators would come see the city, and its hinterland as very different from Britain, something which, when compared with the prevailing ideas of other regions, placed it on a negative footing in British popular understanding.

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[98] *Morning Post*, 29th Jan 1835. For more on the perceived influence of the Irish in American politics see Gilbert Osofsky, 'Abolitionists, Irish Immigrants and the Dilemmas of Romantic Nationalism,' *The American Historical Review* 80.4 (Oct 1975), 889-912; Angela F. Murphy, *American Slavery, Irish Freedom: Abolition, Immigrant Citizenship and the Transatlantic Movement for Irish Repeal* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010); Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763-1834* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 138-142; Richard, *The Slave Power*, 116-120; Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*; Kerby A. Miller, '"Revenge for Skibbereen": Irish Emigration and the Meaning of the Great Famine', in Arthur Gribben, (ed.), *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); McDaniel 'Repealing Unions'; Silbey, *Partisan Imperative*, 44-45, 71-73, 141-142; Feldberg, *The Turbulent Era*, 13-15 Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution*, 13. For anti-Irishness see Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison & London: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004); R.F Foster, *Paddy & Mr. Punch: Connections in Irish and English History* (London: Penguin, 1993); L. Perry Curtis, *Apes & Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington & New York: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1997); Leon O Broin, *Fenian Fever: An Anglo-American Dilemma*, (New York: New York University Press, 1971). Donald M. MacRaild has noted that in Britain 'most contemporary writings exaggerated Irish poverty, immorality, drunkenness and Catholicism' see Donald M. MacRaild, *Irish Migrants in Modern Britain, 1750-1922* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 5-6; De Nie's work provides a convincing rationale for using Britishness to encapsulate England, Scotland and Wales on the basis on the basis of their full participation in the Union, *The Eternal Paddy*, 22. For a classic account of the development of Britishness see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

While Harriet Martineau's New York was populated with corrupt Irishmen and women, another traveller of the late 1830s made similarly striking observations about the ethnic complexion and culture of Pennsylvania. The traveller in question here was Charles Augustus Murray who published his travelogue, *Travels in North America* in 1839. In discussing Philadelphia and its environs Murray described how 'this part of the country was chiefly settled by Germans; indeed, many of them can speak little English' while also noting the existence of German language newspapers further west in Ohio. While Murray was not explicitly critical of these groups, he still contributed to the idea of a non-British ethnically and culturally heterogeneous population in the New York/Pennsylvania region of the North. These ethnic distinctions of America were incredibly pronounced leading Murray to claim that 'there are many features of character in which the Carolinian planter bears as much resemblance to a Boston or Salem Merchant, as a Spanish grandee does to a Flemish burgomaster.' Coming from a Scottish family, and with an apparently strong sense of Scottish identity, Murray distinguished the Scots from the English in the United States setting out an ethnic geography in which 'with due allowance for exceptions, I should say that the Carolinian character is more akin to that of England; the New England, to that of the lowland Scotch' and making a general comparison between the English country house and the Virginian plantation. In attempting to account for the peculiarly 'English' South, Murray suggested that 'before the year 1770, almost every planter sent his boys to Oxford or Cambridge, where he himself had been educated; the necessary consequence of this custom, was a partial adoption of the manners, tastes, and perhaps, too, the faults of the British youth of the higher class.'[99] This language of country houses and Oxbridge educations as a southern characteristic invoked the romanticised 'Cavalier myth' of the Old South and consequently emphasized the existence of historical roots to sectional differentiation. Similarly, the emphasis on the ethno-cultural divisions within the nation more broadly contributed to the idea of a lack of unity within the Union.

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[99] Murray, *Travels in North America Volume One*, 152, 136; Murray, *Travels in North America Volume Two*, 186-187, 208.

Murray's description of the apparent similarities in behaviour between the regions of the Old South (Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and the Carolinas) and a particularly English aristocratic behavioural ethic mirrored, in many ways, the 'Cavalier myth'; a mythological past for the South which claimed that Royalist refugees had settled the region. This theory rendered the South, to many in Britain, as an outpost of a romanticised form of Britishness abroad.[100] Significantly, the Cavalier myth was almost solely deployed by British observers with reference to the South, giving it a very clear sectional resonance. Although Murray drew a distinction between the English and the Scottish in a way which few other travellers did, he placed both groups on a positive footing and for this reason both capably fulfilled the role of the 'Briton' with its positive connotations when he chose to apply the term. When seen in sectional terms therefore, Murray's Old South and New England were peculiarly British in contrast to his German Pennsylvania. While he may not have been particularly anti-Irish or anti-German, he still contributed to an understanding of the ethnic geography of the United State. This geography became central to British ideas about the different areas of America and, after 1861, developed into a key feature of Civil War propaganda when pro-Confederates attempted to paint the North in its entirety as an ethnically heterogeneous area which was hostile to British values and interests.

In the same year (1839) that Murray published his *Travels in North America*, the Tory novelist and naval officer Frederick Marryat published his own travelogue, a text full of examples of sectional divisions based on ethnicity (specifically Britishness or the lack thereof) in areas of the United States. In his opening remarks Marryat offered a brief overview of the sectional differences of America which he conjectured stemmed, at least partly, from the

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[100] The mythology of the Cavalier and Puritan within the context of the United States itself has been discussed in depth by historians. See Cash, *The Mind of the South*; Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*; Fox-Genovese & Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class*; O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order*; Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism*; Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee*; Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*; Jan C. Dawson 'The Puritan and the Cavalier: The South's Perception of Contrasting Traditions,' *The Journal of Southern History* 44.4 (Nov 1978), 597-614. For a controversial thesis about the ethnic as opposed to the behavioural idea of the Cavalier south see David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York & Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989). For attempts by propagandists to utilize these myths see chapter four.

alternative cultures of 'the puritan of the east, the Dutch descent of the middle states, [and] the cavalier of the south.' These divisions explicitly invoked the Cavalier myth and further contributed to the belief in two forms of Britishness existing in the United States, that of the Puritan in New England and the Cavalier in the South, with a distinctly non-British area in-between. For Marryat, as for other observers, these historical roots had clear contemporary resonance when it came to accounting for the peculiarities of different regions in the United States, with New England, for instance still displaying its inherent puritanism. A specific instance of this cultural heritage which Marryat highlighted was the existence of a restrictive legal framework commonly known as the 'Blue Laws' in Connecticut which he attacked in no uncertain terms before he drew the overall conclusion that 'these pilgrim fathers were fanatics and bigots.'[101]

Though Marryat was unequivocally critical of Puritan ethics he was not wholly negative about New England and gave glowing descriptions of the pro-British attitudes of people in Massachusetts, as well as emphasizing the preponderance of English ethnic homogeneity of the area. He described the people of Boston as being 'more English than in any other city in America' and informed his readers that 'you meet. . . specimens of the Old English Gentlemen, descendants of the old English families' while noting how, in the state of Massachusetts, the people were 'fond of comparing their country to that of England.' In addition to these cultural observations Marryat was very much in agreement with most other observers in his belief that 'there is certainly less intermixture of foreign blood in this city than in any other in America.'[102] The New England of Frederick Marryat represented something of a curiosity then, yet it is indicative of the tensions in the way many British people saw the identity of the region. The people of New England were unequivocally ethnically British and had inherited many of the manners of their forebears, but they were drawn from a fanatical tradition which opened them up to criticism. This was an element of their identity which some

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[101] Marryat, *Diary in America,* 2, 87, 92-93.
[102] Ibid*.,* 2, 30-32, 87, 92-93.

Civil War writers attempted to exploit in order to subvert the otherwise peerless British credentials of New England, credentials which pro-Union figures attempted to assert as they put forward the cause of the North.

Looking beyond New England, Marryat's vision of the northern states emphasized the non-British ethnic heterogeneity in other regions of the North. On the city of Albany in New York he told his readers that it 'may even now be considered a Dutch city,' while he noted that the numbers of Dutch and German settlers in Cincinnati (Ohio), which he estimated at 10,000, gave them such an influence that the idea had been discussed by local government to print the cities regulations in multiple languages. Like others, Marryat saved his most pointed critiques for the Irish communities of the North noting in particular their detrimental effect on political affairs in the form of an anecdote. Murray reported that 'not long ago, an Irishman, who had murdered his wife, was brought to trial upon the eve of an election' the upshot of the case, despite the evidence against the man, had been acquittal, a verdict which was a result of the power of 'the Irish party.' Similarly while classifying the German emigrants as 'contented and well behave[d],' Marryat was highly critical of the Irish influence at every turn frequently utilizing obviously ethnic language:

We have been accustomed to ascribe the turbulence of the Irish lower classes to ill-treatment and a sense of their wrongs, but this disposition appears to follow them everywhere. It would be supposed that, having emigrated to America and obtained the rights of citizens, they would have amalgamated and fraternized to a certain degree with the people; but such is not the case; they hold themselves completely apart and distinct, living with their families in the same quarter of the city, and adhering to their own manners and customs. They are just as little pleased with the institutions of the United States as they are with the government at home; the fact is, that they would prefer no government at all.

The distinctive anti-Irish rhetoric utilized here is itself no surprise; it is simply the transfer of ideas about the Irish as identified by De Nie, across the Atlantic. In a sectional context, however, this language developed considerable significance as certain areas of the United

States (New York specifically) became heavily associated with the Irish and the negative implications this brought with it.[103]

While Marryat presented a distinctive sense of regional difference in the United States he, consistent with many other commentators, did not appear to see this as incompatible with an all-pervading, potentially unifying use of Anglophobic political rhetoric. As Marryat phrased it, 'if we are to believe the democratic press, England is the cause of everything offensive to the majority- if money is scarce, it is England that has occasioned it- if credit is bad, it is England- if eggs are not fresh or beef is tough, it is, it must be, England.' Yet, on a practical level, Marryat suggested a potential sectional division within this Anglophobia. He recognized the ethnic similarity of New England to Britain and the respect expressed by many of its residents for traditionally British ideas. Marryat also looked back on the War of 1812 and informed his readers that it 'was the Northern States which were so opposed to it, and the Southern who were in favour [sic].' Even by the time of his visit in the 1830s, however, he noted an apparent shift in attitude and pointed out that in contrast to 1812, it was now 'the southern states which were very anxious to remain at peace with England' as opposed to those in the North who would 'readily consent to a war.'[104] Marryat's analysis of the North suggested the existence of two distinct regions, a traditionally British, sometimes Anglophile, New England, and an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous New York/Pennsylvania with an apparent preponderance towards Anglophobia.

Just like Marryat before him, the politician and abolitionist James Silk Buckingham came back from the United States with worrying tales about the influence ethnic diversity was having on the western side of the Atlantic, concerns which he publicized in the 1841 book *America*. The descriptions which Buckingham gave of areas of the northern states were very

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[103] Marryat, *Diary in America*, 41, 168, 306; Frederick Marryat, *Diary in America with Remarks on its Institutions Part Second* (Paris, Baudry's European Library, 1840), 53. For the Irish and American politics in the urban North see Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 311-312, 328-330, 340; Gilje, 'The Development of an Irish American Community,' 80; Diner, '"The Most Irish City in the Union"', 88, 100-104; Dale T. Knobel, *Paddy and the Republic: Ethnicity and Nationality in Antebellum America* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1986); Di Nie, *The Eternal Paddy*.
[104] Marryat, *Diary in America*, 32.

much in the tradition of previous British commentators. He provided detailed depictions of the ethnic diversity of towns outside of what previous writers had characterized as 'British New England.' He described, for instance, the existence of places in Pennsylvania such as Reading, Bethlehem, and Bethany, in the latter two of which 'the English language is literally an unknown tongue.' In commenting on Buffalo (New York) Buckingham described how 'Dutch and German emigrants abound and the Irish are not less numerous', something which had apparently swelled the Catholic population of the town considerably. In Albany, he developed his negative characterizations of Irish influence further, recounting an article from a local newspaper, the *Temperance Recorder*, which he claimed illustrated, among other things, the detrimental effect of the Irish population on the morality of the town. The emphasis on the Irish here was fairly representative of the British traveller of the period and, what is more, Buckingham explicitly politicized the Irish in negative terms. Notably, he gave a description of electoral practices in New York during which he claimed that the high levels of Irish immigrants to the city undermined the political process in a manner reminiscent of Harriet Martineau. Buckingham also noted that 'no proof of citizenship is demanded beyond [the elector] swearing to the fact,' which meant that 'many Irish labourers, who have not been six months in the country, and who have no legal claim whatever to citizenship,' were 'voting as Americans.'[105]

In the same way that Buckingham described Pennsylvania and New York in distinctly non-British ethnic terms, and in a manner consistent with much of the previous literature, his conclusions about the Old South and New England placed him firmly within a growing tradition which presented these areas as the most ethnically and culturally British parts of the United States. On the South he noted that:

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[105] Buckingham, *America, Volume Two,* 23, 71-72; Buckingham, *America, Volume Three*, 13, 38; Buckingham, *America, Volume Two* 417-418, 71-72. Buckingham was by no means unanimously critical of the Irish, for example in his subsequent work *The Slave States of America Volume One* (London: Fisher, Son & Co, 1842), he noted how in Natchez (Mississippi) 'the Irish emigrants in America preserve most of the generous virtues of their native island,' see 458.

The old men, from the south, and from Carolina and Virginia especially, are what would be called perfect gentlemen of the old school with us,- precise, yet elegant in their dress- courteous and affable in their manners- high toned in their politics and taste- lax in their morality, while fashion sanctions their conduct- warm in their attachments- fierce in their resentments- and punctilious in all points of honour and etiquette. The remains of the feudal system in Virginia, where the laws on entail existed, and where large estates descended hereditarily from father to elder son, sustained the manners and feeling; and Virginia is still called "The Old Dominion," as if to preserve the recollection of its ancient condition as a colony of the British crown.[106]

This passage evoked for readers the Cavalier mythology of the South, along with the sense of an aristocratic social system and, potentially at least, a lingering sense of Anglophilia in the region.

On the subject of New England, Buckingham found both the positive and negative elements of British ethnicity which Marryat had previously noted. He wrote that 'there is no portion of the United States in which the character of the inhabitants has been more extensively influenced, if not almost wholly formed, by the institutions and conduct of their ancestors, than in New England.' Despite the fact that he roundly criticized the Puritan underpinning of this morality as well as the lack of 'genuine worth and cordiality' in Boston, Buckingham still contended that it 'more resembles England, than any other city of America.' The following year, and in a similar vein, the scientist Charles Daubeny noted a meeting with the Otis family in Boston at which he had found that 'Mr Otis [was] a thorough English gentleman of the old school.' While at the theatre in the same city, Daubeny found 'the manners and appearance of the audience quite English.' Contradictions were, however, clearly operating in both texts. Buckingham, for instance, singled out Boston for both its particularly English ethnicity since 'the New Englanders, and the Bostonians in particular, pride themselves upon the purity of their descent from English blood, and trace. . .their origin to English families, with all the pride of ancestry that characterises our nobility and gentry at

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[106] Buckingham, *America, Volume Two*, 439.

home' but also noted that 'there is perhaps no city in the Union where the jealousy of the English is greater.'[107] As he saw it, both the Old South and New England could claim a distinctive English heritage, but against the backdrop of contemporary politics and the Anglophobia of national political discourse it was New England which played a larger role in condemning its mother country and opposing its interests.

In his 1842 work *The Slaves States of America*, produced as a sequel to *America*, Buckingham expressed reservations about even entering the South given his own credentials as an abolitionist. Yet the report of his time in the region offered considerably more than an extended panegyric against slavery. He clearly had concerns over aspects of the section and in the same way that he had been uncomfortable with the Puritan morality of New England he recognized the inheritance in the South of 'the disappointed Cavaliers,' and of 'rakes, gamblers and persons of profligate habits' as well as describing excessive drinking as being characteristic of the region. Even allowing for these reservations, however, Buckingham's South was painted in relatively positive colours particularly as a centre of Anglophilia. While in attendance at a temperance meeting in Charleston, for example, he observed that:

At the close of the meeting, a second anthem was sung by the choir, to the British national air of "God save the King," which I was afterwards told was done in compliment to the nation to which I belonged. I had been announced, indeed, to the meeting by the judge as "the distinguished foreigner;" which sounded strangely in my ears and all around me- the place, the people, the language, and even the object of our meeting seemed so thoroughly English that I could scarcely think I was in a foreign land.[108]

It was evident to Buckingham, even though he was far from enamoured with many aspects of southern life, that as a section it did possess a special air of Englishness, something which made it more British than other regions of the United States.

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[107] Buckingham, *America Volume Two*, 439; Buckingham, *America Volume Three*, 238, 251, 428, 421-422; Charles Daubeny, *Journal of a Tour Through the United States and Canada, made During the Years 1837-1838* (Oxford: T. Combe, 1843), 66.
[108] Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume One*, 20, 286-287, 565-566.

In similarly positive terms Buckingham wrote of Norfolk (Virginia) that 'I should think [it] resembles much more the old Colonial state of society, in feelings and manners than any place in the North, and may fairly rank with Charleston and Savannah, which resemble it in this respect.' In classifying the manners of Old South generally and Virginia specifically Buckingham expressed a high level of respect for the people, finding them a middle ground between 'the coldness and reserve of the New Englanders, and the boldness and recklessness of the Louisianans and Mississippians.'[109] For Buckingham, as for previous popular commentators of the period, regardless of their political persuasion, the United States offered a variety of cultures and differing degrees of ethnic homogeneity which were increasingly definable in sectional terms. A clear mental geography to the United States from a British point of view was becoming discernible and, although it did not present a version of the nation split along the Mason-Dixon Line, it had obvious sectional implications. Both New England and the Old South had British roots both ethnically and culturally, however, they were Puritan and Cavalier in terms of their attitudes, creating a division between them. New York and Pennsylvania represented a definite 'other,' with New York the centre of Anglophobia in the US. Crucially, these divisions helped to familiarize the British with the idea that the United States lacked national unity and was instead composed of a variety of regions with demonstrably different ethnic and cultural characteristics.

While James Silk Buckingham's publications, with their sense of regional variation in culture, ethnicity and levels of Anglophobia in the United States were unquestionably popular, even more significant texts appeared soon after. Charles Dickens's immensely popular travelogue, *American Notes for General Circulation,* was published in 1842 and further

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[109] Buckingham, *The Slave States Volume One*, 20, 287, 565-566; Buckingham, *The Slave States of America Volume Two,* 488, 539-540. In terms of the different ethnic complexions of these regions, by 1850 1% of South Carolina's population was foreign born, 2% of Virginia's was, while 21% of New Yorkers were foreign born. See Richards, *The Slave Power*, 101-102. For a discussion of the apparent Anglophobia present in Southern politics as a response to British abolitionism see Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation*; Richards, *The Slave Power*, 142-143; Edward B. Rugemer 'The Southern Response to British Abolitionism: The Maturation of Proslavery Apologetics,' *The Journal of Southern History*, 70.2 (May 2004), 221-248; Charles S. Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819-1848* (Louisiana State University Press, 1948), 224, 230, 240; For the existence of both Anglophobia & Anglophilia in the South see O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order.*

contributed to British understanding of the regional differences within the United States in terms of both culture and ethnicity. Just like those before him, Dickens noted the Puritan heritage of the New England states and did so in negative terms writing of Hartford (Connecticut) that 'too much of the old Puritan spirit exists in these parts to the present hour; but its influence has not tended, that I know, to make the people less hard in their bargains, or more equal in their dealings' as well as making mention of a law in that town by which a man could be placed in the stocks for kissing his wife on a Sunday. These descriptions of New England Puritanism were similar to the deeply critical account given of the Connecticut 'Blue Laws' (banning business on Sundays) by Frederick Marryat and, given that Dickens had avidly read through existing travel literature prior to his departure, it is perfectly possible that he was aware of Marryat's descriptions. The Puritanism of certain areas in the North and its antithesis; the Cavalier South contributed to a distinction of cultures within 'British' America. Not only this but it tended to bring with it connotations, that of the romanticized South in contrast to the austere, sometimes hypocritical New England. As the historian Charles Cullop noted in his work on Confederate Civil War propaganda and, in particular, the Alabamian Henry Hotze's newspaper the *Index*, the similarity of the southern planter to the British aristocrat underpinned various propaganda efforts and it is clear this image had pre-Civil War roots, even though it possessed a questionable factual basis. In a manner equally consistent with his forebears Dickens also recognized the significance of the Irish population in New York, and its negative influence on the city.[110] By the time of the publication of *American*

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[110] Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation* (1966 repr. London: Oxford University Press, 1842), 198, 73,18. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of *American Notes* see *Morning Post*, 30th Aug 1842, 2nd Dec 1842, 20th Oct 1842; *Morning Chronicle*, 13th Sept 1842, 19th Oct 1842, 28th Oct 1842; *Standard*, 14th Sept 1842, 30th Sept 1842, 25th Oct 1842; *Ipswich Journal*, 1st Oct 1842, 3rd Dec 1842, 22nd Oct 1842; *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 1st Oct 1842; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 6th Oct 1842, 8th Dec 1842; *Examiner*, 15th Oct 1842, 29th Dec 1860, 22nd Oct 1842; *Bristol Mercury*, 22nd Oct 1842; *Bury and Norwich Post, and East Anglian*, 26th Oct 1842; *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 29th Oct 1842, 17th Jan 1852; *The Era*, 30th Oct 1842; *Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Chronicle etc.* 31st Oct 1842; *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, 26th Nov 1842; *Caledonian Mercury*, 28th Nov 1842; *Derby Mercury*, 7th Dec 1842; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 8th Dec 1842; *Belfast News-Letter*, 9th Dec 1842; *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, 9th Dec 1842; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 19th Feb 1843, 11th Jan 1852; *Daily News*, 10th Feb 1846, 21st Feb 1846; *Reynolds Newspaper*, 14th June 1857; Claybaugh, 'Towards a New Transatlanticism,' 446; Charles P. Cullop, *Confederate Propaganda in Europe 1861-1865* (Coral

Notes the sense of geography reinforced by Dickens, thanks to the wide dissemination of *Notes* in the British press, was already well established and the public had a broad idea of what was implied ethno-culturally by New York, Massachusetts or Virginia.

These divisions often brought with them a connection to Britain itself in terms of attitude. This was recognized by contemporary travellers such as Charles Daubeny who reported an exchange between a group of southerners and himself in 1843 and in so doing obliquely referred his audience to the political dimensions of sectionalism and its relationship to views of Britain. He reported how, when discussing the American Union, a southerner had told him that they 'are losers by this national compact' before writing that 'it is surprising how much more fond they seem of talking English politics than their own; Brougham, Canning, Melbourne, and the little Queen, were the principal themes of our after dinner conversation, and I must say, seemed as familiar to them, as they are to us.' Daubeny also took note of some specifically Anglophile southerners including Bishop Moore of Richmond who according to Daubeny 'spoke with great affection of Old England,' and a Judge named Porter who professed 'undiminished love for the Old Country.'[111] The significance of these exchanges was clear. In an obvious way they presented an Anglophile South based on the regions apparent interest in British political celebrities. In addition they illustrated a sense of alienation in the South from Washington politics, providing a neat connection between Anglophilism and southern sectional political identity.

The Anglophilism of the South continued to be contrasted with the ethnic heterogeneity of the North during the 1840s. John Robert Godley for instance explored the theme of ethnicity in New York in his two volume *Letters from America* in 1844. In both the city and state of New York, Godley recognized significant Irish and German populations, writing of Albany that he 'heard a good deal of German talked in the streets, and saw German

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Gables, Florida: University of Miami Press, 1969) 57. For an in depth examination of Hotze's *Index* see R.T Smith *The Confederate Index and the American Civil War*, (MA Thesis: University of Washington, 1961).
[111] Daubeny, *Journal of a Tour Through the United States and Canada,* 122,146.

inscriptions over the shop-doors' while finding in Buffalo that 'one third of the population of the town is composed of Germans.' In addition to this he noted the many Irish men in New York City, doing so primarily in negative terms. He wrote for instance about how they dominated the population of the New York workhouses and expressed serious reservations about their political influence since 'taken as a body, they are too formidable by their numbers and their union to be neglected by a popular candidate,' a concern which James Silk Buckingham had expressed three years before. Godley's attempts to grapple with the politics of sectionalism and the potential connection they had to the historical cultures of the Puritan and Cavalier led him to conclusions which linked ethnicity, cultural practices and politics. In his text he traced the development of sectional identities from the Puritan/Cavalier root, through the era of Federalism and Jeffersonianism and ending in the current tensions of American politics.[112] Godley then, while he offered his own particular interpretation of American sectionalism which involved unique features, still deployed the traditional vocabulary of ethnicity and culture in relation to the United States and saw the expression of these differences in the political sphere.

Even if there were variations in the detail, another observer who published in 1844, George Featherstonhaugh, subscribed as enthusiastically to the Cavalier and Puritan culture myth as did Godley. Featherstonhaugh, in reviewing his experiences as a traveller, informed his American readers that:

The original colonists of North America may be divided into two classes,- those enterprising and speculative adventurers who went to Virginia in pursuit of wealth, and the Puritans, who left their native country for the sake of enjoying freedom of opinion. The southern, or Virginian colony, became in all material circumstances a copy of the mother country.[113]

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[112] John Robert Godley, *Letters from America Volume One* (London: John Murray, 1844), 40, 140, 45, 5, 55-58; Godley, *Letter from America Volume Two*, 167.
[113] Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion through the Slave States, Volume Two,* 375-376.

As the colonies developed, according to Featherstonhaugh, 'dissatisfaction was evinced [towards Britain] in Virginia at an early period, yet the first germ of American aversion to monarchical government is to be traced to the Puritans who settled the northern colony of Massachusetts.' Featherstonhaugh also followed well-worn tracks (for the most-part) when it came to American ethnicity, by emphasizing the influence of the non-British population in areas of the North when he explained to his readers that the Germans of Pennsylvania 'control election[s] entirely.' Even in the Old South, the region most commonly classified in terms of similarity and respect towards Britain, Featherstonhaugh had some reservations about the contemporary condition in the area with most of his concerns centring on the person of Thomas Jefferson and his influence on society. Featherstonhaugh maintained that 'before Mr. Jefferson's time Virginia was a happy English colony, a better copy of the mother country than any of the other colonies. She had numerous country gentlemen, whose fathers, as the custom of the day was, had sent their sons "home" to be educated at Oxford and Cambridge, and she had an established endowed Protestant Episcopal Church.' For Featherstonhaugh this apparently idyllic British society began to change under Jefferson's influence. The contrast here to the British Virginians was drawn with the Pennsylvanian Germans who 'control the elections entirely, and have it in their power to put the government in the hands of Germans.'[114] As was invariably the case among travellers and novelists before the Civil War, Featherstonhaugh's account of the ethnic and cultural differences between the sections of the United States included unique aspects. He still, however, propounded a view of the nation which placed him alongside earlier writers such as Martineau who had created a sense of sectionality for the British public; the Old South, New England, New York/Pennsylvania and the Deep South were demonstrably different entities as he described them to his readers

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[114] Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion through the Slave States, Volume Two*, 376, 264; Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion through the Slave States, Volume One,* 19, 116. The ways in which Jefferson's political thought was appropriated and rejected by southern statesmen is discussed in James J. Read, *Majority Rule Versus Consensus: The Political Thought of John C. Calhoun* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009).

The eminent geologist and close friend of Charles Darwin, Sir Charles Lyell fits equally comfortably in this tradition with Featherstonhaugh, echoing the same sectional divisions of both Featherstonhaugh and his predecessors within his 1845 travel narrative *Travels in North America: With Geological Observations on the United States, Canada and Nova Scotia*. Just as Charles Daubeny had done two years before, Lyell expressed a great deal of respect for Virginia and informed his readers that in the state he had discovered 'to be an Englishman engaged in scientific pursuits was a sufficient passport, and their servants, horses and carriages, were most liberally placed at my disposal.' Even further South in Charleston, Lyell explained that among the planters 'the usual style of living is that of the English country gentlemen. They have well-appointed carriages and horses, and well-trained black servants.' In a sense, however, these examples appear to be islands of Britishness in a nation more generally diluted by immigration. A major concern which Lyell had about this immigration was its effect on the system of government, a concern which Frederick Marryat had expressed a few years earlier. Lyell clearly identified the possible implications of immigration for effective democracy when he cautioned:

Any foreigner who has hastily embraced the notion that a suffrage virtually universal must be incompatible in the US with order, obedience to the laws, security of property a high degree of civilization, and the most impeachable public credit, has only to make himself acquainted with the present condition of the New-England States, especially Massachusetts, and he will feel wholly satisfied that the charge may be refuted.[115]

This was Lyell making a clear division within the United States on the political process itself and offering something of a defence of democracy in doing so. Nevertheless, this was a point underpinned by ethnicity:

It is a wholly different question whether so democratic a constitution is equally fitted for the exigencies of many other parts of the Union, where the mass of the people are less advanced in knowledge and

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[115] Lyell, *Travels in North America Volume One*, 135, 181, 234-235.

wealth, where the forces of public opinion and sympathy is checked, and free-communication impeded by *distinctness of race* [my emphasis] or language.[116]

New England was apparently only able to operate its political system because of its ethnic homogeneity and the areas of the nation which lacked this ethno-cultural base were treated very differently by Lyell.

In order to emphasize his point about the political consequences of ethnicity and culture Lyell drew his audiences' attention to places which had more heterogeneous populations. He noted, for instance, that 'Pennsylvania labours under the disadvantage of being jointly occupied by two races, those of British and those of German extraction' and that in Ohio 'an influx of illiterate Irish, Welsh, and Westphalian settlers has tended to lower the educational qualifications of her electors.' For Lyell, as for so many others it was the Irish connection which was so unsettling and he noted the potentially subversive undertones of Irish political action in the United States in a British domestic context when he drew attention to 'an endless procession of Irish parading through the streets with portraits of O'Connell.' In all likelihood, the parade which Lyell described here was connected to the Repeal movement and its leader back in Ireland, Daniel O'Connell, who had formed his Loyal National Repeal Association in Dublin in 1840 to agitate for repeal of the act of Union between Ireland and Great Britain. Many in Britain commented upon the existence of an Irish Repeal movement in the United States and the cause was frequently conflated with the Anglophobia of American politics. One particular newspaper report is worthy of attention here, an account given by the *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* of a speech by New York Governor William Seward, a prominent Whig, to a group of Repealers in Utica. In his address, and as part of his attempt to woo Irish voters, Seward came out in favour of Repeal, liberally seasoning his sentiments with Anglophobic rhetoric. This report therefore brought together three of the key negative aspects of the North; the Irish, mass politics and Anglophobic terminology. On the long-term prospects for the United States, Charles Lyell was remarkably

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[116] Ibid., 234-235.

positive and certainly did not seem to envision any dissolution of the Union based on the ethnic and cultural distinctions he had outlined. He assumed instead that since 'the English language, laws, and literature, have pervaded more and more the Dutch, German, and French settlements. . . the danger of the confederacy appears to all reflecting politicians less imminent now than formerly.'[117] Whatever the personal views of Lyell on the future prospects of the United States, for the British public in 1845, he was simply another popular author who created a mental geography of the American nation with clear sectional divisions and which any reader could understand and interpret. These were divisions which in their most polarized form presented a juxtaposition between the rural Elysium of the country-house owning plantation squire in Virginia and the 'rabble' of Irish Repealers marching through the streets of New York City.

The continuing British public interest in the United States was attested to by the fact that only four years after the publication of his first work on the nation, Sir Charles Lyell returned to the topic of America in 1849 giving an account of a second visit he had made. Travelling as he did during the tensions over the Oregon border and being well connected socially, he was privy to debates over the issues at stake involving key figures including Daniel Webster who, according to Lyell, not only urged peace but 'rebuked the blustering tone of defiance, in which the demagogues and newspapers in some parts of the Union were indulging against England.' Similarly, a South Carolinian warned his British acquaintance that the reason for political support for potential war was that '"we have a set of demagogues,"'

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[117] Lyell, *Travels in North America Volume One,* 229-230, 234; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 7th Aug 1844. Seward's relationship to Anglophobia reared its head again during the Civil War for this see footnote 266. The oft-quoted French traveller Alexis de Tocqueville had reservations about the compatibility of immigrants and American democracy see Johann M. Neem, 'Taking Modernity's Wager: Tocqueville, Social Capital and the American Civil War,' *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41.4 (Spring 2011), 591-618, 604. For the transatlantic significance of the repeal movement see Murphy, *American Slavery, Irish Freedom*. The influence of these planter gentlemen models was particularly strong on novelists from the 'muscular fiction' tradition of George Alfred Lawrence, William Stephens Hayward and Ouida (Louise De La Ramee). According to the scholar Charles Shain the works of Ouida set during the Civil War saw: 'her exiled English gentlemen conduct themselves as if they were killing blue-coated grouse instead of Union soldiers.' See Shain, 'The English Novelists and the American Civil War,' 412. For more on how Lyell specifically and British travellers more generally saw the Irish influence in the United States as inherently negative see Berger, *The British Traveller in America 1836-1860,* 101-102.

who '"in this country. . . trade on the article called "hatred to England".' The language of popular political Anglophobia, particularly in the press, was, in this instance at least, clearly national. Yet the idea of the Anglophobic rallying cry in American politics came to develop a distinctly sectional edge against the backdrop of the Civil War, particular during the *Trent* crisis when the image of Union politicians and the press whipping up popular Anglophobia became central to Confederate propaganda in Britain. The Anglophobic press image was something rendered particularly negative when tied to New York and the apparent anti-Britishness of the Irish in the city which travellers had been noting for the previous thirty years.[118]

In terms of his travels more broadly Lyell deployed well-rehearsed images of the ethnic and cultural make-up of different regions. His New Englanders were marked by their 'strict morals,' while 'in Massachusetts. . . the white population is more educated than elsewhere, and more Anglo-American, having less of recent foreign admixture.' Similarly he found something akin to affection towards the Great Britain in the South, although it should be noted that British abolition was, at least to some extent increasing anti-British feeling in the slave states in Lyell's view. This idea that the South held an Anglophobe position because of the close association between Britain and abolition was something recognized by a number

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[118] Lyell, *A Second Visit Volume One*, 180-181, 298. For the diplomatic history of the period and the significant tensions over Oregon see Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation*, 229-392; Bourne, *The Balance of Power*; 120-170; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*; Dykstra, *The Shifting Balance of Power*; Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement,* 49-73; Scott Kaufman, *The Pig War: The United States, Britain, and the Balance of Power in the Pacific Northwest, 1846-72* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Oxford: Lexington Books, 2004); Stuart, *United States Expansionism*, 77-166; Brauer 'The United States and British Imperial Expansion'; Richard S. Cramer 'British Magazines and the Oregon Question,' *Pacific Historical Review* 32.4 (Nov 1963), 369-382; W.D Jones, *The American Problem*. The key scholarly text examining the Anglo-Saxonism in this context remains Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass, London: Harvard University Press, 1981); Dorothy Ross '"Are we a Nation?": The Conjuncture of Nationhood and Race in the United States, 1850-1876,' *Modern Intellectual History* 2.3 (2005), 327-360; Reginald Horsman 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850,' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37.3 (July-Sept 1976), 387-410. According to Sam W. Haynes it was the perceived Anglophilia of Daniel Webster which prevented him from being a credible presidential candidate see Haynes *Unfinished Revolution*, 121. For details on southern Anglophobia as a phenomenon derived from abolitionism see Rugemer, *The Problem of Emancipation*, 181; Peter S. Onuf 'Antebellum Southerners and the National Idea' in L Diane Barnes, Brian Schoen, and Frank Towers, (eds.), *The Old South's Modern Worlds Slavery, Region and the Nation in the Age of Progress* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 36-37.

of travellers and was later exploited by British pro-Unionists during the Civil War. Yet as Peter Onuf has noted, the end of the Mexican War (1846-1848) convinced most southerners that Britain had no interest in interfering with slavery, something which reduced the Anglophobic rhetoric of the region.[119] Although it would be incorrect to contend that the perceived relationship between British abolition and southern Anglophobia was a negligible one as far as the British were concerned, the connection should not be exaggerated. As Lyell's work demonstrates, this connection certainly was not significant enough to obscure the British view of the connection between American Anglophobia in the North and ethno-cultural heterogeneity.

In a discussion with a friend in New York, for example, Lyell reported back on the deeply negative influence of both the Irish and Germans in politics, explaining that in New York the 'Irish. . . turn the scale in the elections for mayor and other city officers' as well as repeating the accusation of his American friend that if not for the (often fraudulent) immigrant vote Henry Clay would have been the victor of the 1845 election. The success of Polk was therefore, allegedly, because 'the Romanist priests feel, or affect, sympathy with this political party [Democrats] and in the last election they instructed the Germans and Irish to vote for Polk against Clay.' This connection between New York and non-British groups was strong in Lyell's second travel account and deeply politicized. He recounted mockingly for example a conversation with an American friend who had informed him that the pigs could not be removed from the streets of the city because of the likely response of their Irish owners. Similarly, in discussing Philadelphia, Lyell maintained that the development of an Irish enclave in the city had necessitated a more expensive and active police force. Boston, however, so often the home of British people and British values in the accounts of writers, was in this case also connected to the Irish community of the United States with Lyell reporting on a Repeal meeting in the city during which a Boston artisan had informed him that

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[119] Lyell, *A Second Visit Volume One*, 159, 182, 299, 322; Onuf 'Antebellum Southerners and the National Idea.'

'"we hope that we may one day be able to do for Ireland what France did for the United States in our great struggle for independence."' The key point of emphasis in both Boston and New York was still, however, the Irish which as Lyell's mentions of mass politics and Repeal demonstrate, brought with them associations of Anglophobia and mob rule.[120]

Despite drawing different conclusions from Lyell on many points, the journalist and free trade advocate Archibald Prentice gave further descriptions of particularly British enclaves within the United States in his 1849 travelogue. For Prentice even the landscape of certain areas reminded him of home, in particular the New Jersey coast, which he glimpsed from a boat and considered 'exceedingly English in its appearance' and the countryside around Baltimore which was 'beautifully undulating and, in spite of slavery, very English.' In contrast, Prentice drew his readers attention to the lack of Britishness in some regions, specifically Pennsylvania, which he found to be greatly influenced by Germans noting that 'at present there are nearly as many German newspapers published in Pennsylvania as English ones.' One of the most interesting of Prentice's descriptions was that which he gave of Hartford, a town which Charles Dickens had been less than enamoured with. He rejected outright Dickens's image of the town as puritanical and even went as far as to suggest that 'Mr. Dickens, in his notice of Hartford, had adopted a little of [the] southern imputation of hypocrisy.'[121] Prentice's sentiment not only illustrated the place of the travel narrative as a point of reference on America for the British literate class, but was indicative of the appreciation of a sense of northern and southern identity and the possibility of British sympathy for one or the other. Although Prentice clearly overstated his case with regard to Dickens, his comments attest to the continued centrality of the travel narrative in the creation of the sectional identities of America in the British mind.

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[120] Lyell, *A Second Visit Volume One*, 249-250, 291, 256, 187-188. For a full discussion of mass politics see chapter three.

[121] Bourne, *Britain and the Balance* in particular 170-206; Archibald Prentice *A Tour of the United States with Two Lectures on Emigration, Delivered in the Mechanics' Institution Manchester* (London: John Johnson, 1849), 5, 37, 104, 160-161.

An emphasis on the influence of the Irish in New York continued to characterize British views of ethno-cultural sectionalism in the United States. A letter sent by an American resident in Britain to the liberal London *Daily News,* in June 1848 was indicative of the strong Irish connection to the city and its apparent consequences. This correspondent opened his account by noting that 'among the thousands who emigrate to the United States, the Irish are conspicuous for their number and peculiarities.' They seemingly had a clear position in the city of New York since 'all the dirty work in the city. . .is performed chiefly by the Irish.' They did not, however, simply fulfil this labour role, they were also apparently active in politics and had a negative effect on the city's political system. The author of this letter referred specifically to William Seward's aforementioned attempt to court the Irish of the city noting how he 'advocated repeal, and became the intimate friend of the leading priests and bishops.' The actual consequences of Irish political activism in the United States (and New York specifically) were such that 'one thing is certain, that the freedom of Ireland, if achieved by the present generation, would present a most revolting spectacle of government.'[122] This particular newspaper report again made clear the connections between the Irish, New York, and a particularly negative form of American politics.

Events in Ireland itself and the way they were received in America also contributed to how the British engaged with Irish-Americans, and consequently, sectionalism in the United States. The attempted Irish rebellion of 1848 provides a clear illustration of this. The uprising was led by a group known as Young Ireland who had broken away from Daniel O'Connell and who, led by William Smith O'Brien and Thomas Francis Meagher attempted to spark off revolution in Ballingarry (County Tipperary). This uprising was quashed by the British Government, resulting in two deaths and the arrests of many of the key leaders of the movement. A level of sympathy apparently existed among Americans for the cause of Young Ireland, a sympathy which seemed to be localized in the ethnically heterogeneous regions of the United States. The Philadelphia correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* outlined various

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[122] *Daily News*, 13th June 1848.

meetings in support of the Young Ireland rebellion, describing how, in Philadelphia itself, 'another Irish sympathy meeting was held,' while in Reading (also in Pennsylvania) 'a Society of the Friends of Ireland was formed.' The region which dominated Young Ireland support was, however, New York. The newspaper correspondent described how 'a meeting of the Brooklyn Republican Society of Friends of Ireland met at Freeman's Hall. . .an address and resolutions were voted to Mrs. Mitchel [wife of Young Ireland member John Mitchel], and resolution tending support and protection.' During the same period other meetings were held in different parts of the city including one 'at the large space near Broadway', chaired by a member of the prominent Irish Emmett family. Most disconcerting of all, however, were the descriptions of various Irish brigades who were, according to one speaker 'ready to go and fight the battles of Ireland.' In its own account of the American reaction to the 1848 rebellion in September, the *Hampshire Advertiser and Salisbury Guardian* combined the serious and satirical making mocking reference to Charles Dickens's fictional, and aggressively Anglophobe, American journalist Elijah Pogram when it described American newspapers putting the number of British casualties of 6,000. This report therefore presents another specific example of the significance of cultural commentators in Anglo-American politics while making a serious point about the Irish-American reception of the Young Ireland uprising. The writer ominously noted an apparent appeal made by the Irish: 'people of America, Ireland stretches her hands out to you for assistance. Do not let us be disappointed.'[123] Irish

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[123] Morning Chronicle, 30th July 1848; *Hampshire Advertiser and Salisbury Guardian*, 9th Sept 1848. For the Young Ireland Movement and 1848 uprising see Robert Sloan, *William Smith O'Brien and the Young Ireland Rebellion of 1848* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000); Richard P. Davis, *The Young Ireland Movement* (Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1987); Brendan O'Cathaoir, *John Blake Dillon, Young Irelander* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990); Dennis Gwynn, 'Smith O'Brien and Young Ireland,' *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 36.141 (March 1947), 29-39; Dugger, 'Black Ireland's Race'; Cian McMahon, 'Ireland and the Birth of the Irish-American Press, 1842-61,' *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism and Bibliography* 19.1 (2009), 5-20; Miles Taylor, 'The 1848 Revolutions and the British Empire,' *Past & Present* 166, (Feb 2000), 146-180. For connections to the United States see Murphy, *American Slavery, American Freedom*; McMahon 'Ireland and the Birth of the Irish-American Press.' It would be misleading to suggest that Boston was wholly exempt from these perceived connections with Ireland after all the *Boston Pilot* was an extremely successful Irish-American newspaper. See Taylor, 'The 1848 Revolutions.' Despite a Boston-Irish population existing, New York tended to loom large as an Irish haven from a British point of view particularly as 1848 exiles including John Mitchel, Thomas Francis Meagher, Richard O'Gorman and John Blake Dillon emigrated to the city. Crucially in sectional terms, newspaper reports did not really highlight Repeal meetings or

America's hatred of Britain had seemed to take a more radical and violent tone and most of this vitriol appeared to be emanating from northern cities.

The sort of ethno-cultural divisions which the British claimed existed in the United States were equally as prevalent in the writings of political radicals as they were in the British intellectual mainstream, even if the conclusions drawn about America from them were sometimes different. John Arthur Roebuck, a former Chartist and radical MP for Sheffield, provides an instructive illustration of this. Roebuck published *The Colonies of England: A plan for the Government of Some Portion of our Colonial Possessions* in 1849 primarily as an exploration of possible reforms in the British Empire. He first gave a detailed historical account of the development of the American colonies which would eventually become the United States and did so in a way which reflected their sectional differences. Roebuck described the development of New England from its Puritan roots while mitigating the negative implications of the term Puritan by explaining that over time 'all the sterner and cruel characteristics of their class [the Puritans] were so checked and subdued as to seem almost effaced.' In contrast to Puritan New England, Roebuck explained how 'the most powerful nobles of the court of Charles [II] united to plant a colony, to which they gave the name of their royal master. Such were the auspices, under which Carolina became a colony.' He also claimed that in the establishment of Georgia, James Oglethorpe 'had no thought of gain; he reserved nothing for himself; he never looked to making a property as Penn and Lord Baltimore had done.' While criticising Lord Baltimore it was William Penn of whom Roebuck was most overtly critical, accusing the Pennsylvania founder of 'barefaced tyranny' as well as describing his motivations in establishing the colony as being those of 'grasping avarice and cruel bigotry.'[124]

Young Irelander sympathy in the South. For Irish Brigades in the United States see John Belchem 'Republican Spirit and Military Science: The Irish Brigade and Irish-American Nationalism in 1848,' *Irish Historical Studies* 29 (1994), 44-65.

[124] John Arthur Roebuck, *The Colonies of England: A Plan for the Government of Some Portion of our Colonial Possessions* (London: John W. Parker, 1849), 60-75.

Similarly in his novel, *Sunshine and Shadow*, the writer, and Chartist political activist, Thomas Wheeler noted how his fictional protagonist, Arthur Morton 'during one and a half years residence in America observed its varying traits of character-from the phlegm of the descendants of the early Dutch settlers of New York, to the high blood and bounding spirit of the sons of Maryland and Virginia.' Roebuck and Wheeler, two committed radicals, created here an explicit division in terms of culture and ethnicity illustrating the ability of ideas of sectionalism to transcend political boundaries. For all of these differences within the nation, Roebuck at least, still found the American people overall to be 'the same as ourselves- the original thirteen states were the work of Englishmen. English heads and English hearts, and English hands brought these new communities into existence. No longer connected by government with us, they, nevertheless, retained characteristics of the race from which they sprang.'[125] Roebuck, therefore, clearly saw the United States as *both* a national entity unified by its English heritage and a sectionalized nation which lacked coherence. Roebuck's apparently contradictory viewpoint here was far from anomalous among British observers. The recognition of an American nationalism did not preclude an engagement with sectional differences when it came to the Anglo-American relationship because the different ethnic and cultural enclaves within the United States seemingly explained the different regional attitudes towards Britain.

The importance of the mythology and historical roots of the different colonies of the United States to the way Britons understood the nation, regardless of their political persuasion, should be due weight in any analysis of the period. Roebuck was a committed liberal and had been a Chartist, while another liberal, Sam Rathbone (a member of a Liverpool shipping family with strong abolitionist links), wrote a private letter back to Britain while in the United States in which he explained that 'the southerners were more gentlemanly, pleasant men. They are not the descendants of bigots & Puritans but of

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[125] Thomas Wheeler, *Sunshine and Shadow* in Ian Haywood, (ed.), *Chartist Fiction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 139; Roebuck, *Colonies of England*, 84.

gentlemen & this good blood seems to have stuck to them.' When this sort of cultural heritage is analysed it becomes easier to see how somebody like Rathbone could express so much apparent fondness towards southern slaveholders. This was because as he saw it southerners were not *simply* slaveholders, they had a more complex identity based on strong connections to Britain. The published travelogue of Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, released in 1850, expressed sentiments with some similarity to those of Rathbone. After a meeting with the new President Zachary Taylor she explained to her readers that 'he spoke very kindly of England' and that 'he continued in this strain and spoke so nobly of England, that it made one's heart bound to hear him.' Again the slaveholder here was more than a one dimensional figure and was certainly no straw man, while the ethnic and cultural heritage of the South was expressed in contemporary political terms by Anglophilism.[126] Not only does Stuart-Wortley's published account demonstrate the dissemination of this view to the British public, but William Rathbone's correspondence is testament to the fact that the Cavalier myth and southern Anglophilism influenced private discussions too.

Charlotte Houstoun's 1850 book *Hesperos*, a follow-up to the 1846 travel account *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico*, explored similar themes of ethnic geography to her first text. In *Hesperos,* Houstoun provided descriptions of the ethnic make-up and cultural inheritance which would surely have been familiar to her readers. She noted, for example, the Dutch heritage of Albany as well as the continuing use of the 'Dutch' language (in truth she probably conflated Dutch and German in her account) in areas of Pennsylvania and maintenance in that state of Dutch 'national habits and customs,' as well as criticizing what she described as their ignorance and bigotry. For her the attitudes this large Dutch/German community were integral to understanding the refusal of the state to pay off its debts despite the 'local advantages of the state of Pennsylvania,' which should have made this a simple exercise. In

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[126] Sam Rathbone to William Rathbone VI, 21st February 1849, [RP] RPVIX.3.50; Stuart-Wortley, *Travels in the United States Etc.,* 39. Kevin Phillips notes that by the early 1850s Cincinnati was 'teutonized to the point of having six German-language newspapers,' see Phillips, *The Cousins War*, 433.

a similar vein Houstoun also described how 'a great proportion of the inhabitants of Cincinnati are German; there are many names from Deutschland above the shop doors, and an inn is as frequently a Gast Haus as an hotel.' She also continued the British tradition of recognizing the existence of a notable population of Irish in the mid-Atlantic region. It was these communities of Irish immigrants which Houstoun was most critical of. She highlighted their political power and in particular their role in Anglophobia describing them as being 'the first to promote any measure likely to produce war with the old country.'[127]

Houstoun clearly agreed with Charles Lyell's description of Irish Repealers here and these images of political power were echoed by the *Belfast News-Letter* which reported in 1851 on how, as an election loomed in America, the Irish 'attempted to organise an agitation. . .for the purpose of influencing American politics, and threatening with the vengeance of the "Irish Vote" the candidates for Americans suffrages at the polls.' Houstoun's sentiments on this point provide an opportunity to reassert the importance of the connection between ethnicity, Anglophobia and the North. Houstoun's point about the Irish as she made it in 1850 was essentially a broadly based Hibernophobia, intended to denigrate America because of its susceptibility to the influence of the Irish. This had sectional implications as well however. Irish communities in America increased the Anglophobia of politics in the nation and since New York was 'the most Irish city in the Union' (by 1860 a sixth of all Irish men and women in the United States lived in the New York) it is easy to see the potential utility of these pre-war discourses for pro-Confederates who attempted to undermine the cause of the Union by portraying it as the cause of the Irish mobs in the North.[128]

The official correspondence of members of the British government during the 1850s attests equally as clearly as the works of intellectuals to the integral role played by the ethnic and cultural geography of the United States as the British understood it. Sir John Crampton wrote to the Foreign Secretary Lord Malmesbury in September 1852 to inform him that the

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[127] Houstoun, *Hesperos Volume One,* 80, 201-202, 277, 179-180.
[128] *Belfast News-Letter*, 26th May 1851; 'Introduction' in Bayor & Meagher, (eds.), *The New York Irish*.

power behind the election of Franklin Pierce that year had been 'the Irish and German emigrants . . . hatred of Great Britain and a wish to interfere in the affairs of every other nation in support of rebellion and revolution is the great characteristic of this section of the Democrats [Young America].' Here it is possible to see, even in the official correspondence of figures at the head of British government, the association between Anglophobic politics and ethnically non-British groups in the United States. Another political figure who was clearly aware of the rampant Anglophobia of this particular election campaign was William Schaw Lindsay. Lindsay was a liberal MP who would go on to support the Confederacy during the Civil War. On 16th October 1854 he received a letter from the New York merchant Asa Whitney which he subsequently transcribed into his diary and in which Whitney informed his British friend of the Anglophobic elements of the American press and its use of Britain as a bogeyman in domestic debates.[129] Of course it is only possible to speculate on the specific reasons which made Lindsay side with the Confederacy six years later, but his brush with American Anglophobia in the North and the enduring legacy of these views for the British more broadly created a context in which the pre-war reputation of a section could influence British attitudes during the Civil War.

This American Anglophobia continued to have a strong connection to both New York and the Irish through the 1850s. The *Belfast News-Letter* noted on the 25th August 1852 that 'Irish emigrants mostly leave this country with feelings of anger, if not hatred against England. . .they take little pains to conceal such feelings in the exercise of their political functions as neutralised [sic] American citizens.' This sentiment could have been written at almost any point in the pre-war period and encompasses the relationship between the Irish, political influence and Anglophobia. However a flashpoint occurred in the first half of the 1850s which added a new focus to British interactions with the American Irish and which intersected with

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[129] John F.T Crampton to Lord Malmesbury, 12th Sept 1852 in Barnes & Barnes (eds.), *Private and Confidential*. Members of the consular service frequently noted the large Irish population in certain cities see Laura A. White, 'The United States in the 1850s as Seen by British Consuls,' *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 19.4 (March 1933), 509-536, 519; William Schaw Lindsay Diary, William Schaw Lindsay Collection, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London [Hereafter WSLC] LND.5.3.

sectionalism. This event was the arrival of the Young Irelander John Mitchel in the United States. Mitchel had been arrested just before the 1848 rebellion and sentenced to transportation, firstly to Bermuda and then Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania). In 1853 Mitchel was able to escape from there with the help of an Irish-American Young Irelander, and made his way to New York.[130]

Popular perceptions in Britain were that Mitchel was received sympathetically in the United States and, crucially in sectional terms, it was usually New York which was seen as the most supportive of him. The radical *Reynolds's Newspaper* described in November 1853 how 'a meeting of the members of the Thomas Meagher Club was held last evening at Hermitage-Hall [New York], John Duffy in the chair, for the purpose of making preparations for the reception of John Mitchel, the Irish exile.' In January of the following year the *Bradford Observer* similarly noted a 'complimentary dinner [given] to Mr. John Mitchel in the Broadway theatre, New York.' Once settled in the United States, Mitchel began to publish an Irish-nationalist newspaper entitled *The Citizen* (unsurprisingly out of New York). The British *Era* newspaper gave an account of Mitchel and *The Citizen* entitled 'Irish Madmen in America', and contended that Mitchel's publication had 'been scandalizing his former confederates by advocating Negro slavery in America.' This connection between Mitchel's *Citizen* and pro-slavery once again hints at the lack of a coherent image of the anti-slavery northern states and did little to rehabilitate Mitchel, or the Irish-American image in Britain. Speaking of the period more broadly some in Britain even claimed that an armed Irish uprising was afoot in the United States which would take advantage of the British government's preoccupation with the Crimean War in order to 'liberate' Ireland. *The Belfast News-Letter* reported an apparently concrete conspiracy along these lines which had centred on Cincinnati and had intended to create 'hostilities between the American Republic and the Government of this country,' before

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[130] *Belfast News-Letter*, 25th Aug 1852. For details on John Mitchel see Sloan, *William Smith O'Brien*, passim; Bryan P. McGovern, *John Mitchel: Irish Nationalist, Southern Secessionist* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009); Aidan Hegarty, *John Mitchel: A Cause Too Many* (Belfast: Camlane Press, 2005).

describing the conspirators as 'a gang of "fugitive Irishmen".'[131] However unrealistic the prospect of an Irish-American 'invasion' was, the idea certainly circulated in Britain. Crucially in the case of both John Mitchel and the 'Irish Brigades' the association was made with the ethnically heterogeneous areas of the urban North which seemingly harboured a population that advocated revolution against the British.

While recognizing the utility of these images for the purposes of Civil War propaganda there was still not a hard division along the Mason-Dixon Line in terms of the way the British saw culture and ethnicity. A more complex regionalism than this still dominated as Lucy Isabella Bird, whose *The Englishwoman in America* appeared in 1856, illustrated through her reassertion of the particular Britishness of New England and specifically Boston. She explained that 'the whole has an English air' and informed her readers that a thirty-one gun salute had been fired in the city in celebration of the British victory at the battle of the Alma in 1854. The counterpoint to this Anglophilia was provided, as it so often was by British observers, in the form of New York and in particular by the Irish population of the city. On New York cabbies, Bird wrote that 'they are generally Irish and cheat people with unblushing audacity.' She also suggested that the high levels of political violence in the city stemmed from the contests between the Irish Catholics and the Know-Nothing party. In fact the nearest thing to a compliment Bird gave to the Irish population was little more than a backhanded insult, stating that their own intemperate habits encouraged abstinence among other Americans. Her overall classification of immigrant groups involved at least a modicum of sympathy with Germans, a group she commended 'for their genius and industry', while criticizing their apparent penchant for socialism and atheism. The Irish conversely were simply 'the willing and ignorant tools of an ambitious and despotic priesthood.' While the Irish of New York City bore the brunt of Bird's attack she also recognized the existence of

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[131] *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 13th November 1853; *Bradford Observer*, 12th Jan 1854; *The Era* 30th April 1854; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 16th April 1854; *Belfast News-Letter*, 4th Aug 1855. For more on the *Citizen* see McMahon 'Ireland and the Birth of the Irish-American Press.' For an examination of the place of slavery in relation to the Irish in America see Murphy, *American Freedom, American Slavery*; Ian Delahanty '"A Noble Empire of the West": Young Ireland, the United States and Slavery,' *Britain and the World* 6.2 (September 2013), 171-191.

significant emigrant communities in the upstate New York region around Buffalo including the Irish, German and French. Although they did not come in for such a sustained assault, based on her descriptions of New York city, it can be assumed that she was unlikely to be positive about the Irish in Buffalo either.[132]

The conclusions about ethnic heterogeneity in upstate New York which Bird gave are reminiscent of those of Martineau, Buckingham and Godley, and in 1856 another traveller, Amelia M. Murray, offered more of the same evidence in her *Letters from the United States, Cuba and Canada*. Murray reflected that she had found Albany to contain 'a great mixture of the varying national characteristics of Europe. . .many also of the respectable inhabitants there still speak Dutch; French is less common, but the American, Scotch, Irish and English blood is mixed up.' A conclusion which Murray suggested had been particularly striking for her, since she had left only recently what she identified as the peculiarly 'British' city of Boston. Once again, however, Murray, like so many before her, found areas of the South to be equally similar to Britain. In Charleston, for instance, she recognized a number of cultural connections as well as noting that the Magnolia Cemetery in the town 'has a chapel built like a country church in England' and that 'the tone of voice and choice of words and pronunciation are much more like old England.' Despite this observation, Murray was no unqualified supporter of the South, nor did she treat it as ethnically wholly English, noting the existence of a flourishing Irish community in Virginia. She also found distinctly Anglophobe strands of thought while in Baltimore, which she claimed were drawn from 'family recollections of the severities practiced by the English government and the military in the struggle for independence; and partly from the well-intentioned but ill-judged interference of

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[132] Isabella Lucy *Bird The Englishwoman in America* (1966 repr. Madison & London: University of Wisconsin 1856), 393, 447, 95, 176, 384-385, 153, 120 & 176. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Bird's work see *Examiner*, 1st Dec 1855, 22nd March 1856; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 13th Jan 1856; *Bradford Observer*, 24th Jan 1856; *Bristol Mercury*, 26th Jan 1856; *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser*, 31st Jan 1856; *Manchester Times*, 2nd Feb 1856; *Caledonian Mercury*, 9th May 1856. For a biography of Bird see Anna M. Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird* (London: John Murray, 1906).

the present English generations about the slavery question.'[133] This notion of tension between the South and the British over slavery was far from unprecedented and is indicative of the potential power of the slavery issue in transatlantic relations. In terms of ethnic geography, however, Murray's conclusions followed, for the most part, the divisions of her predecessors.

While Anglophobia may have been on occasion associated with the South as Murray suggested here, the notion of the ethnically and culturally British and Anglophile Old South retained considerable sway in Britain. James Stirling's 1857 travel book *Letters from the Slave States* demonstrated both this view, and the growing divisions within the United States neatly when its author explained to his readers that:

We have met with much kindness from some of our Southern friends. They know that, as English folks, we do not sympathize with their pro-slavery feelings; yet that does not seem to prevent their friendly dispositions, so long as we do not obtrude our notions offensively on them. In this respect they seem to regard us more favourably than they do their countrymen of the North. They have no patience with the Yankees, though they can tolerate, and even hospitably entreat, the Abolitionist English man. It pains me to think that this plague of slavery should stand between us and the cordial affections of this kindly, and, at bottom, noble Southern people.

This was not an Anglophilia located solely in the South however. Stirling identified various shades of regional opinion meaning that he could describe the northern states on the whole as being am embodiment 'of English civilization' and on the national stage to contend that 'before I came here I had heard much of Anglo-phobia, and was prepared to meet in public and private with symptoms of jealousy and dislike of the English nation. But in this I have been most agreeably surprised. With few exceptions, such as Hiberno-American Democratic tirade, or a Southern denunciation of British Abolitionism, I have met with nothing of the kind.'[134]

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[133] Murray, *Letters from the United States,* 136, 37, 163, 204-205, 195, 163.
[134] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States*, 160, 221, 208.

Crucially, in a sectional sense, Stirling also observed that 'few Irish, comparatively, come to the South' thus giving a more obvious Irish character to the North. Stirling also made the Irish connection explicitly negative in his criticism of how government in America 'resolves itself into the supreme rule of Irish Rowdyism' as well as his recognition that 'the Democratic party has very nearly reduced the Republic of the United States to an Irish mobocracy.' Stirling equally reasserted the cultural differences between regions in a manner similar to his predecessors in the form of the myth of the Puritan and Cavalier. He stated that 'the North is essentially Puritan; the South, Cavalier. They are so historically, and they are so in all the characteristics of their development.' The conclusions which Stirling drew from this inheritance were that 'the North, then, was originally, and is yet, Puritan and Plebeian; the South, on the contrary, was Cavalier and Patrician; Virginia and the Carolinas were settled mainly by English gentry, with a sprinkling even of the nobility.' A similarly romanticized account was provided by the traveller Henry Murray who wrote, with reference to a plantation on the James River (Virginia), that the planters' homes reminded 'one of in many places of the old country', while finding within these houses that ' thoughts also turn homeward irresistibly, as the eye wanders from object to object.'[135] These sectional characterizations of the United States plainly drew on a whole host a pre-existing tropes, constructing a mental geography of the nation which claimed an English Cavalier inheritance for the Old South in contrast to Puritan ethics in areas of the North, which themselves were often in conflict with the political and social influence wielded by Irish immigrants.

The private diary of the Secretary of the US Legation between 1853 and 1874, Benjamin Moran, provides evidence of both the tensions within the Anglo-American

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[135] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States,* 230, 28, 31, 60, 63; Henry A. Murray, *Lands of the Slave and the Free: or, Cuba, The United States and Canada First Volume* (London: John W. Parker, 1855), 403-404. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of this text see *Examiner*, 19th May 1855, 4th Aug 1855; *Morning Chronicle*, 16th Aug 1855; *Morning Post*, 22nd Aug 1855; *Derby Mercury*, 12th Sept 1855; *Daily News*, 25th June 1856; *Glasgow Herald*, 2nd July 1856. For more on the political consequences of this, particularly with regard to democracy see chapter three. For an introduction to the notion of a 'mobocracy' see Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy,* 5-6. For the mob in American politics more generally see Grimsted, *American Mobbing*. For a classic account of the Cavalier mythology see Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee*.

relationship at the end of the 1850s in terms of the permeation of Anglophobic rhetoric, and a testament to the significance of the travel narrative for the development of British ideas. After the opening of a transatlantic telegraph cable in 1858 Moran commented in glowing terms that 'to-morrow will be the Sabbath; and it will be the first Sabbath upon which the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon family- mother and daughter- will be within speaking distance of each other.' Yet, despite this romantic familial rhetoric Moran was no Anglophile, far from it. His outlook was consistently anti-British and only a month after he appeared to emphasize the close Anglo-American relationship in this comment he wrote that 'England heartily hates America. The hearty manner in which the people of the United States have received the success of the Atlantic cable has been taken up here with jeers and ridicule.' He also claimed that the British 'lie about us, rob us, and treat us insolently and will so continue to do until we give them another good flogging.' Even claims of good will by the British towards the United States could be taken badly by Moran, for example the Secretary commented in 1859 that 'Mackay [Charles] recently wrote a book on the US in wh. [sic] he pretended to be very friendly towards us: but the truth is he hates us.'[136] Allowing for Moran's characteristic hyperbole his insights are indicative of the love/hate connection between Britain and America from citizens on both sides of the Atlantic. Taken as a nation the United States was capable of being either passionately Anglophobic or equally Anglophile, something Moran typified. Placing this flexibility against the complex backdrop of sectional differentiation which was so frequently discussed in Britain makes clear the extent to which Anglophobia was both powerful and malleable and why it became a key pillar of Civil War discourse in Britain.

The mythological nature of the Cavalier and Puritan and the relationship this mythology had with Anglophilia/phobia inevitably harked back to the colonial period and the formation of early American society. The novelist William Makepeace Thackeray explored these connections and reinforced the dominant ideas about them in an explicit way in his

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[136] *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume One*, 7th August 1858, 3rd September 1858, 24th September 1859.

1859 novel *The Virginians*. Thackeray's book was published in the monthly format typical of popular fiction in the period and was printed in fluctuating numbers between 13,000-20,000 across its run. This work was set in the lead up to the American Revolution and followed the fortunes of a family split by the causes of the loyalists and revolutionaries. The heritage of the main protagonists of the novel, a Virginian planter family named the Warringtons, is traced back to Britain. The state of Virginia itself is described at various times as being committed to the King (George III in this case) and Church of England something George Featherstonhaugh had noted was a genuine sentiment in the region as a traveller in 1844. Within the novel the contrast to the Warringtons is provided by the Van Den Boschs's, a family of Dutch merchants from New York. The ethnic dichotomy set up by Thackeray here, combined with the actions of the two families (the landed Warrington as opposed to the trading Van Den Bosch), offered an obvious division between the South and the New York/Pennsylvania region. The nature of this division was one which his readers would have been well aware of the contemporary resonance of when it came to understanding sectionalism in the United States.[137]

It was not solely in terms of positive descriptions of the South that publications continued to claim clear ethnic and cultural sectional divisions up the eve of the Civil War. The private Secretary of the Prince of Wales, John D. Englehart, published an account of the Prince's travels through the United States in 1860 in which he described how the population

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[137] William Makepeace Thackeray, *The Virginians* (1892 repr. London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1859), 24-25, 42, 370. For the sales and publication of this novel see Peter L. Shillingsburg, *Pegasus in Harness: Victorian Publishing and W.M Thackeray* (Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia, 1992); John Sutherland, *Victorian Fiction: Writers, Publishers, Readers* (London: Macmillan 1995). For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of *The Virginians* see *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3rd Sept 1857, 24th Sept 1857; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 5th Sept 1857, 15th Oct 1859; *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser, and Cheshire, Shropshire, Flintshire and North Wales Register*, 12th Sept 1857, 12th June 1858; *Examiner*, 10th Oct 1857, 3rd Dec 1859; *Aberdeen Journal*, 14th Oct 1857, 11th Nov 1857; *Leeds Mercury*, 17th Oct 1857; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 17th Oct 1857; *Daily News*, 28th Oct 1857, 30th Oct 1859; *Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Herald*, 3rd Nov 1857, 4th Oct 1859; *Morning Chronicle*, 3rd Nov 1857, 6th April 1857, 5th July 1857, 4th Nov 1857; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 7th Nov 1857; *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 8th Nov 1857; *Standard*, 5th Dec 1857, 19th July 1858, 5th Dec 1859; *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, 1st Jan 1858; *Birmingham Daily Post* 4th Jan 1858, 5th Feb 1858; *Manchester Times*, 15th Jan 1859.

of America had 'a common ancestry, language, literature and a common freedom [which], must be productive of a strong feeling of sympathy towards England.' Within this same work Englehart emphasized the English credentials of New England in general and Boston specifically, describing how in that city 'the most enthusiastic welcome greeted the Prince as he drove through the streets' and noting that 'the feeling towards England [is] as towards a *home*, the home of their forefathers.' During a lecture given in Bolton in 1860 which was later published, the traveller Henry Ashworth gave a description of South Carolina which seemed to tally with what Thackeray and many before him had said about the Old South with its emphasis on the long-standing connection between Britain and the Palmetto State. Ashworth also noted that 'throughout our visit to the New England States, everything we met with was looking so very English,' and noting the Puritan roots of New England civilization.[138]

The idea of the roots of civilization, which Ashworth used here to invoke a clear sense of American regionalism, are central to how the British would eventually engage with the American Civil War. The sort of regional variations which Ashworth described provides a vital backdrop for comprehending British opinion on the conflict, since cultural commentators had engrained the idea of ethnic disunity in the United States in the minds of British readers. While the pre-war ethnic and cultural map of the United States clearly did not divide the North and South strictly along the Mason-Dixon Line, it did establish a clear geography. The United States could, broadly speaking, be conceived as three major regions. First the ethnically and culturally British Cavalier South, second, the ethnically and culturally British Puritan New England and finally the ethnically and culturally heterogeneous Mid-Atlantic region. This division in itself attached certain positive and negative connotations to each region given the anti-Irishness which characterized of much British thought, yet it involved more than this. Anglophobia, so often noted by British travellers as a defining feature of American society

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[138] John Gardner D. Englehart, *Journal of the Progress of H.R.H. Prince of Wales through British North America; and his Visit to the United States, 10th July to 15th November 1860* (Privately Printed); 100-101, 95, 98-99; Frank Prochaska, *The Eagle and the Crown: Americans and the British Monarchy,* (Padstow: Yale University Press, 2008); Ashworth, *A Tour of the United States, Cuba and Canada*, 98, 155.

frequently intersected with ideas about American politics. This 'seeing' of Britain in America and the American sections would subsequently allow Civil War propagandists to emphasize the apparently coherent anti-Britishness of New York in contrast to the pro-Britishness of the South, regardless of the truth behind the assertions. Indeed, if any consensus viewpoint can be taken from this British commentary before the war it was that New York was defined by its Irishness and Anglophobia and this view had a profound impact on British views of American politics leading up to the Civil War.

Chapter Three: 'If you ask me if I am an American my answer is, no Sir, I am a South Carolinian': British Interpretations of America's Sectional Politics

THE AMERICAN TWINS. OR NORTH AND SOUTH. [139]

Fig. One, *Punch*, 'The American Twins, or North and South' (27th September 1856)

The above cartoon from the satirical magazine *Punch* entitled 'the American Twins, or North and South' was published in September 1856 and portrayed the northern and southern sections of the United States as two separate figures held together by the Union. As the scholar Marcus Wood has noted, the physiognomic characteristics which *Punch* often used to

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[139] For title quotation see Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slave* States, 341-342; Punch, 27th September, 1856.

differentiate North and South are in evidence here (the South being the armed figure on the left). However, this emphasis on physical difference needs to be supplemented by a consideration of the potential political implications of the image. North and South are presented here as two distinctive 'individuals' rather than being personified as a single nation in the manner of John Bull. In terms of the visualization of the Union itself it is apparently an artificial, possibly even a forced relationship, keeping the two unwilling partners together. In this visual representation *Punch* encapsulated a broader, frequently unappreciated element of British engagement with the United States before the Civil War; the British recognition of the lack of any genuine political unity in the American Union.[140]

On the subject of politics in an Anglo-American context historians have frequently posited a connection between the views British individuals held on domestic political issues and the sympathies they had during the American Civil War. Certainly the studies of historians such as E.D Adams and Frank Lawrence Owsley attempted to demonstrate a correlation between being a reformer in Britain and supporting the Union. This, however, was always a questionable premise given the vociferous role played by the liberals John Arthur Roebuck and William Schaw Lindsay in the Confederate lobby in Britain. Indeed the work of subsequent scholars including Duncan Andrew Campbell and R.J. M. Blackett has effectively illustrated the flaws in this politically determinist argument. This chapter contends that while Blackett and Campbell are correct in eschewing any straight forward connection between the political ideologies of British commentators within a domestic context and their Civil War sympathies, politics were nonetheless integral to the Civil War debate in Britain. Since cultural commentators had familiarized their readers with both sectional and national political disagreements the knowledge of American politics which the public had must be placed alongside domestic political ideologies in order to gain a true understanding of the British reaction to the Civil War. In terms of structure this chapter runs chronologically and examines

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[140] Marcus Wood 'The American South and English Print Satire, 1760-1865,' in Joseph P. Ward, (ed.), *Britain and the American South from Colonialism to Rock and Roll* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2003).

British published commentary on the explicitly sectional political divisions of the United States which were integrated into Civil War discourse. At the same time, however, it recognizes certain dominant tropes of American national politics before the Civil War which are significant in the context of this study as they would subsequently be recast into a sectional mould during the conflict, becoming key weapons in the armoury of propagandists.[141]

The 1830s: Frances Trollope to Frederick Marryat

Although Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* was nominally an examination of the behavioural peculiarities of the United States, the content of the text was deeply political and when the context of its publication is appreciated its political importance becomes even clearer. As her biographer, Joanna Johnston, has noted Trollope's book was published during the intensive debate in Britain over the 1832 Reform Act, something which engaged the attention of the political classes and the public and raised questions about the fundamental assumptions of British political life. The text contained a palpable sense of disillusion with American politics and Trollope had certainly crossed the Atlantic with high expectations of the polity she would encounter. As it was, her time in the United States was

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[141] A list of books which deal with the relationship between British and American politics in the antebellum includes (but is not limited to) Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*; D.P Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics 1815-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution*; Jones, *The American Problem;* G.D Lillibridge, *Beacon of Freedom: The Impact of American Democracy Upon Great Britain, 1830-1870* (New York: A.S Barnes & Company Inc: New York, 1965); Thistlethwaite, *The Anglo-American Connection*; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*; Butler, *Critical Americans*; J C D Clark, *The Language of Liberty 1660-1832: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jamie L. Bronstein, *Land Reform and Working-Class Experience in Britain and the United States, 1800-1862* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999); Peter Conrad, *Imagining America* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1980); Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*; Fladeland, *Men and Brothers*; Paul Giles, *Atlantic Republic: The American Tradition in English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Giles, *Transatlantic Insurrections*; Richard Gravil, *Romantic Dialogues Anglo-American Continuities 1776-1862* (London: MacMillan, 2000); Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*; Robert Kelley, *The Transatlantic Persuasion: The Liberal Democratic Mind in the Age of Gladstone* (New Brunswick & London: Alfred J. Knopf, 1969); Mulvey, *Transatlantic Manners*; Prochaska, *Eminent Victorians;* Rice & Crawford, eds., *Liberating Sojourn*; Roper, *Democracy and its Critics*; Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*; Robert Weisbuch *Atlantic Double-Cross American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1986); H.C Allen & Roger Thompson, (eds.), *Contrast and Connection in Bicentennial Essays in Anglo-American History* (London, G. Bell & Sons Ltd, 1976); Levanthal & Quinault, *Anglo-American Attitudes*; Ward, *Britain and the American South*; William Brock 'The Image of England and American Nationalism,' *Journal of American Studies* 5 (Dec 1971), 225-245; Gulddal 'That Most Hateful Land.'

characterized by what the historian Daniel Walker Howe has described as 'probably the dirtiest [election] in American history'; the 1828 contest between John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. Her experience of this event led Trollope to conclude in her discussion of democracy that 'no one in their senses, who has visited their country and known the people can doubt its fitness for them [the American people], such as they are now are, or its utter unfitness for any other people.' Within in the context of franchise reform Trollope's observations had obvious resonance for the British, yet they were also significant in transatlantic terms since they described the government of the United States in negative language.[142]

In addition to this national critique, Trollope also noted certain sectional differences in politics while in Washington. A subtle, but nonetheless significant, codicil was added by Trollope after she had roundly derided members of the US Congress: 'among the crowd who must be included in this description, a few were distinguished by not wearing their hats, and by sitting on their chairs like other human beings, without throwing their legs above their heads. Whenever I inquired the name of these exceptions, I was told that it was Mr This or Mr That, of *Virginia* [original emphasis].' The particular emphasis on Virginia may seem a small detail, yet as a bifurcation of American politics progressed through the pre-war period, that state (if not the South more generally) was often portrayed as the outsider of American democracy. Crucially, as has been recognized in previous chapters, Virginia was frequently described in explicitly positive terms for a number of reasons, to which this attitude of its political classes could be added. With more explicitly sectional dimensions were Trollope's reminiscences of the debates which she observed in Congress and while being perfectly open about her lack of understanding of the issues at stake, she noted how 'every debate I listened to in the American Congress was upon one and the same subject, namely, the entire

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[142] Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 359.

independence of each individual state, with regard to the federal government.'[143] This mention of state rights in America broached the issue of the position of the states relative to the national government. Significantly, it is indicative of the long-standing British awareness of the difficult relationship between the two which would be manifested during the Civil War.

The early 1830s saw a concerted decline in the perceived desirability of American politics among many and in particular the key intellectual figures of the era. As the literary scholar Paul Giles has recognised, the generation of passionate advocates of the United States as a political entity such as Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron was superseded in the period by figures such as Frances Trollope and Charles Dickens who rejected the idealistic image of the United States and, unlike their predecessors, had actually visited the nation. Trollope was typical of this new generation and made it clear to her readers that she disapproved of many aspects of American politics, including the party system which meant that 'when a candidate for any office starts, his party endow him with every virtue and with all talents.' Similarly, she bemoaned the fact that since a candidate needed to appeal to the mass of the populace 'dishonest transactions' were frequently resorted to in order to ensure election. This overarching critique of party was also noted by the liberal *Examiner*

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[143]Johnston, *The Life, Manners and Travels of,*126. The amount literature on the 1832 Reform Act is huge, however for a brief discussion of its passage see Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas* (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1973), 84-89. For a recent account see Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 372-565; Edward Royle & James Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers 1760-1848* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1982), 140-158 passim; M.J Daunton, *Progress and Poverty: An Economic and Social History of Britain 1700-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 479-500; J.C.D Clark, *English Society 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics During the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 527-564; David Cresap Moore, *The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Mid-Nineteenth Century English Political System* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1976); Norman Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel: A Study in the Technique of Parliamentary Representation 1830-1850* (London & Harlow: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd, 1953), passim; Michael Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1973); Nancy D. LoPatin, *Political Unions, Popular Politics and the Great Reform Act of 1832* (Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1999); John A. Phillips, *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour 1818-1841* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); J.R Dinwiddy, *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London & Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1992) passim; Asa Briggs 'The Background of the Parliamentary Reform Movement in Three English Cities (1830-2),' *Cambridge Historical Journal* 10.3 (1952), 293-317; John A. Phillips & Charles Wetherell 'The Great Reform Act of 1832 and the Political Modernization of England,' *The American Historical Review* 100.2 (April 1995), 411-436; Philip Harling 'Equipoise Regained? Recent Trends in British Political History, 1790-1867,' *The Journal of Modern History*, 75.4, (December 2003), 890-918; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 278. For Howe's account of the election see 275-284. Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 190-191.

newspaper in August 1832, when it subtitled an article with a quote from the 18th century poet Alexander Pope who described party as 'madness of the many for the gain of a few.' Sitting alongside the rejection of party was Trollope's clear disdain for the mob as a political tool, something which she incorporated into the 1832 fictional companion to *Domestic Manners*; the novel *The Refugee in America*. Within this text, the doors of the President's home are thrown up by a mob because the servants 'quite aware that they owed more obedience to the mob than to their master, yielded to their remonstrance.'[144] Trollope's thoughts on these points may seem random and slightly disconnected but recognizing them as something more coherent is vital to understanding the development of British ideas about political sectionalism. Terms such as 'the mob', 'equality' and 'political party' were widely deployed in critiques of the American political system as a national institution, yet they were easily appropriated for sectional ends by others both before and during the American Civil War.

These discussions of party, equality and the mob had both sectional and national resonance in the pre-Civil War period, but one element of the North/South relationship was always sectionally charged. From its first mention in Britain the tariff and nullification crisis (1832-33) were seen as being inherently concerned with the distinction between the sections. The 1832 attempt at nullification by the state of South Carolina in response to the protective legislation passed by the Federal Government involved a rejection of the power of the United States to enforce measures and the recognition that different sections had fundamentally different needs. The act made clear that it was in the interests of the South to embrace free trade in the same way that it was in the interests of the North to pursue protection. Unsurprisingly, this event was absolutely integral to the British understanding of political

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[144] Giles, *Atlantic Republic*, 60. Jesper Gulddal has suggested that conservative romantics set the pattern of later anti-Americanism, regarding 'the United States as a product of the shallow, unhistorical Enlightenment, of reason fatally overestimating itself.' Gulddal 'The most hateful land', 423-424. Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 217-219, 46; *Examiner*, 19th Aug 1832; Frances Trollope, *The Refugee in America Volume Three* (London: Whittaker, Treacher & Co. 1832), 117-118. For more on British views of the American party system see Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics*, 133. Within the United States itself the mob could be given a sectional distinction, Paul C. Nagel for instance noted how the southerner, James Hammond, described 'the licentious Sodom of Northern Mobocracy, see Paul C. Nagel, *One Nation Indivisible The Union in American Thought 1776-1861* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 256.

sectionalism, touching as it did upon the issue of tariffs and sparking discussion about the nature of sovereignty in America. The nullification debate in the United States even had domestic connotations for British observers given the struggle of many liberals for free trade. Popular writing in this period makes clear that British interest in nullification involved discussions over both protection in a British or abstract sense and with specific reference to the United States. The *Morning Post,* a mainstream anti-reform newspaper, reprinted an editorial which had originally appeared in the *Standard* on the 7th September 1832 which described nullification not simply as a tariff issue but as something connected more broadly to the idea of sectional differences in the United States. The editorial informed readers that 'there is, in fact, little to bind the Carolinians and Georgians to the New Englanders or even the Virginians. Their habits, their domestic systems, their commercial interests, are all diametrically opposed to those of the men of the northern states.' The *Essex Standard* made a similar observation in an 1833 editorial which contended that the tariff had placed sectional differences in sharper relief, rather than creating them. This article also noted that 'the ostensible ground of the breach is the oppression, upon the Southern States, of the tariff on goods imported; but in various particulars it seems that the interests of, temper, and habits of these Southern Countries do not harmonize well with the laws and government of the general Congress, where Northern interests prevail.'[145] Discussed in this way, the tariff issue was

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[145] The most significant tariff related issue in Britain centred on the Corn Laws. For a description of the effects of these laws with particular reference to the careers of two key Anglo-American figures who were integral to the abolition of the Corn Laws through their work in the Anti-Corn Law League (ACLL), Richard Cobden and John Bright, see Donald Read *Cobden and Bright: A Victorian Political Partnership* (London: Edward Arnold 1967)*,* 20-68. Information on the often difficult relationship between the ACLL and the free-traders of the South is provided in Simon Morgan 'The Anti-Corn Law League and British Anti-Slavery in Transatlantic Perspective, 1838-1846,' *The Historical Journal* 52.1 (2009). The laws themselves and their repeal have been the subject of a number of works see Paul A. Pickering & Alex Tyrrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London & New York: Leicester University Press, 2000); Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People?*, passim; Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey, *From the Corn Laws to Free Trade: Interests, Ideas, and Institutions in Historical Perspective,* (London, Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2006); Anthony Howe, *Free Trade and Liberal England 1846-1946* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Anthony Howe, *The Cotton Masters 1830-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), passim; Royle & Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers*, 167-190, passim; Harold Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society 1780-1880* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969) passim; Jonathan Parry, *The Rise and Fall of Liberal Government in Victorian Britain* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1993), 145-164; Taylor, *Decline of British Radicalism*, passim; Anna Gambles, *Protection and Politics: Conservative Economic Discourse 1815-*

simply an expression of the differences between sections rather than the sole cause of them. It is therefore that the different social systems, ethnic divisions and cultural ideas which previous chapters have noted about North and South were integrated into political sectionalism.

While these discussions about the deep rooted divisions between North and South and their expression through the lens of the tariff and state rights made up a significant proportion of the copy on nullification there were also strong self-serving ideas at work in Britain which resulted in sympathy for the free trading South. The veteran radical and former resident of Philadelphia, William Cobbett, wrote in *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* that 'all

1852 (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999); Bronstein, *Land Reform and Working Class Experience*, passim; Daunton, *Progress and Poverty,* 545-556; Christopher Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004) 136-138; Henry Miller 'Popular Petitioning and the Corn Laws, 1833-46,' *English Historical Review* 127.527 (Aug 2012); Angus McIntyre 'Lord George Bentinck and the Protectionists A Lost Cause?' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 39 (Dec 1989), 141-165; Peter Harnetty 'The Imperialism of Free Trade: Lancashire and the Indian Cotton Duties, 1859-1862,' *Economic History Review* 28.1, (1975), 333-349; Thomas P. Martin 'Cotton and Wheat in Anglo-American Trade and Politics, 1846-1852,' *Journal of Southern History* 1.3 (Aug 1935), 293-319; Thomas P. Martin 'The Upper Mississippi Valley in Anglo-American Anti-Slavery and Free Trade Relations: 1837-1842,' *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 15.2 (Sept 1928), 204-220. For the Nullification Crisis see William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina 1816-1836* (1992 repr. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965; Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr, *The Age of Jackson* (Boston, New York & London: Little, Brown and Company, 1945), 94-97; Forbes, *The Missouri Compromise*, 238-265; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 395-410; Freehling, *The Road to Disunion Volume One*, 211-286; Walter, *The Fire Eaters, passim*; Charles Seller *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America 1815-1846* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); *Robert* V. Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Democracy 1833-1845 Volume Three* (New York, Cambridge, Philadelphia, San Francisco, London, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Sydney: Harper & Row Publishers), 12-44; Richard E. Ellis, *The Union at Risk: Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights, and the Nullification Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); John Niven, *John C. Calhoun and the Price of Union A Biography* (Baton Rouge & London: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), passim; Clyde N. Wilson, '"Free Trade: No Debt: Separation from Banks": The Economic Platform of John C. Calhoun' in Robert Louis Paquette & Louis A. Ferleger, (eds.), *Slavery, Secession and Southern History*, (Charlottesville & London: University Press of Virginia, 2000); Read, *Majority Rule Versus Consensus*, passim; Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease, 'The Economics and Politics of Charleston's Nullification Crisis,' *Journal of Southern History*, 47.3 (Aug 1981), 335-362; J.P Ochenkowski, 'The Origins of Nullification in South Carolina,' *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 83.2 (April 1982), 121-153; Richard B. Latner, 'The Nullification Crisis and Republican Subversion,' *Journal of Southern History* 43.1 (Feb 1977), 19-38; Lacy K. Ford Jr. 'Inventing the Concurrent Majority: Madison, Calhoun, and the Problems of Majoritarianism in American Political Thought,' *Journal of Southern History* 60.1, (Feb 1994), 19-58; Gerald M. Capers 'A Reconsideration of John C. Calhoun's Transition from Nationalism to Nullification,' *Journal of Southern History* 14.1 (Feb 1948), 34-48; *Morning Post*, 7th Sept 1832; *Standard*, 4th Jan 1833; *Standard*, 24th Jan 1833; *Hull Packet*, 18th Jan 1833; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 26th Jan 1833; *Aberdeen Journal*, 9th Jan 1833; *Aberdeen Journal*, 23rd Jan 1833; *Essex Chronicle & Colchester and Country Advertiser*, 5th Jan 1833; *Essex Standard and Colchester and Country Advertiser,* 26th Jan 1833; *Ipswich Journal,* 19th Jan 1833; *Leicester Chronicle or Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 13th Jan 1833; *Sheffield Independent and Yorkshire and Derbyshire Advertiser*, 19th Jan 1833.

these southern and western men, are commercially speaking, closely connected with Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester and Leeds. They have no such connexion with the Northern States.' By the same token, Cobbett observed that the people of the North 'are carriers for the southern, south-western, and north-western states. . .they, and they alone, have established manufactories. . . in short, they are aiming to become rivals of England.' The same edition of the newspaper also placed the nullification debate within a broader context of sectional relations when it observed that most areas of the south and west 'look upon the tariff as a robbery of them committed for the benefit of the states of the north,' a sentiment echoed in editorial commentary during January 1833 by newspapers across Britain. The *Aberdeen Journal* for example raised the alarming spectre of secession when it noted that 'the United States of America seem to be on the eve of a disruption. The discontent that has arisen among the Southern States- particularly South Carolina and Georgia- has assumed a most alarming aspect. Nothing can now prevent the withdrawal of these two important States from the Union, but the immediate modification, if not repeal, of the obnoxious tariff.'[146]

An article in the *Newcastle Courant* took a very similar position pointing to the growing power of disunion in the nation and British recognition of it. This line of argument, however, was not unanimously subscribed to even among those with a modicum of sympathy with the southern cause. The *Bristol Mercury* explained in its 5th January edition that 'we admire the spirit of the South Carolinians; and as the Tariff operates so directly to their injury, we think they have shown not only their spirit, [but] their sound judgement in resisting it', yet it placed little confidence in the prospect of long-term division. The *Preston Chronicle* was even more dismissive of nullification noting that 'some temporary dissatisfaction has arisen in Carolina' and maintaining that 'it would be but temporary.' The middle class reform newspaper, the *Leeds Mercury*, actually entered into the legal side of the debate in its discussion of the nullification crisis questioning the rights of South Carolina to ignore federal legislation on a

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[146] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 19th Jan 1833; *Aberdeen Journal*, 9th Jan 1833.

constitutional basis.[147] Taking all this evidence together, it is impossible not to see the post-nullification United States as possessing clear sectional political fractures which all literate Britons would have appreciated, even if they failed to understand them.

This acknowledgement among the British of the profound sectional divisions in the United States did not, however, preclude continued descriptions of national political characteristics. These ostensibly national characteristics nevertheless contained within them the seeds of sectional division. Of these national tropes the quintessential illustration of 'Americanism' for many Britons was that of the mob, something of an institution in British discussions of American politics in the period. In 1833, at the height of the tensions over nullification, the newspaper *John Bull* connected the conflict between state and Federal government to the descent of democracy into the mob much as Trollope had done the year before. *John Bull,* however, took this a step further by noting the potential for a further descent into dictatorship. An editorial from the same newspaper published on the 14th January noted that the 'republic is on the edge of a civil war, if not knee deep in it already. . .father and son, and uncle and brother, are cutting each other's throats, on account of the tyranny and oppression of the paternal government. . .so much for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.' In September of the same year *John Bull* again took up the topic of American democracy, on this occasion noting that 'men accustomed to democracy can never be brought to the rigours of military discipline.'[148] While these comments about the mob and the influence of democracy on discipline, or the lack thereof, against the backdrop of the early 1830s were consistent with the overall modus operandi of *John Bull*, (to undermine the United States at every turn), they had a longer term significance. They accentuated images of America which came to be sectionalized in both the pre-war period and by wartime propagandists.

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[147] *Bristol Mercury*, 5th Jan 1833; *Newcastle Courant*, 7th Sept 1833; *Preston Chronicle,* 5th Jan 1833. For further examples see *The Leicester Chronicle or Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 12th Jan 1833; *Leeds Mercury,* 19th Jan 1833.
[148] *John Bull*, 14th Jan 1833; *John Bull,* 23rd Sept 1833. For the acceptance of the idea of the tyranny of the majority and the influence of Alexis de Tocqueville on the development of the concept in Britain see Roper, *Democracy and its Critics*, 145.

Richard Cobden, one of the so-called 'members for the United States' during the Civil War, had displayed a long standing interest in American issues that stretched back to his first publication, an 1835 pamphlet entitled *England, America and Ireland.* Cobden's pamphlet appears to have been commercially successful and, in a later edition of his political writings, F.W Chesson claims that it went into at least a sixth edition. The pamphlet's content offers something of an insight into the intellectual justification for Cobden's pro-Americanism before the Civil War and pro-Unionism during the conflict. The text is interesting in one sense as within it Cobden recognized the power of the travel narrative in the Anglo-American information network which meant 'we have met with persons. . . who believe conscientiously that the Americans threw off the yoke of the mother country, merely with a view to escape the payment of certain sum[s] of money due to English creditors; and that they have ever since been struggling after a dubious kind of subsistence by incurring fresh debts with us, and occasionally repaying our credulity in no creditable coin.' According to Cobden, people held this belief because they 'have read the works of no authors or travellers upon that country, with the exception of those of Moore, Mrs. Trollope, and Basil Hall.' This observation is particularly pertinent as it demonstrates clearly the potential power of travellers to construct ideas of America and the concerns of certain British politicians about the genre.[149]

Cobden's personal opinion of America was unquestionably positive. Despite this even he maintained that 'we do not advocate republican institutions for this country [Britain]. We believe the government of the United States to be at this moment the best in the world; but then the American are the best people.' As this liberal politician saw it, the social system of Britain was fundamentally different from that of the United States since 'democracy forms no element in the materials of the English character. An Englishman is, from his mother's womb, an aristocrat. Whatever rank or birth, whatever fortune, trade or profession may be his fate, he is, or wishes or hopes to be, an aristocrat.' Even as he offered a defence of the political

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[149] Campbell, *Unlikely* Allies, 166; Read, *Bright and Cobden*, 13; Richard Cobden, *England, Ireland and America*, in F.W Chesson, (ed.), *The Political Writings of Richard Cobden Volume One* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902), 76-77.

system of the United States, however, Cobden noted key areas which were commonly criticized including its press and the attitude Americans had towards financial matters.[150] Although, in the context of *England, America and Ireland*, these were unequivocally national in scope, they were some of the key tropes of American politics which went on to be sectionalized. In his rejection of the compatibility between aristocracy and democracy he also prefigured ideas which resurfaced in the writings of those who claimed that the South rejected American democracy as it was popularly, and usually negatively, understood in Britain.

Although Cobden here explicitly discussed national politics in the wake of nullification, it is clear that the tariff and the tensions between South Carolina and the national government had long term implications for the way the British understood sectionalism. The issues which were at stake in 1832 developed into reference points on the differences between North and South for British observers in subsequent years. In 1836 *John Bull* looked back on the crisis and reasserted the idea of a fundamental disconnection between North and South, which stemmed from economic differences but which had more general consequences. The paper also somewhat prophetically speculated that the differences were so great as to mean that 'the federation of States has never, and will never recover.' In political terms this same editorial explained that when it came to the United States as a whole, 'its government is supported only by those who benefit from the tariff.' This, of course, meant the northern states. On a different topic, but one with clear contemporary resonance in 1836, the tension between North and South over the fate of Texas, *John Bull* drew a similar contrast between the different interests of the northern and southern states.[151] This continued recognition of sectional tensions in terms of political policy between North and South in the British press may have been (and in the case of *John Bull* certainly was) the product of anti-Americanism as opposed to sectional sympathy. The fact remains, however, that this language was used to undermine the United States and established a sectional division for British readers.

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[150] Cobden, *England, Ireland and America*, 75-76, 101-102.
[151] *John Bull*, 23rd May 1836. For British interest/involvement in Texas, which became independent from Mexico in 1836, see footnote 32

Significantly the re-assertion of the tariff as a sectional issue in these popular forms fostered the subsequent equation of the South with free trade, thereby helping to legitimize the cause of the Confederacy.

Democracy and despotism, at least for many Britons of the early nineteenth century were inextricably linked. The idea essentially was that democracy often led to a dictator supported by the power of the mob. *John Bull* published an editorial in 1836 which gave a critical account of the current President Andrew Jackson in these terms. It portrayed Old Hickory as the logical outcome of the American political system in which a mobocracy inevitably placed power in the hands of a despot, informing its readers that 'the United States are evidently reaping not only the fruits of reform and modern mountebankism, that of mob-law and pretended self-government, but of actual despotism. There is no, *nor ever was,* in the Eastern Hemisphere such a practical despot as ANDREW JACKSON [original emphasis in both cases].' While this was without question an overarching critique of the American political system with little regard for sectional differences it is nevertheless worthy of noting at this juncture.[152] The language of the mob and despot may have been national in scope in 1836 for *John Bull*, but when the United States broke down as a national entity this language was pointedly sectionalized to give a political character to each region. Similarly, the transfer of power from the mob to a despot president was drawn upon heavily by British Confederates in order to critique certain actions of the Lincoln Government such as the decision to suspend Habeas Corpus or his treatment of 'Copperhead' politicians.[153]

While the national political process and the rights and interests of the different states were frequent topics for comment in Britain, another key area bound up with politics has yet

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[152] The relationship between democracy and the decline into mob rule was most influentially expounded by Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France: and on the Proceedings of in Certain Societies in London relative to that Event* (1982 repr: Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1790); *John Bull*, 4th July 1836. For British views on President Jackson and the mob see Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics,* 111-113.

[153] On the suspension on Habeas Corpus and the Copperhead controversy see James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 287-290, 596-600; Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

to be touched on in this chapter, the power of finance in the United States. As early as 1833 elements of the British press were criticizing the numbers of British debtors who were absconding to America and the same organs who noted this phenomenon approved wholeheartedly of action taken by the British government over the issue. It was not simply that the United States came to be seen as a haven for bankrupts during the period, the financial dealing of the nation more generally came in for criticism in Britain. Henry Tudor, a traveller who published an account of his time in the United States in 1835, described Wall Street as the place in which 'the commerce of the world is conned over.'[154] The financial crisis which rocked the United States during the tail end of the Jackson presidency and throughout Martin Van Buren's time in office ratcheted up these tensions up further. Unsurprisingly, the consistently anti-American *John Bull* warned its readers against becoming involved in the risky financial dealings of the nation in 1837.[155] *John Bull's* critique was typically anti-American, however, Tudor's mention of Wall Street is particularly indicative of the identity which the city of New York possessed when it came to finance. New York was the archetype of the American city in its negative form and this was reflected in its financial conduct.

This cynicism over the financial dealings of the United States, and the North in particular, was also noted by a number of eminent British travellers of the period, including some of those who had a great deal of sympathy with the United States as a political entity. Harriet Martineau, for instance, described in her 1837 travelogue the number of bankruptcies in the nation and the carelessness 'with which speculators are allowed to game with other people's funds.' Even while Martineau appreciated the prevailing image of the cunning "Yankee" speculator she also contended that the image was exaggerated in Britain, noting that 'the activity of the commercial spirit in America is represented abroad, and too often at

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[154] See *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 16th Aug 1832, 5th Sept 1833; *Morning Chronicle*, 27th Aug 1833; Henry Tudor, *Narrative of a Tour in North America; Comprising Mexico, and the Mines of Real Del Monte, the United States, and the British Colonies: With an Excursion to the Island of Cuba, in a Series of Letters Written 1831-1832* (London: James Duncan, 1834), 25. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of Tudor's work see *Standard*, 8th Jan 1834, 7th May 1834; *Morning Post*, 9th Jan 1834, 10th March 1834; *Sheffield Independent, and Yorkshire and Derbyshire Advertiser*, 25th Jan 1834, 1st Feb 1834; *Morning Chronicle*, 30th Jan 1834, 9th May 1834, 17th Feb 1834; *Ipswich Journal*, 26th April 1834.
[155] *John Bull*, 28th May 1837, 11th June 1837.

home, as indicative of nothing but sordid love of gain: a making hast to be rich, a directly selfish desire of aggrandisement.' The version of commerce which Martineau claimed to be reacting against here certainly tallied with a description which Charles Augustus Murray would give two years later after arriving in New York and finding that 'a stranger runs [the risk of] submitting to an operation which passed in England by the various names of "being done," "screwed," "taken in," "sold," "fleeced," &.c'[156]

To Martineau, Murray's assessment would have been a harsh one which ignored the benevolent impulse of American society since 'their eager money-getting is not for the purposes of accumulation. Some-many, are deplorably ostentatious; but it seemed to me that the ostentation was an after-thought; though it might lead to renewed money getting.' Consistent with the rest of Martineau's narrative it was the New Englanders who represented American commerce in its most positive form. She was certainly not alone in making this distinction and as the literary scholar Christopher Mulvey has recognized it was New York specifically which was commonly portrayed as the archetype money-making merchant capital of the United States in a negative sense. Martineau told her readers that 'in New England, peopled by more than 2,000,000 of inhabitants, there are not more than 500, probably not more than 400 individuals, who can be called affluent men; possessing that is, 100,000 dollars and upwards. A prosperous community, in which a sordid pursuit of wealth was common, would be in a very different state from this.' She also emphasized the role of commerce as a motivation for the benevolence of the commercial classes of the northern states and highlighted that 'if the most liberal institutions in the northern States were examined into, it would be found how active the merchant class has been, beyond all others, in their establishment.'[157] This point of view was typical of the liberal laissez-faire British, as represented politically by figures such as Bright and Cobden, yet even those who came from

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[156] Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 345, 360; Murray, *Travels in North America,* 53.
[157] Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 363-364; Mulvey, *Transatlantic Manners,* 22.

a similar intellectual position to Martineau did not necessarily side with the North in the Civil War.

This image of the money-making American, be they a New Yorker, another northerner or simply a generic national figure, developed alongside various tropes of both sectional and national politics in the United States. Consequently, these financial images contributed either in the immediate, or longer term to the construction of sectional identity for the North as Martineau's case demonstrates. Martineau, a political liberal with an interest in many areas of progressive or reforming campaigns, was intensely interested in the republican experiment of the United States, yet she could not fail to note the sectional tensions which came with it. She even speculated on the state rights elements of American politics. Martineau outlined her basic understanding of these doctrines, the sectional differences and the factors which contributed to them when she noted that 'it is absurd to suppose that communities where wide differences of customs, prejudices, and manners still exist, can be, or ought to be, brought into a state of exact conformity of institutions.' She also warned her readers against 'supposing the state governments to be subordinate to the general.' In political terms this divergence was becoming more pronounced over time so 'while the north is still fostering a reverence for the Union, the south loses no opportunity of enlarging lovingly on the virtue of passionate attachment to one's native state.'[158]

This distinction between the interests of the sections and the idea of state rights was manifested in the development of political parties which represented each region on the national stage. Martineau contended that 'the federalists are the great patrons of commerce; but they are as proud of the national lands as the broadest of democrats. The Democrats, however, may be regarded as the patrons of agriculture. . . there seems to be a natural relation between the independence of property and occupation enjoyed by the agriculturalist,

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[158] For a discussion of Martineau's connection with one of the key liberal political figures of the era, Richard Cobden, see Nicholas C. Edsall, *Richard Cobden: Independent* Radical (Cambridge, Mass & London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 162-163; Howe, *Cotton Masters*, passim; Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 44-46.

and his watchfulness over State Rights and the political importance of individuals.' As well as speculating on the prospects for the future as she understood them, Martineau recognized that 'the democratic party are fond of saying that the United States are intended to be an agricultural country. It seems to me that they are intended to be everything. The Niagara basin, the Mississippi valley, and the South will be able to furnish the trading world with agricultural products for ever,- for ought we can see. But it is clear that there are other parts of the country which must have recourse to manufactures and commerce.'[159] The North and South in this analysis possessed distinctive attributes, the former being a growing manufacturing power and the later possessing an agricultural character. Crucially, these differences found expression in the diverging political interests of the two sections and this account demonstrates British appreciation of the issues at stake in sectional relations.

The idea that state governments had pre-eminence over the Federal Government was an idea not simply dealt with by Martineau in terms of the characteristics of each region and the abstract chances of secession. She engaged explicitly with the tariff, the nullification crisis, and the issues which these disputes had raised. Martineau, in a manner consistent with her liberal principles, conceded that South Carolina had legitimate grievances over the tariff and concluded in the wake of Henry Clay's Compromise Bill that 'the triumph remained- if triumph it were- with South Carolina. This was owing to the goodness of her principle of free trade.' However Martineau made it clear that even though she supported free trade, South Carolina was mistaken in blaming all its problems on protectionism:

The high spirit of South Carolina is of that kind which accompanies fallen, or inferior fortunes. Pride and poverty chafe the spirit. They make men look around for injury, and aggravate the sense of injury when it is real. In South Carolina, the black population outnumbers the white. The curse of slavery lies heavy on the land, and its inhabitants show the usual unwillingness of sufferers to attribute their maladies to their true cause. Right as the South Carolinians may be as to the principles of free trade, no tariff every yet occasioned such evils as they groan under. If not a single import duty had ever

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[159] Martineau, *Society in America Volume Two*, 30-32.

imposed, there would still have been the contrasts which they cannot endure to perceive between the thriving States of the north and their own. Now, when they see the flourishing villages of New England, they cry "we pay for all this." When the north appears to receive more favour from the general government, in its retrospective recompenses for service in war, the greater proportion of which service was rendered by the north, the south again cries, "We pay for all this." It is true the south pays dearly; but it is for her own depression, not for others prosperity.[160]

In creating such a coherent image of sectional differentiation which incorporated both slavery and the politics of the tariff debate, Martineau was able to maintain both an anti-tariff and a pro-northern perspective. Protection was invariably bad policy and in this sense the South was right to resist it. Yet the South did not understand that its own flaws were to blame for its socio-economic shortcomings rather than the tariff policy of the Federal Government. Central to Martineau's thought, therefore, was the basic assumption that to be pro-northern did not meant rejecting clear sectional differences- for a Briton to subscribe to the doctrine of political sectionalism before the Civil War did not involve them nailing their colours exclusively to the mast of the North or South.

While it was clear that certain 'national' characteristics existed as far as British travellers were concerned, features which in the political sphere (as it was broadly understood) incorporated a preoccupation with financial gain and a turbulent, often violent, political system dominated by the mob or mass action, a level of sectional complexity was evident within the nation. Commentators such as Martineau contended that demonstrable differences existed in the interests of the sections of America and these interests were explicitly expressed in the political sphere and connected specifically to the state rights doctrine. Despite recognizing these differences, Martineau played down the power of the sectional division concluding that 'the sectional hatred, if not an abstraction, is founded mainly on abstractions, and give[s] way at once when the parties are confronted.' More specifically, even though she described a northern clergyman 'who expects and desires the dissolution of

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[160] Martineau, *Society in America Volume One*, 103, 99-100.

the Union, saying that the north bore all the expense' and a South Carolinian who 'sees no use in the Union, but much expense and trouble' she wrote these figures off as being eccentrics. Therefore, while she appreciated that sectionalism was a force in American life it was a weak one. Her analysis of the future prospects of the Union was, consequently, positive, encapsulated in her belief that 'the probabilities of the continuance of the Union are so overwhelming, that no man, not in a state of delusion, from some strong prejudice can seriously entertain the idea of a dissolution.'[161]

In his two volume *Diary in America,* Captain Frederick Marryat spent a considerable amount of time exploring both sectional politics and elements of national politics which would (unknown to him of course, given that he died in 1848) end up being integrated into sectional discourse during the Civil War. The 1839 account of his experiences was, in a political sense, overwhelmingly negative in its tone, making sweeping criticisms about American national politics, and deploying images of the nation which would subsequently be sectionalized. At the heart of Marryat's understanding of the United States as a political entity was its adherence to democracy which he described in the following terms:

It may be inquired by some, what difference there is between a republic and a democracy, as the terms have been, and are often, used indifferently. I know not whether my distinction is right, but I consider that when those possessed of most talent and wisdom are selected to act for the benefit of a people, with a full reliance upon their acting for the best, and without any shackle or pledge being enforced, we may consider that form of government as a republic ruled by the most enlightened and capable; but that if, on the contrary, those selected by the people to represent them are not only bound by pledges previous to their election, but ordered by the mass how to vote after their election, then the country is not ruled by the collected wisdom of the people, but by the majority, who are as often wrong as right, and then the governing principle sinks into a democracy, as it now is in America.[162]

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[161] Ibid., 185, 105-106.
[162] Ibid., 11.

Later, in a brief history of the early United States, Marryat expanded on this general statement and noted the apparent degeneration of America into a democracy despite the warning given by George Washington in 1796 about the risks of that system. A comment near the end of Marryat's work was revealing about the influence of the British context in his views of American politics. He emphasized the role which the recently passed 1832 Reform Act could have in driving Britain towards democracy and expressed concern that this development would result in an increased power being exerted by the mass of the people, as it was in the United States. This apparent 'mob' power in America was made all the worse by the key conduit of politics in the nation; the press. According to Marryat the newspaper industry had such an influence that 'to be popular with the majority in America, to be a favourite with the people, you must first divest yourself of all freedom of opinion.' In terms of offering a model for what was wrong with the press of the nation Marryat held up the New York *Morning Herald* as an example, describing it as 'the most remarkable newspaper for its obscenity, and total disregard for all decency.' Of similar concern to Marryat when it came to the American political system was the phenomenon of party politics. He was wholly critical of the influence of party feeling on the political process, pointing to its role in bribery and the fact that political interest and moral convictions had to be subordinated to the demands of party meaning that, as Marryat described it, 'the struggle in America is for place, not for principle.' Marryat evidently feared the development of an Americanized system in Britain and consequently attacked the negative elements of American democracy in his defence of established British politics.[163] Even here, however, an implicit sectionalism seemed to exist. It was no coincide, given its reputation as the archetype 'mobocracy', that it was a New York newspaper which Marryat highlighted. It was this city and its surrounding area which developed an intimate association with American democracy in its most negative forms.

The notion of the mob, political violence and a despot heading up a democracy was tied, by Marryat at least, directly to the Presidency of Andrew Jackson in a manner similar to

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[163] Marryat, *Diary in America Part Second*, 64, 111, 132-137, 190, 203.

that used by the newspaper *John Bull* a few years before. While George Washington had warned the United States about the dangers of democracy Jackson was, in Marryat's analysis, the epitome of a new form of American democratic politics, 'raised as he was to the office of President by the mob, the demagogues who led the mob obtained offices under government, to the total exclusion of the aristocratic party, whose doom was sealed.' The consequence of this development in the political system was the creation of an all-powerful force of public opinion which taught Marryat that 'if the people, not only legislate, but, when in a state of irritation or excitement, they defy even legislation, they are not to be compared to *restricted* [original emphasis] sovereigns, but to despots.'[164] Despite Jackson's southern origins and career this recurring image which placed democracy and despotism in such close proximity became a staple of pro-Confederate discourse in Britain which often cast Abraham Lincoln or William H. Seward in the role of despotic democrat in the Jacksonian mold.

The images outlined here by Marryat were principally national in scope, although again the relationship between the Irish in the North and mob violence (as discussed in chapter two) were unlikely to be lost on the more shrewd British observers. In his introduction Marryat had explained to his readers that the political system had a sectional side as well: 'even on that point upon which you might safely venture to generalize, namely, the effect of a democratic form of government upon the mass, your observations must be taken with some exceptions, arising from the climate, manners, and customs, and the means of livelihood, so differing in this extended country.' A sense of distinctive regional difference which he further emphasized when he noted that:

Another difficulty and cause of misrepresentation is, that travellers are not aware of the jealousy existing between the inhabitants of the different states and cities. The eastern states pronounce the southerners to be choleric, reckless, regardless of law, indifferent to religion; while the southerners designate the eastern states as a nursery of over reaching pedlars, selling clocks and wooden nutmegs. . . Boston turns up her erudite nose at New York; Philadelphia, in her pride, looks down upon

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[164] Ibid., 132-137.

both New York and Boston; while New York, chinking her dollars, swears the Bostonians are a parcel of puritanical prigs, and the Philadelphians a would-be aristocracy. A western man from Kentucky, when at Tremont House in Boston, begged me particularly not to pay attention to what they said of his state in that quarter. Both a Virginian and Tennesseean [sic], when I was at New York, did the same.[165]

While being in themselves quite sweeping socio-economic distinctions between the regions (the sum of much pre-war sectional discourse) these differences invaded the political sphere in Marryat's analysis and were underpinned by clear sectional economic divisions. Marryat also made it clear to his readers which side of the divide it would be in British interests to remain on good terms with. He saw an alliance between Britain and the agricultural South as being perfectly natural and was bullish about southerners themselves recognizing this fact, explaining that 'at the declaration of the last war with England. . .it was the Northern States which were opposed to it, and the Southern who were in favour of it: but circumstances have changed. . . the Southern [is] very anxious to remain at peace with England, that their produce may find a market; while the Northern, on the contrary, would readily consent to war, that they might shut out the English manufactures.'[166] Not only were North and South distinctive but the southern states had the potential to form a valuable economic compliment to Great Britain.

Marryat also attempted to engage with the legality of secession, suggesting that, not only were the sections not homogenous, but that they might be able to divide into different nations at some point. On the topic of the ending of slavery in the South, he recognized some form of the state rights doctrine by noting that the only way the national government could do anything about slavery would be to 'trample on the constitution.' Similarly, referring to nullification he criticized the Federal Government since, as he put it, the administration 'never displayed more weakness than in the question of the tariff upon English goods to support their interest. South Carolina, one of the smallest States, led the van, and the storm rose.

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[165] Marryat, *Diary in America*, 2, 4.
[166] Marryat, *Diary in America*, 32, 254; Marryat, *Diary in America Part Second*, 60. The war being referred to here was the 1812-1815 conflict between Britain and the United States.

This state passed an act by convention, *annulling* the Federal Act of the tariff, armed her militia, and prepared for war.' He concluded that 'by examination into the Constitution of the United States. . . the States have reserved for themselves all the real power, and that Federal Union exists but upon their sufferance. Each State still insists upon its right to withdraw itself from the Union, whenever it pleases.'[167] The differences between the sections were therefore not simply pronounced but a genuine legal channel existed for the division of the nation into its constituent parts.

The 1840s: Thomas Brothers to Sir Charles Lyell

From a more radical political background, but drawing some similar conclusions to Marryat was Thomas Brothers whose travelogue was published in 1840. Brothers had lived in the United States and, having gone over as a political radical, had been thoroughly disillusioned by his experience. On returning, Brothers published a book whose title *The United States of North America as they are; Not as they are generally Described: Being a Cure for Radicalism* gives an accurate impression of its content. Written thematically in the form of letters to British reformers, Brothers systematically dismantled the radical image of the United States. In his letter to the Birmingham reformer Thomas Attwood he made specific mention of Frederick Marryat's work before attacking American politics and the broader effects they had: 'the British people never were, are not now, and, I think, never will be, any more like the great mass of the American republicans.' While in his letter to the radical-Tory Earl of Stanhope on the issue of American elections Brothers noted that 'over this business there is generally rioting, confusion, and, of late years, bloodshed and murder. This excitement then continues to increase till after the general election.' American politics was a deeply unpleasant business as Brothers described it, putting him very much in line with many other commentators. Brothers also noted the potential power of the notion of secession in the

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[167] Marryat, *Diary in America*, 253; Marryat, *Diary in America Part Second*, 179-181.

following description which was included in his letter to the penal reformer Matthew Davenport Hill:

That threat, to dissolve the Union, was soon followed by another which at first seemed to be of still greater importance, — it was what was termed the South Carolina Nullification; that is, the state of South Carolina refused to pay any more taxes to the general government, unless the general government would alter the laws, and make them agreeable to their wish. These high-minded, gallant, and honourable men, ever true to their purpose, made a protestation that they would perish to a man before they would longer submit to the tariff.'[168]

Brothers's images of American politics conceived in a national sense were disconcerting for any self-respecting advocate of many of the political ideas so frequently associated with the republic, characterised as they were by mob power and disunity. Undoubtedly, this was his purpose, yet within his analysis he also recognized the sectional tensions of the nation's politics. He was not entirely in favour of the stand which South Carolina had taken in 1832, but he propounded a view of American politics to a British audience in which some areas of the nation felt disconnected from the national interests as dictated from Washington, just as Charles Daubeny had observed in his meeting with a group of elite southerners in 1843.[169]

The following year (1841) in his popular work *America,* James Silk Buckingham also engaged with various facets of the political system of the United States just as Brothers had done, but considered them from a liberal as opposed to a radical standpoint. In a discussion of the politician Daniel Webster, Buckingham drew attention to the New England statesman's advocation of protection, criticizing the policy and noting in the abstract that 'the doctrine of high duties, tariffs, and protection for domestic manufactures, so long exploded by all the best writers on political economy in Europe, (French, Italian, and German, as well as English) is dear to Mr. Webster, and he lauds it as the keystone of the American system.' It was, however, only certain areas of the United States which, as Buckingham saw it, actually

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[168] Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 100; Brothers, *The United States of North America as they are,* 62, 135, 187.
[169] For an account of this meeting see page 102.

possessed a manufacturing industry to protect. Pennsylvania, for example, according to Buckingham's figures (taken from 1836) boasted in its manufacturing 'upwards of two hundred and fifty articles' which possessed a value that 'exceeded seventy millions of dollars,' while in Rhode Island there were 'at present about 130 cotton manufactories, eight bleacheries, and four calico printing establishments, employing an aggregate capital of nearly 10,000,000.' These descriptions represented a continuation of the tradition of differentiating the North and South on the basis of their development in terms of manufacturing and a bifurcation between the industrial and agricultural. Significantly, Buckingham also promoted the idea of a potentially fruitful commercial connection between Britain and the South.[170]

The operation of the American political system in both sections was of similar interest to Buckingham who discussed it in some detail since he 'had an excellent opportunity of seeing the working of the political machine, and the conflict of opposing parties, in a general election for the State Legislature, which occurred, soon after [his] arrival in New York.' Specifically Buckingham described how 'heretofore, the composition of the legislature for the State of New York, including the two houses, the Assembly and the Senate, as well as the Governor, was, like that of the Congress or legislature of the general government, democratic, or favourable to the existence of Mr. Van Buren's administration.' For the purposes of the election he saw the cities party machinery kicked into gear: 'the note of preparation was sounded early, by all their organs of the press; and while committees were forming in town and country, and meetings held every night in the week, by old and young, to organize and arrange their plans of operation, pass strong resolutions, print them in the newspapers, and distribute them freely through every part of the city; the editors themselves were all busily engaged in aiding these operations by their daily appeals.' Buckingham was highly critical of this method of political agitation and felt he spoke for his countrymen generally when he observed that:

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[170] Buckingham, *America Volume One*, 331; Buckingham, *America Volume Two*, 22; Buckingham, *America Volume Three*, 462.

A stranger arriving in the country, and not knowing anything of the state of parties beforehand, or of the mode of warfare practised on such occasions, would have imagined that the fate of the whole Union depended on the issue of this single election; that if it were carried in favour of the Whigs, the nation would instantly be restored to the highest degree of commercial prosperity; but that, if carried against them, the result would be universal bankruptcy, total annihilation of all the elements of prosperity, the dissolution of the Union, the insurrection of the slave population, and the destruction of all that was worth preserving in the country. There was no term of opprobrium too severe for them to apply to their opponents, the democratic republicans. They called them atheists, infidels, agrarians, incendiaries, men who were without religion and without honesty, who desired to pull down all that was venerable in the institutions of the country, to seize the property of the rich and divide it among the poor, to demolish the churches, to destroy the courts of justice, to let loose all the criminals from the jails, to abolish all government, and to produce only a chaos of anarchy and confusion. Some few who heard all this, seemed really to believe it; but the greater number knew it to be merely electioneering language, and disregarded it accordingly; though they had no objection whatever to its use, provided it would attain the end they had in view.[171]

This description had little appeal to most Britons and built on images of the press and party in negative terms, contributing to an understanding of American democracy which came to be associated with the urban north and New York specifically.

Interestingly, despite the electioneering and powerful rhetoric of this campaign, Buckingham took care to note the 'order and decorum,' which he observed in the practice of voting itself, particularly in contrast to a British election. The same held true for a later campaign in New York which Buckingham read about while in Boston. However, even though the contest itself 'went off quietly, and not a single breach of the peace appears to have occurred in any quarter' he noted the bombastic partisan rhetoric engaged in by the political press, some examples of which he reproduced:

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[171] Buckingham, *America Volume One*, 67-69, 71-73.

From the *New York Courier and Enquirer*— Great and GLORIOUS VICTORY ! New YORK TRIUMPHANT! — THE COUNTRY saved!— 'We have met the enemy, and they are ours.' — New York was called upon to save the country — and promptly, fearlessly, and nobly has she done her duty! Her sister States invoked her to come to the rescue — she heard, and she obeyed! Van-Burenism lies prostrate in the dust — Toryism stands rebuked — Loco-Focoism, Agrarianism, and the Sub-Treasury, together with all experiments upon the currency — are prostrated, never again to raise their hideous heads, and -threaten the subversion of our free institutions![172]

This hyperbolic reaction and the passion of the political press in the United States was indicative of the flaws of the American political system, as was the palpable sense of triumph which Buckingham also noted in this newspaper article which declared that 'against the entire monied force of the Government — against fraud and corruption in every form they could assume — and against the people's money, employed to enslave the people, have the Whigs of New York contended and triumphed.' Much to the chagrin of the British American political rhetoric was characterized by this sort of hyperbole and exaggeration, something which was abundantly clear in the significance of press and in discussions of party:

Abundant specimens might be offered, to show the manner in which the American press is disposed to turn almost every striking incident to political account, to soften down all frauds and immoralities committed by men of their own party, and to put forth in the most prominent light all similar acts when committed by their opponents. If a bank stops payment, the main object of inquiry with the newspapers is, whether the directors were Whigs or Democrats. If a treasury defaulter runs off with a large sum, it is sure to be attributed to his Whig or Democratic politics; neither of them caring a straw about the immorality of the act, but each being anxious to obtain a party triumph.[173]

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[172] Buckingham, *America Volume One,* 73; Buckingham, *America Volume Three*, 411-415.

[173] Buckingham, *America Volume Three*, 411-415; 338-339. Whigs within the context of Buckingham's work referred to the American incarnation of the party, for an outline of the party and the differences between Whigs and Democrats see John Ashworth, *The Republic in Crisis 1848-1861* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 30-37, 97-98, 128-131; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*; Silbey, *The Partisan Imperative*; Freehling, *The Road to Disunion*; Remini, *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Freedom*; Richards, *The Slave Power*; Nagel, *One Nation Indivisible*; Pessen, *Jacksonian America*; J.V Matthews '"Whig History": The New England Whigs and a Usable Past,' *New England Quarterly* 51.2 (June 1978), 193-208; Max J. Skidmore 'Antebellum American Thought and Politics,' *Journal of American Culture* 33.1 (2010), 63-68.

Buckingham's discussion of the electoral politics of the United States provides a fascinating insight into the British perspective on American politics. It portrayed a charged, rough and tumble democracy defined by party passion and press bombast. Propagandists during the Civil War used these national tropes of the US political system and associated them explicitly with one section or the other with the pointed purpose of recalling the negative accounts given by men like Buckingham.

While offering significant commentary on American politics both in a national and sectional sense in its own right, Buckingham's ideas in *America* become more pronounced when they are placed alongside the content of its companion work *The Slave States of America.* Recalling for example Buckingham's descriptions of northern manufactures and the tariff policy his description of the nullification crisis is notable:

The origin and end of this celebrated controversy may be thus briefly stated. The people of the free states, including all those of the Union north of the river Potomac, wishing to encourage domestic manufactures, and thus to render themselves independent of importations from England, were powerful enough in Congress to establish by law a scale of high duties on almost all British manufactures, ranging from 20 to 50 per cent., professedly with a view to protect the dearer manufactures of their own country. To this the people of the South very naturally objected, as they would derive no benefit whatever from the establishment of manufactures, since their States were not likely to establish any; while on the other hand, they would be injured to a considerable extent, by being obliged to pay for every manufactured article of which they stood in need, from 20 to 50 per cent, more than the price at which they could be supplied from England if no such tariff existed. These high duties were, therefore, clearly founded in injustice, by taxing the consumers of the whole country, for the exclusive benefit of the few engaged in manufactures.[174]

This image of a section being tied to the Union against its interests was not exclusively applicable to the South as Buckingham himself recognized: 'they mutually reciprocate the charge that they are each taxed unjustly for the benefit of the other; and in this the

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[174] Buckingham, *The Slave States of America Volume One*, 35.

Southerners say truly; because the tariff-laws of the North undoubtedly impose heavy taxes on the South for the protection of Northern manufactures; while the people of the North are doing all they can to force on the abolition of slavery, which, say the Southerners, would rob us of our property, and means of conducting agriculture.'[175] Viewed in these terms the Union, far from being an ideal political solution, was rendered a peculiarly uncomfortable arrangement for both sections and in this sense if secession did occur it would be perfectly understandable.

One of the intended correspondents of Thomas Brothers' letters in the aforementioned *Cure for Radicalism* was the reforming Birmingham Quaker Joseph Sturge, who himself travelled around the United States and published his thoughts on the nation in *A Visit to the United States in 1841*. In terms of his political identity, Joseph Sturge can be placed within the Bright, Cobden and Martineau school of free trade liberalism, yet he pushed his liberalism a shade further than them, forming the Complete Suffrage Union in November 1841 in an attempt to fuse together the repeal of the Corn Laws and suffrage extension through an alliance of working and middle class activists. Sturge, whose time in the United States was characterized by a preoccupation with slavery, cast around for an explanation for its continued existence in America (a nation which he greatly admired) and settled on the phenomenon of political sectionalism. The conclusion which Sturge drew was that 'neither the free states, nor the general Government, can perhaps constitutionally abolish slavery in any one of the existing slave States.' This did not, however, mean that Sturge accepted the status quo, he was of the opinion that while it might not be able to tackle the peculiar institution in the South, the Washington government should take action on 'objects within the limits of constitutional power of the general Government, such as the suppression of the internal-slave trade, and the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia.' In terms of political distinctions between the state and nation in America, Sturge was clear, claiming that 'each state constitutes within itself a distinct republic, virtually independent of the general Government;

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[175] Buckingham, *The Slave States of America Volume Two*, 116.

so long as its legislation does not conflict with the specific articles of the constitutional compact, all the rights and powers of sovereignty, not specifically designated to the Government in that instrument being retained by the States.'[176] This sort opinion was illustrative of the extent to which the United States were presented as being divided on many fronts, from the legal framework which gave the states sovereignty and tended to be of abstract concern to British observers, through to issues close to British hearts such a slavery and free trade.

Interestingly even though many Anti-Corn Law League (ACLL) members including Sturge, Bright and Cobden were unequivocally anti-slavery, in a transatlantic context they found themselves aligned with the slaveholders who advocated free trade. The historian Simon Morgan has noted the excitement of ACLL members when John Tyler, a Virginia slaveholder, ascended to the presidency (in 1841 after the death of William Henry Harrison) due to his apparent commitment to free trade while the board room of the ACLL actually had busts of John C. Calhoun and George McDuffie in it. After the passage of the Walker Tariff in 1846 which lowered rates substantially, Cobden personally congratulated Calhoun on his achievements; all of this despite the fact that Tyler, Calhoun and McDuffie were slave-holders and Calhoun had advocated the annexation of Texas to expand the institution. Free trade was in fact such a significant issue and so intimately associated with the South that it would lead a number of liberals who vocally opposed slavery to support the Confederacy after 1861.[177]

The political complexities of pre-war America which are so evident in the free trade debate were of similar interest to the phrenologist George Combe, who went into some detail on the power of the national government in his work on the United States. He maintained the

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[176] Henry Miller 'Radicals, Tories, or Monomaniacs? The Birmingham Currency Reformers in the House of Commons, 1832-1867,' *Parliamentary* History 3.3 (2012), 354-377, 368; Read, *Cobden and Bright,* 29-30; Sturge, *A Visit to the United States*, 172, 176-177,180.
[177] Morgan, 'The Anti-Corn Law League' 100-103. For McDuffie as a proslavery figure see Sydnor, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism*, 336; For more on Texas see footnote 32; Report of Lindsay speaking in Free Trade in North Shields, 3rd July 1859, WSLC, LND.1.

position that the national government had no power to abolish the institution in individual states, recognizing that 'there is unquestionably a constitutional difficulty in regard to Congress passing laws relative to slavery in the several States, as each is an independent sovereignty within its own territories; but Congress wields a powerful moral influence over the Union, and there are several forms in which its opinions on the subject may be legitimately expressed.' Combe specifically noted a resolution brought by the Democratic Senator from New Hampshire, Charles G. Atherton, on the nature of the Washington government which contended that 'this Government is of limited powers, and that, by the constitution of the United States, Congress has no jurisdiction whatever over the institution of slavery in the several States of the confederacy.' While recognizing the constitutional difficulty of abolition, Combe, in a manner similar to Sturge, was critical of the lack of action taken by the national government in the area in which it did have jurisdiction, pointing to the continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia.[178] By the early 1840s it seems that the doctrine of state rights was understood well in Britain as commentators from across the political spectrum interpreted the political system of the United States in ways which suggested its legality.

The mechanics of democracy itself was a frequent subject for comment among British visitors to the United States, and while often given in national terms, a North/South divide is still discernible in many texts. Combe described critically how in America 'one evil attending democratic institutions and universal suffrage. . .is the tendency to convert all questions into subjects of party contention.' The merchant William Rathbone VI would surely have agreed with Combe given that he wrote to his mother from New York in June 1842 to comment on how 'rich & poor, take all their opinions on trust from those who are interesting in deceiving them. . .rather let us [in Britain] have a selfish aristocracy than a selfish people.' He proceeded to outline the consequences of the party system which resulted in the subordination of 'the intrinsic merits of a measure' to the 'despotism of party.' Part of this outcome in the American political system for Rathbone was a natural result of the fact that

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[178] Combe, *Notes on the United States Volume One*, 255.

'the power of the people exceeds their educational attainments' since in America 'the institutions are democratic in a high degree, for, with few exceptions, political power is placed in the hands of every man above twenty-one years of age.' The implications of this phenomenon were quite obvious to Combe who contended, after seeing a riot in Harrisburg (Pennsylvania), that 'a democracy is a rough instrument of rule. . .and I have not met with a British radical who has had the benefit of five years' experience of it, who has not renounced his creed, and ceased to admire universal suffrage,' something the life of Thomas Brothers would certainly have attested to. While Combe did recognize many Americans who were educated to a high level he still concluded that 'in the United States the more ignorant governs the more enlightened' a situation which was to the detriment of the nation since 'any magistrates who should propose either to tax the city for the expense of a proper cleaning establishment, or of a police force sufficient to enforce order, would be deprived of their offices at the end of the first year.'[179] As both Combe and Rathbone saw it, the uneducated American mob acted as the controlling force of the nation's democracy, a deeply negative interpretation of the political system.

The intellectual underpinning of much of the anti-democratic rhetoric of British commentators on the subject of the United States involved an abstract concern over the notion of a tyrannical majority. Combe explored this idea in depth and rejected the received wisdom that 'the institutions of the United States have produced a frightful result in establishing the tyranny of the majority.' He explained instead that the situation was more complex than this as 'it may be supposed that the tyranny of the majority consists in elevating their own will into supremacy over the law' and in America 'there is constantly a reaction in favour of law and order,' tyranny of the majority in this form was not a problem as far as Combe was concerned. Yet at the same time a form of intellectual tyranny was apparently in evidence. Combe explained that 'the tyranny of the majority may be supposed to mean

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[179] Combe, *Notes on the United States Volume One*, 88-89, 161, 223, 290; William Rathbone VI to Elizabeth Rathbone, 5th June 1842, [RP] RPVIX.3.68.

merely that in matters of opinion nobody dares to think, or at least to avow what he thinks, in opposition to the majority; and this is really the only tyranny that exists.' In consequence Combe chose an alternative phrase for what he saw as occurring in the United States, telling his audience that 'it is an error. . . to speak of the tyranny of the majority over the minority of the nation in matters of opinion; the tyranny is rather that of the public over the individual.'[180] This image of the individual being subsumed by the mass in the United States was typical of the moderate-liberal; those, like Trollope or Buckingham, who were so often disillusioned by their experiences in America, and who were so significant in establishing the negative language of democracy. This was a language which became intimately associated with New York and Pennsylvania and the large, politically demonstrative, urban populations which seemed to inhabit both states.

In addition to these various (and primarily negative) descriptions of the American political system, Combe also commented on attitudes towards finance in the United States and did so in a way which, although not explicitly sectional in terms of contrasting the North and South critiqued the conduct of specific areas of the North, thus providing implicit sectional differentiation. As well as describing New York generally as the place of 'rendezvous of the rogues of both Europe and America' Combe described in some detail a land speculation bubble in Manhattan during 1836 which culminated in a 'very general bankruptcy.' It was not solely New York, however, which was noted in these terms by Combe, in fact on the topic of the 1837 bank suspension he recognized that 'the State of New York paid the interest of its debt, not in its own depreciated bank-notes, but in specie; that is to say, it paid the difference of exchange in addition to the interest; but the State of Pennsylvania paid the interest of her debt in her own depreciated bank-notes' while he also noted a million dollar bank fraud which had gone on in Philadelphia. Another traveller wrote a private letter home from this same city in May 1841 and explained that 'I am sorry to say that Pennsylvania is one of those which

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[180] Combe, *Notes on the United States Volume Three,* 274, 276-277, 280, 283. For more on the individual and the mass see Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics*, 173-174, 203-204.

appear disinclined to be honest; the legislature of that State seems to be very bad; they have refused to pass a tax bill and they have authorised the issue of notes under the value of a dollar, both actions tending to make confusion worse.' These accounts provide a useful commentary on the institutional attitudes of areas of America towards financial morality from a British perspective. In a more sweeping indictment of the political system this same correspondent noted that 'a republic may be a very fine form of government a . . . democracy as far as we may judge from the United States is the next worst thing to a despotism; the race between the parties is so severe.'[181] These were the sentiments of a political liberal and are representative of the wholesale rejection of the American political system as a model for the British, a system which developed an increased connection, either implicitly or explicitly, with areas of the North.

Another liberal, Charles Dickens, also noted in 1842 the apparently relaxed attitude of Americans towards financial practices which were so often condemned in Britain. In his travelogue, *American Notes*, Dickens described the 'giant effigies set up in other parts of that vast-counting house which lies beyond the Atlantic,' as well as noting the 'love of "smart" dealing: which gilds over many a swindle.' Dickens did, however, exclude Boston, at least to some extent, from this characterisation, telling his readers that 'the golden calf they worship at Boston is a pigmy [sic],' providing yet another illustration of the abiding British sympathy for New England. It has been suggested that Dickens may have been writing from a position of authority on the subject of American finance having (allegedly) lost money in the Cairo City and Canal Company. What is certain is that he would have been well aware of British figures who had lost out in transatlantic speculation. In 1842 (the same year that *American Notes* was published) the poet, William Wordsworth wrote a searing attack in *The Dial* magazine denouncing the repudiation of debts by Pennsylvania, something Combe had referred to and which, according to Wordsworth, had led to the defrauding of innocent investors including his

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[181] Combe, *Notes on the United States Volume One*, 246, 48-49; Combe, *Notes on the United States Volume Three,* 109, 208; William Rathbone VI to Elizabeth Rathbone 9th May 1841 from Philadelphia [RP] RPVIX.3.56A.

own daughter, Dora.[182] These discussions of financial improprieties clearly had the potential to touch a raw nerve among a certain class in Britain, who, even if they had not directly lost money in American finance during this period, would have been acutely aware of those who had.

On the issue of the American political system Dickens wrote a letter back to Britain on 22nd March 1842 in which he bemoaned what he observed in the nation, lamenting the fact that 'this is not the Republic I came to see. This is not the Republic of my imagination.' Dickens was very much a liberal during this period and as the historian Hugh Cunningham has noted was 'democratic by principle,' as such it seems perfectly reasonable to conclude that his disappointment stemmed from the genuine high hopes he had. Like a range of other commentators Dickens saw a convergence of party and mob in the American political system as being at least a partial explanation for its failings. His description of politicians in the United States is worth giving in full:

I saw in them, the wheels that move the meanest perversion of virtuous Political Machinery that the worst tools ever wrought. Despicable trickery at elections; under-handed tampering with public officers; cowardly attacks upon opponents, with scurrilous newspapers of shields and hired pens for daggers; shameful trucklings to mercenary knaves whose claim to be considered, is, that every day and week they sow new crops or ruin with their venal types, which are the dragon's teeth of yore, in everything but sharpness; aidings and abetting of every bad inclination in the popular mind, and artful suppressions of all its good influences: such things as these, and in a word, Dishonest Faction in its most depraved and most unblushing form, stared out from every corner of the crowded room.[183]

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[182] Dickens, *American Notes*, 27, 245; Gravil, *Romantic Dialogues,* 65. Debate exists about the evidence for Dickens having invested in the Cairo City and Canal Company see Gerald G. Grubb, 'Dickens' Western Tour and the Cairo Legend,' *Studies in Philology* 48.1 (Jan 1951), 87-97.
[183] Slater, *Charles Dickens*, 175, 196; Hugh Cunningham 'Dickens as a Reformer' in David Paroissien (ed.), *A Companion to Charles Dickens* (Oxford, Malden, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 173; Cunningham raises questions about Dickens reputation as a reformer which are noted in (among other works) Ackroyd, *Dickens,* 137-139, 154-155, 301-302, 325-328, 369-371, 736-742; Andrew Sanders, *Charles Dickens*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 46-47, 50-61. For discussions of Dickens' politics more generally see Gold. *Charles Dickens: Radical Moralist*; Dickens, *American Notes*, 27, 245, 119-121, 247-248.

The consequence of this, as Dickens saw it, was to discourage the best people in the nation from becoming involved in politics.

An integral cog for the political machine in Dickens' analysis was the newspaper industry. In America, 'the press had its evil eye in every house, and its black hand in every appointment of state, from a president to a postman' and the consequence of this was that no American could be elected 'without first grovelling down upon earth and bending the knee before this monster of depravity.' This combined dangerously with the party system which was undermining the fabric of political life in the nation. While in New York for example, although impressed by the public works of the city, Dickens had reservations about the ability of an institution such as the New York Lunatic Asylum to keep a consistent and effective administration given the constant changes in personnel brought about by party disputes. Dickens's overarching notions about the American political system were, in many ways, similar to those of George Combe, and the scholar Juliet John's observation that he saw the United States as 'a dystopian vision of mass culture,' would certainly have held true for Combe and, for that matter, other pre-war commentators.[184] Clearly both Dickens and Combe saw in America the decline of the individual in favour of the mass and although at this stage this was a division between Britain and the United States it developed a connection to areas of the North particularly. Consequently, the language which Dickens deployed in his hyperbolic descriptions of American politics developed into a vocabulary of negative tropes about American democracy would could be mined for sectional purposes during the Civil War and explicitly associated with sectional tropes of culture and ethnicity in characterizing the urban North.

The image of the mob in America and its political and social implications were also a point of comment for one of the most active writers on the United States in Britain, Frances

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[184] Laura A. White notes that British Consuls in the United States during the 1850s provided similar tales of the spoils system in politics see White, 'The United States in the 1850s,' 527; John 'A body without a head'; Whitridge 'Dickens and Thackeray in America' 224. The historian Paul Goodman suggested different attitudes towards finance between Boston and New York see Goodman 'Ethics and Enterprise.'

Trollope. In her 1843 novel *The Barnabys in America,* which followed a fictional British family

as they travelled from New Orleans, up through the southern states and on to Philadelphia

and New York, the power of the mob was mentioned in a number of instances. These

included an exchange between Mrs. Barnaby and a large group of Americans during which

the former asked her audience about the effects of a republican form of government on the

public. The response which she received was that of all the members of the audience

attempting to speak at once, with the one who finally answered doing so only 'by force of

lungs, and the impetus given to his determination to be heard by the consciousness that he

was the richest man in the company.' If the relationship between the question and the manner

of the response was too subtle for her readers, Trollope went on to make her point

abundantly clear when she stated that 'you might have fancied yourself in the chamber of

congress at Washington.' This short discussion implied that the effects of republican

government were to drive the administration down to the level of the rabble and that the

essential feature to control this rabble was wealth as opposed to a suitability to govern.[185]

This was, therefore, another indictment of the American political system and its reliance on

the power of the mob.

  Characterizations of this type were not simply the preserve of published intellectuals

like Trollope, Dickens or Buckingham; an examination of correspondence from the 1840s

attests to the fact that the language of mob power was used by many ordinary Britons with

reference to America. The Liverpool businessman William Rathbone VI wrote a letter in 1841

in which he explained that the constant upheaval of American government had disillusioned

many Britons which helped to explain how many radicals returned from the United States as

Tories, an ideological shift which somebody like Thomas Brothers was typical of. Benjamin

Disraeli, then a conservative MP and also writing in 1841, explained with reference to the

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[185] Frances Trollope *The Barnabys in America, or Adventures of the Widow Wedded* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1843), 145-146. For reactions to *The Barnabys* see *Standard*, 29th March 1842, 20th Sept 1843; *Morning Post*, 30th March 1842, 13th Oct 1843; *Caledonian Mercury*, 30th June 1842, 31st Oct 1842; *Morning Chronicle*, 11th Oct 1842, 10th May 1844; *Examiner*, 22nd July 1843, 7th Oct 1843; *York Herald, and General Advertiser*, 9th Sept 1843; Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 507; *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume One*, 23rd April 1860.

Alexander McLeod affair, during which a British citizen was arrested in November 1840 for his involvement in the burning of the American ship the *Caroline* in November 1837, that even though the United States had officially released McLeod, a mob had assembled to re-imprisoned him. The significance of finance was similarly reasserted during this period. Frances Trollope offered a fictional account in *the Barnabys in America* of an attempt by a pair of New Yorkers (Mr Fad and Mr Scam) to cheat money out of her character Major Barnaby. She also commented on Mrs Barnaby's attempts to foster acquaintances in New York, that 'had she presented as presents to her new companions some her most precious and transferable articles of finery, instead of merely displaying them, it is possible she might have advanced more rapidly in their good graces.'[186] These comments by Combe, Trollope, Rathbone and Disraeli are important because they indicate the extent of anti-Americanism in Britain and its ability to cross political boundaries. Trollope was a liberal novelist, Rathbone a liberal businessman, Combe a liberal scientist and Disraeli a socially aware Tory novelist with political ambitions, but all of them critiqued similar aspects of the United States. If this powerful language of anti-Americanism could be explicitly sectionalized during any open conflict between North and South by pro-Confederates in Britain, it already had a receptive audience which crossed the political spectrum.

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[186] Trollope, *The Barnabys in America*, 293-294; William Rathbone VI to Elizabeth Rathbone, 3rd May 1841, [RP] RPVIX.3.55A. For information on McLeod and the subsequent tensions over the Maine border see Bourne, *The Balance of Power in North America*, 75-77, 86, 93; Stuart, *United States Expansionism*, 126-147; Kenneth R. Stevens, *Border Diplomacy: The Caroline and McLeod Affairs in Anglo-American-Canadian Relations 1837-1842* (Tuscaloosa & London: University of Alabama Press, 1989); Francis M. Carroll, *A Good and Wise Measure: The Search For the Canadian-American Boundary 1783-1842* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Jones & Rakestraw, *Prologue to Manifest Destiny*; Wilbur Devereux Jones, 'Lord Ashburton and the Maine Boundary Negotiations,' *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 40.3 (Dec 1953), 477-490; J. Chris Arndt, 'Maine in the Northeastern Boundary Controversy: States' Rights in Antebellum New England,' *New England Quarterly* 62.2 (June 1989), 205-223; Howard Jones, 'Anglophobia and the Aroostook War,' *New England Quarterly* 48.4 (Dec 1975), 519-539; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 130-132. McLeod was innocent and acquitted however the New York governor at this time who insisted on McLeod's trial for murder was the arch Anglophobe William Henry Seward, something the British did not forget. Benjamin Disraeli to Sarah Disraeli, 19th February 1841 in M.G Wiebe, J.B Conacher, John Matthews & Mary S. Millar, (eds.), *Benjamin Disraeli Letters Volume Three, 1838-1841* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press 1987). Disraeli's critique of American democracy was drawn from a Tory as opposed to liberal position and as Paul Giles has noted with reference to Disraeli's 1845 novel *Sybil* his thought 'hark[s] back to a monarchical medievalism,' Disraeli therefore saw American Democracy and social equality, as the antithesis of his idea of a stable hierarchical society. For more see Giles, *Virtual Americas*; Paul Smith, *Disraeli: A Brief Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); William Rathbone VI to Elizabeth Rathbone, [RP] RPVIX.5.56A.

This intersection of the national and sectional and the establishment of tropes with cross party appeal, continued with Charles Daubeny's *Journal of Tour Through the United States and Canada* which was published in 1843. He told his readers of one Virginian he had met who 'spoke of the Union as of little importance to the South, and contemplated its dissolution as neither distant nor greatly to be depreciated' while another group of southerners informed Daubeny in unambiguous language that 'the Southerners . . . are losers by this national compact.' Daubeny also found the issue of the tariff very much alive while in South Carolina and concluded that 'the South Carolineans [sic] seem to even now pay a dear price for their Union with the North.'[187] Once again here the United States was portrayed as far from united, it was an artificial arrangement which in a domestic context was not unanimously popular.

After being so deeply altered by his experiences of American politics it was of little surprise that Dickens integrated the ideas he had outlined in *American Notes* into the fictional United States of his 1844 novel *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. Before Martin and his servant Mark Tapley had even set foot on the shore of the United States news sellers boarded their ship to hawk their wares which possessed titles including the 'New York Sewer,' 'New York Plunderer,' 'New York Peeper,' 'New York Stabber' and 'New York Keyhole Reporter.' These titles appear to have entered into the public lexicon to some extent as the *Morning Post* directly compared the *New York Herald* to Dickens's 'New York Sewer,' in its 21st October 1843 edition. The less than subtle criticism here in both the novel and newspaper article was directed at that common prey, the American press, who were a particular target for Dickens given the negative reaction they had given to *American Notes*. The emphasis on New York here also needs to highlighted as it offered another example of the slight sectionalization of a national characteristic which would become central to Civil War debate. In a similar spirit of sectionalization it is in the city of New York that an acquaintance of Mark Tapley by the name of Ned Lummey had 'made his fortune' only to lose 'it all the day

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[187] Daubeny, *Journal of a Tour Through the United States and Canada*, 111, 122-123.

after in six-and-twenty banks as broke.' Dickens here tied two classic anti-American tropes to the city of New York, and in the same way that the *Morning Post* had done on the subject of the press, the *Freeman's Journal* on 21st September 1843 drew directly on Dickens' novel as a point of reference in a discussion of tariffs.[188]

Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit* deployed the image of the confused party politics in the United States, which permeated much of the British commentary, in a fictional form. He did this with the fictional Watertoast Association of United Sympathizers (with its obligatory newspaper the *Watertoast Gazette*) as well as political figures including La Fayette Kettle, Cyrus Choke and Mr Hannibal Chollop, the latter of whom shot a man 'for asserting in the Spartan Portico, a tri-weekly journal, that the ancient Athenians went a-head of the present Locofoco Ticket.' These mocking sentiments were echoed in a short sketch entitled 'An Aristocratic Dinner in New York' which was published in *Ainsworth's Magazine* in 1842. Not only were the financial schemes of the United States mocked within this piece (a particularly frequent target in the early 1840s as has already been noted) but one character was introduced to 'Mr. Titus Offley Champkin, one of the most patriotic Whig editors of this State; a terror to all locofocoes, soap-locks, loafers, and nullifiers: a friend of internal improvement laws, Texian [sic] annexation and all the truly American institutions. Great with the pen, great in Tammany Hall. New York owes him a debt of lasting gratitude.'[189] New York was again singled out here for being a particularly objectionable example of American democracy on the model outlined previously by Buckingham, Combe and Dickens and embraced by Rathbone, Disraeli and countless others.

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[188] Stone, '"Dickens Use of His American Experiences in *Martin Chuzzlewit*'; Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 214, 250, 266, 345-346, 504; Ackroyd, *Dickens*, 379; *Morning Post*,21st Oct 1843; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser,* 21st Sept 1843; Gulddal, 'The Most Hateful Land,' 432-435. Earl J. Hess has described how within the United States itself in a post Jacksonian political world 'it became impossible to separate equality from democracy i.e the social from the political' see Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue and Progress,* 7. For an illustration of Dickens' experiences with American newspapers, including a forged letter which appeared in the New York press see Monod, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 50.
[189] Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit,* 332-363, 503-504; *Ainsworth's Magazine of Romance, General Literature and Art*, Volume 2, 15-16.

Contrarily, some in Britain saw parts of the South as opposed to this democratic 'anarchy and confusion.' In 1846, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* for example, noted the almost aristocratic state institutions of Virginia, a description which can be contrasted to the accounts *Ainsworth's* gave of New York politics. Similarly, British Consul Robert Bunch claimed that 'South Carolina would scorn to be classed with the venal electors of the North.'[190] The *Blackwood's* article deserves some attention here because it tapped into an extant belief that American democracy did not fit comfortably in Virginia. Frances Trollope in *Domestic Manners* in 1832 had highlighted the political conduct of Virginian statesmen who eschewed the rough and tumble of their fellows, while an editorial in the *Essex Standard* during the early 1830s had speculated on the differences in attitude towards democracy with Virginia portrayed as less favourable to a democratic arrangement. The division between North and South in terms of democracy was certainly not universal among British commentators. Crucially, however, when it was noted it inevitably contrasted a sceptically democratic South with an avidly democratic North. This distinction would be integral to pro-Southern propaganda during the Civil War as it allowed writers to disassociate the Confederacy from the negative tropes of American democracy just as a 'common' British ethnicity allowed them to dissociate the South from the image of a troublesome American heterogeneity.

This distinction between North and South was also echoed in John Robert Godley's 1844 work *Letters from America* in which the author observed that he had been 'more struck than I expected to be with the difference between the northern and the southern people, and am surprised at the acrimony with which they appear to speak of the matters upon which their respective opinions or interests clash.' Another text published in 1844, George

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[190] *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Volume 58, No. 3, April 1846, 440; White, 'The United States in the 1850s,' 526. Locofocos were a wing within the Democratic Party in New York dominated by urban workers who were formed in the mid-1830s and who were able to exert considerably sway within the Democratic party see Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 345-346; Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery & The Politics of Free Soil, 1824-1854*; Carl N. Degler, 'The Locofocos: Urban "Agrarians",' *Journal of Economic History* 16.3 (Sept 1956); Andrew Bonthius 'The Patriot War of 1837-1838: Locofocoism with a Gun?' *Labour/Le Travail* 52 (Fall 2003), 9-43.

Featherstonhaugh's *Excursion Through the Slave States,* gave some detail on what these differences were with reference to South Carolina by emphasizing the agriculture versus manufacturing dichotomy of the nullification crisis. This distinction had its political dimensions as well, particularly in terms of attitudes towards democracy. As Godley described it 'they predict all sorts of evils to the North from their universal suffrage and the supremacy of the mob. In Virginia there is a limitation of the franchise, even among the whites, a property-qualification being required; and the voting is open, not by the ballot, which is stigmatized here as an unmanly and underhand mode of proceeding.' Virginia here is not representative of typical American democracy. This division which existed in political terms was underpinned by the economic differences between the sections recognized by both Godley and Featherstonhaugh. While in Virginia for instance, Godley noted that 'for the first time since my arrival in the States I find myself in a thoroughly agricultural country, and among a population possessed of rural tastes and habits. In even the country parts of New England, the people are much more commercial than agricultural in spirit and character, and look upon land (as I said before) in the light of an investment, not of a home.' Godley also deployed a number of other prevalent sectional and national images in his descriptions of the political system:

The Whig politicians, led by Mr. Adams. . .perceive that the North has less than her just share of influence in the administration of affairs, and they attribute it to the bond of union which slavery constitutes among the slave-holding states. The latter make a compromise with the ultra- democratic party in the North, who, to secure the Southern support in their radicalism, are in return generally content to advocate slavery and other Southern interests [191]

In this analysis of Godley the American Union itself was a pragmatic political compromise, not an expression of American identity.

The extent of the division between North and South and its connection back to nullification was a topic Featherstonhaugh also engaged with explicitly, recalling

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[191] Godley, *Letters from America Volume Two*, 197, 195, 71-72; Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slave States*, 334-335, 342.

conversations he had with the committed secessionist academic Thomas Cooper. During these discussions Featherstonhaugh remembered being informed that 'if you ask me if I am an American my answer is, no Sir, I am a South Carolinian,' before adding to Cooper's observation his own contention that 'if the children of these Nullifiers are brought up in the same opinions, which they are very likely to be, here are fine elements for future disunion; for, imbibing from their infancy the notion that they are born to command, it will be intolerable to them to submit to be, in their own estimation, the drudges of the northern manufacturers, whom they despise as an inferior race of men.'[192] Godley and Featherstonhaugh hardly offered an image of American unity to their readers, if anything the opposite was true since from the point of view of both men the sections of the United States were fundamentally different and these differences were clearly manifested in the political sphere.

The distinctive divisions between North and South on political topics and with regards to economic interests were similarly noted by Sir Charles Lyell in his book *Travels in North America*, published the year after both Godley and Featherstonhaugh's works. Despite travelling, nominally at least, for the purpose of studying the country's geology, Lyell turned his eye to various aspects of American politics and like others he emphasized the divisions within the nation explaining that 'the territorial extent and political independence of the different States of the Union remind the traveller rather of the distinct nations of Europe than of the different countries of a single kingdom like England.' This emphasis on a basic division across the nation was highlighted in the same year by Benjamin Disraeli, who explained in pointedly political terms, in a letter to the banker and politician Baron Lionel de Rothschild, that the national government of American 'has no more influence over the Western States, than over Devonshire or Dorset.' In addition to his commentary on the difficulties inherent in the federal arrangement of the United States, Lyell also touched on the topic of finance. While noting the high levels of debt in Pennsylvania as well as the fact that 'nearly two-thirds. . .was held by British owners' he suggested that the negative ideas of the people's conduct in

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[192] Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slave States*, 341-342.

dealing with this had been overblown in Britain.[193] This is a sentiment which indicates clearly British popular perceptions of the extent and nature of American financial speculation, even as it attempts to undermine them.

In the sequel to his 1845 text, the 1849 travelogue *A Second Visit to the United States*, Lyell developed the idea of sectionalism in a contemporary political context, recognizing its existence with reference to the tariff dispute in an already well-understand manner. Lyell recorded that 'in many of the Southern and Western States, the commercial policy of Massachusetts was represented to me as eminently selfish, the great capitalists wishing to monopolise the manufacturing trade, and by a high tariff to exclude foreign capitalists, so as to grow rich at the expense of other parts of the Union' a view propounded in print in the same year by the Manchester journalist and free trade advocate Archibald Prentice. Once more the issue of free trade and sectional relations came to the fore here. In sectional terms, the association between the South and free trade given by Lyell and Prentice contributed to the development of a positive southern identity for the South based around a popular British cause. In addition to this, however, Lyell inverted the image of the North dominating national politics which had been noted by members of the press and earlier travellers like Trollope and Daubeny, instead quoting a northerner who had informed him that it was, in fact, the South which held the North in 'political thraldom.' Despite possessing more than a modicum of sympathy for the North it would be a mistake to think that Lyell treated everything above the Mason-Dixon Line in apologetic terms. He tapped into a rich tradition of anti-New York sentiment in the collective understanding of his readers and described how the election of President Polk had only occurred because of '5000 fraudulent votes given in the city of New York.'[194] Again it was New York, the home of the Irish and mobs, which was

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[193] Lyell, *Travels in North America Volume One*, 242, 218, 220, 244; Disraeli to Baron Lionel de Rothschild, 3rd December 1845 in M.G Wiebe, J.B Conacher, John Matthews & Mary S. Millar, (eds.), *Benjamin Disraeli Letters Volume Four, 1842-1847* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press 1989).
[194] Lyell, *A Second Visit Volume One*, 95, 325; Prentice, *A Tour of the United States,* 46. For a discussion of British economic involvement in the United States see Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*.

presented as the most 'American' of all the areas of the United States with the negative

tropes associated with the nation taken to their extremes.

The 1850s: Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley to James Stirling

As the mid-century was reached the flood of British travellers to the United States

showed no signs of ceasing. Even though the Anglo-American tensions which stemmed from

the publication of travelogues may have reduced, this did not mean a reduction in either

British censure or sectional commentary. Emmeline Stuart-Wortley writing in 1850 continued

to emphasize the politicization of the tariff issue with regard to sectional relations when she

informed her readers that, in contrast to the northern states 'the South are for free trade.' The

notion of different economic imperatives underpinning North and South was similarly noted in

an article in *Blackwood's* published in 1851 which contended that the manufacturers of the

North were not able to compete on the open market and therefore required a protective tariff

while also claiming that New England farmers represented the most tangible competition to

British economic interests. James F.W Johnston noted a similar sectional division between

North and South in his text of 1850 as well as implying that, from a legal standpoint, the

dissolution of the Union would be perfectly acceptable, and expressing personal reservations

about the development of a mob mentality in American politics. In an explicitly national

context Stuart-Wortley also questioned the value of the party system since she felt that it

demanded that a relative unknown take up the position of president in order to placate all

sides. Similar ideas to those of Stuart-Wortley and Johnston were propounded by Matilda

Houstoun in her 1850 travelogue *Hesperos* within which she emphasized, among other

things, the rapid industrialization of the North and the preponderance towards financial

mismanagement in Pennsylvania (something Houstoun linked to the region's Dutch heritage)

and, on the national stage, the need of the president to appeal to the mob. This last point was

made with particular reference to James K. Polk who, at least as Houstoun saw it, was forced

to humour the majority and 'take the most effectual means of insuring [his] own election.'[195] The literature of the early 1850s therefore mined the same vein as that which had preceded it. This essentially involved a recognition of the different attributes of the sections yet a continued acknowledgment of the existence of American national politics which were (crucially for the subsequent propaganda of the Civil War) presented in negative terms.

Critiques of American politics in both a sectional and national sense can similarly be found in the diplomatic correspondence of the early 1850s. For instance the Washington DC diplomat Henry Bulwer wrote to the Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston in 1851 to highlight the lack of professionalism in the US consular service and explicitly mocked the fact that a cook had been appointed to an official position in the city of Lyon in France. The following year another letter, this time from John F.T Crampton to Lord Malmesbury, took a more serious tone, describing the 'Babel-like state to which the Congress of the United States has been reduced' and critiquing the conduct of government and finance: 'I have mentioned. . . some difficulty with a Foreign Government, which, while it deranged the commercial and monetary affairs of the country, did not promise to lead to some immediate tangible profit to the whole Union.' The early fifties also saw an appreciation in British diplomatic circles of the all-encompassing nature of the sectional division. Crampton for instance informed the then Foreign Secretary Lord Clarendon in 1853: '[sectional difference] insinuate [s] itself into every part of their proceedings; discussions begun upon subjects apparently most remote, invariably degenerate into [a] North and Southern squabble.' The significance of these distinctions and, in particular, their interpretation in Britain should not be downplayed. They demand a recognition of the distinctions within the United States and even though it was true that abolition was a national cause for the British, free trade became similarly powerful, particularly after the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846. As Benjamin Disraeli wrote to Lord Malmesbury in August 1852 ' [Britain] ought now be for as complete free trade as we can

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[195] Crawford 'British Travellers,' 205; Stuart-Wortley, *Travels in the United States*, 21, 25; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine,* 70.434 December 1851; Johnston, *Notes on North America Volume Two*, 343, 243-250, 342; Houstoun, *Hesperos Volume One*, 50, 201-202; Houstoun, *Hesperos Volume Two*, 237.

obtain, & let the English farmer, & the English landlord too, buy the best & cheapest.' It was the South rather than the North that fulfilled this free trade agenda in an Anglo-American context and it had been doing so since the 1830s, as the British public were well aware.[196]

American politics continued to be a subject of considerable interest in Britain and in both his 1852 text *Notes on Public Subjects* and his 1854 *the Constitution of the United States Compared to Our Own* the British legal scholar Hugh Seymour Tremenheere explored the topics of democracy, party and the press in both national and sectional contexts. He recognized in *Notes on Public Subjects* the consequences of, 'the daily stimulus of the democratic press, flattering their [the Americans] vanity, pandering to their passions, and striving to fill them with exaggerated notions of their self-importance.' Tremenheere here offered another critique of the American political press as having a detrimental effect on the nation by undermining the decision making ability of its people. In his later study, Tremenheere continued his criticism of American politics, using the election of Franklin Pierce in 1852 as a case study illustrating the problems he identified. From an analysis of this election campaign Tremenheere concluded that the American system always required a compromise candidate for the presidency and for this reason it was likely that a 'nobody' would be nominated by each party. Drawing on his legal background Tremenheere discussed how this related to the constitution and informed his readership that 'the general quality of the members sent to the national Legislature falls far short of the anticipations formed of what would be the result of the constitutional system at the time of its formation.' This broadly framed critique of American democracy was subscribed to with particular enthusiasm by *The Times* during the 1850s when it looked back and surveyed the American scene during this period. Furthermore, Tremenheere claimed that 'the Constitution of the United has

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[196] Henry Bulwer to Lord Palmerston, 27th January 1851; John F.T Crampton to Lord Malmesbury, 12th September 1852; Crampton to Lord Clarendon, 7th Feb 1853 all in Barnes & Barnes, (eds.), *Private and Confidential*; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 70.434, December 1851; A.N Wilson, *The Victorians*, (London: Hutchinson, 2002), 133; Benjamin Disraeli to Lord Malmesbury, 13th August 1852 in M.G Wiebe, Mary S. Millar & Ann P. Robson, (eds.), *Benjamin Disraeli Letters Volume Six, 1852-1856*, (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 21.

endeavoured to guard itself by every precaution that is in the power of a republican constitution to adopt, against being, or if possible ever becoming a democracy.'[197] Tremenheere's version of the United States was therefore defined by a range of negative political tropes concerned with the nature of democracy, yet in his very mention of these tropes Tremenheere further contributed to the sectionalizable language of anti-Americanism.

It is clear that by the 1850s two strands of thought existed pertaining to the image of the United States from a British perspective. One was that of a unified polity which was frequently given in explicitly negative terms while at the same time a second maintained that the United States was politically divided into regions or sections and that this division was consistent with the constitution. These modes of thinking permeated British discourse of the period and although it might be tempting to see the later image as being pro-southern given its Civil War applications, this was not necessarily the case. In a newspaper article published in 1855, discussing the Fugitive Slave Law, Harriet Martineau mused on the right of secession. However, she did so not with reference to the South, but Massachusetts (an area of the United States she was particularly sympathetic towards). Martineau explained to readers of the *Daily News* in 1855 that Massachusetts 'cannot obey the contradictory laws of the Union and the State.' She then rhetorically asked 'is Massachusetts ready to withdraw from the Union, or to be declared excluded from it? If so she may, we think, reasonably hope for the companionship of all the best states.'[198] The significance of this description is clear; before the war the notion of secession was accepted in Britain and had little to do with being actively in favour of 'the South.'

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[197] Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, *Notes on Public Subjects, Made During a Tour in the United States and Canada*, (London: John Murray, 1852), 133-134; Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, *The Constitution of the United States Compared With Our Own* (London: John Murray, 1854), 221-225, 150-154, 291. For a sample of the reviews, adverts etc. of these two works see *Examiner*, 6th March 1852, 20th Nov 1852, 24th March 1852, 3rd Dec 1853, 25th March 1854; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29th April 1852; *Morning Chronicle*, 13th May 1852; *Morning Post*, 13th May 1852, 1st July 1852; *Bradford Observer*, 3rd June 1852; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 11th Aug 1852; *Belfast News-Letter,* 4th May 1857; *Standard,* 24th Nov 1853; Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 42-45.
[198] *Daily News*, 8th June 1855. For a discussion of John C. Calhoun's thought on the American Constitution as a dissolvable contract see Roper, *Democracy and its Critics* 62; Read, *Majority Rule*, 15-17, 26-29, 33-35, 85-117.

Martineau's speculations on the possibility of secession do not mean that she or anybody else had abandoned using powerful national tropes long familiar to the British public when describing the United States. Writing in 1856, Lucy Isabella Bird sounded a note remarkably similar to that of Charles Dickens in 1842 in her descriptions of New York as a city crippled by its own governance. In terms of national politics Bird was similarly critical, describing how 'the President, the Members of Congress, and to a still greater extent the members of the State Legislatures, are the *delegates* of a tyrannical majority rather than the *representatives* of the people [original emphasis in both cases].' The image of the tyranny of the majority was also noted by Amelia M. Murray who published a travelogue the following year. She contended that her time in the United States and exposure to mob despotism had raised her estimation of British institutions now that she had seen the possible alternative to them.[199] Once again a traveller had become disillusioned with American democracy and published a text characterized by negative political tropes, an experience so common it almost became a cliché by the late 1850s. Placing Bird and Murray's descriptions of American politics against the more general British discourse of sectionalism, the implicit identities of North and South within them became clearer. Ideas of the political mob and unbridled elections brought with them connections to the urban North, New York in particular. In contrast, the South had a recognizable history in British thought which excluded it from the worst aspects of the mob and democratic politics. The meant that during the Civil War itself, the Union could be viably presented as the embodiment of the negative aspects of American politics.

The tyranny of the majority and the political mob were equally significant topics for James Stirling, who published his travelogue in 1857. Stirling drew a party division in the northern states and described how 'the Northern mobs were all Democratic, seduced by the party name' while attacking the political knowledge and sophistication of 'New York and Philadelphian mobs,' an observation which, in terms of its geographical specificity, had a

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[199] Bird, *The Englishwoman in America*, 339, 415; Murray, *Letters from the United States*, 330-331, 182.

clear connection to the topics of both ethnicity and anti-abolition. This was, however, no

simple sectional division since Stirling also noted the existence of southern mobs within an

urban environment, particularly those in New Orleans. In national terms he made the ominous

claim that 'politics in this country have got beyond the control of politicians.' In addition to this

image of the American mobocracy Stirling also described of another negative national

feature, unbridled party spirit, and, on this score, a sectional division became clear. As the

United States marched westward and added territory discussions about the extension of

slavery were inevitably stimulated and different parties representing the interests of North and

South developed. This meant that, as Stirling put it, ' [in] the late Presidential election. . .

North and South were arrayed against each other,' and that 'the Democratic party was, in

truth, a Southern party, adopting the interests and views of the South.' When it came to the

topic of future prospects, Stirling maintained his sectional line explaining that 'the supremacy

of the North is assured. Already she excels her sister in every element of power, and the rate

of her progress is infinitely greater. Nothing but her oligarchical organization and the prestige

of her old associations- now almost extinct- saves the South from political subjection.'[200]

Again here the image of the South as politically subjugated to the North came to the fore with

the Union presented as an unfortunate arrangement for southerners.

Stirling discussed these old associations in another part of his account within which he

also explored another element of the political divisions between North and South, an element

which tied contemporary political differences to the myth of the Puritan and Cavalier. Stirling

made clear that 'it is a gross blunder to speak simply of American democracy' since 'the

American government is one half democratic, one half aristocratic. There is a bona-fide

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[200] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States*, 86-87, 100-101, 128, 165, 72, 77, 84, 303. The Rural vs Urban dichotomy existed in southern thought see Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press, 2004); Blaine A. Brownell & David R. Goldfield, (eds.), *The City in Southern History: The Growth of Urban Civilization in the South* (London & Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1977); Lyle W. Dorsett & Arthur H. Shafer, 'Was the Antebellum South Aniturban? A Suggestion,' *Journal of Southern History* 38.1 (Feb 1972), 93-100; David R. Goldfield, 'The Urban South: A Regional Framework,' *American Historical Review* 86.5 (Dec 1981), 1009-1034; Frank Towers 'The Southern Path to Modern Cities: Urbanization in the Slave States' in Barnes, Schoen, Towers, (eds.), *The Old South's Modern Worlds*.

Democracy in the North, founded on a material equality of condition; but the South is a downright oligarchy.' Stirling linked these differences in political outlook to the mythology of the Puritan North and Cavalier South since 'they are so historically, and they are so in all the characteristics of their development' meaning that:

The North, then, was originally, and is yet, Puritan and Plebeian; the South, on the contrary, was Cavalier and Patrician; Virginia and the Carolinas were settled mainly by English gentry, with a sprinkling even of the nobility. They brought with them not only their aristocratic feelings, but even their aristocratic laws, entails, and the law of primogeniture. And though these laws, as such, have been repealed, the spirit and custom, which are stronger than all laws, and without which all written law is but waste parchment, exist more or less to this day; and in the older Southern States it is the custom for the eldest son to take the family estate where it yet exists, and portion off the younger children. The South, then, is to all intents and purposes an Aristocracy, nay, an Oligarchy; for in addition to aristocratic feeling, there is also an anti-democratic in equality of fortune.[201]

This division negotiated the difference between the two ethnic and cultural regions of the North, setting up a political distinction between North and South. It presented to British readers a clear and, in some ways, coherent idea of sectionalism in the United States.

These differences continued to be recognized by figures in British politics up to the eve of the Civil War. One of the key members in the British pro-Confederate lobby during the conflict, Sir William Gregory, had a similar experience to Stirling of the different political systems during his time in the United States in the late 1850s. Gregory reported that he found Baltimore to be 'one of the most aristocratic towns in the Union' while in the diplomatic sphere Lord Napier also discussed the nature of democracy in America in his correspondence with Lord Clarendon. In doing so Napier gave a sectional division on the basis of attitudes towards universal suffrage:

I have not met in America more than two persons of thought and political experience who in their hearts believe in the permanent working of the popular sovereignty and universal suffrage machine-

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[201] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States*, 60-63.

but no one dares declare himself, *at least* in the North, and no one knows how the prerogatives

abandoned to the mob are to be resumed by the better order of people [my emphasis][202]

This mode of description was utilized in distinctly anti-southern terms in another work

published in 1857, William Chambers's *American Slavery and Colour* which classified the

South as 'practically a despotism.'[203]

Of less abstract concern in James Stirling's text was the ever-present tariff issue, or

as he described it 'the stupid old system of protection' which he claimed 'created the mobs of

New York, Philadelphia, and all the other manufacturing districts.' This trade issue was an

explicitly sectional phenomenon in British commentary since 'interest makes the North

protective; and thus the weight, not only of numbers, but of intelligence is thrown into the

scale of barbarism, while the more advanced notions [are] left to the Democracy of the

South.' Stirling went as far as to place protection alongside slavery as 'the worst enemy of the

Union' and to note that 'if Abolitionism has its disunion, the Tariff had its nullification.' Stirling's

overall conclusions, therefore, were couched in the language of sectional differences and

while appreciating the role of slavery in these differences, he maintained that 'the present

antagonism of North and South has really originated in their opposed social idiosyncrasies

and habits.' For him slavery itself 'has acquired this pre-eminence [in public discourse] by

accidental circumstances, partly by the error and misdeeds of American politicians.'[204]

Consequently, the tariff and slavery were of similar significance. Both were expressions of

deep-seated differences and, crucially in terms of British relations with the American sections,

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[202] Gregory quoted in Brian Jenkins, *Sir William Gregory of Coole: The Biography of an Anglo-Irishman* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986), 143; Lord Napier to Clarendon, 9th Feb 1858; Napier to Malmesbury, 8th June 1858 both in Barnes & Barnes, (eds.), *Private and Confidential*.
[203] Chambers*, American Slavery and Colour*, 92. See Robert E. Bonner 'Proslavery Extremism Goes to War: The Counterrevolutionary Confederacy and Reactionary Militarism,' *Modern Intellectual History*', 6.2 (2009), 161-185; Walther, *The Fire-Eaters*, passim; Tate, *Conservatism and Southern Intellectuals*, 179-183, 242. Tate's work provides a useful introduction to the free trade ideals of two key southern intellectuals, William Gilmore Simms and Nathaniel Beverly Tucker. Matthew Mason 'The Battle of the Slaveholding Liberators: Great Britain, the United States, and Slavery in the Early Nineteenth Century,, *William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 59.3, Slaveries in the Atlantic World, (July 2002), 665-696, 667.
[204] Stirling, *Letters from the Slave States*, 38, 195-197, 70.

the southern fight against protection gave the section a cause which could appeal to the British.

From a British point of view the United States of 1861 was very different politically from the United States of the 18th century. This can be neatly demonstrated with one simple anecdote. During the American Revolution and in the early years of independence one of the icons of Whig politics in Britain, Charles James Fox, had been an advocate of the American cause. By 1860, one of those who took Whiggism through the nineteenth century, Thomas Babington Macaulay, wrote a letter to the American biographer H.S Randall, in which he (in Benjamin Moran's phrase) 'denounces our institutions very severely.'[205] Moran may have been surprised at Macaulay doing this but the simple fact was that as a political entity the United States was no longer the liberal icon it had been. For the previous thirty years British commentators had returned from the nation thoroughly disillusioned with its politics and many had published their thoughts which were eagerly read by the public. These works created prevalent negative tropes about American democracy which expressed popular concerns over the power of the mob, the press, the financial interests and the potential of a despotism developing out of democracy in the United States as it had done in France. In the short term these works provoked discussion in Britain and counter-accusations from across the Atlantic, however, their real significance was felt with the outbreak of the American Civil War. The tropes they established, which were usually applied to the American nation, often with sectional connotations, were integrated into the identities of North and South which propagandists put forward and became fused with the British understanding of pre-war sectional politics. This fusion of negative ideas about the American political system was, however, not unprecedented in the pre-war period. In truth the British had been accustomed to viewing American politics in a sectional way for a considerable time. By 1860 many possessed an understanding of the state rights doctrine and the divergent ideologies of free

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[205] *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 23rd April 1860.

trade and protection which contributed politically to what they already understood about the lack of social and cultural uniformity of the nation.

These sectional politics themselves were at their most tense in the wake of the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860. Britain's Washington consul, Lord Lyons, had genuine worries that, 'our friends are apparently going ahead on the road to ruin' and that the election of Lincoln might mark the end of the United States. While his observation may have been correct it was far from unprecedented. For at least thirty years the divisions within the American Union had been explored very publically by British commentators and while almost every individual might add their own wrinkle to the fabric of American politics, it was generally accepted that North and South were different. British observers presented the sections as having distinctive economic, social and cultural complexions as has been attested to in previous chapters and the interests they engendered were expressed in the political sphere. British attempts to engage with debates over the tariff or to understand American democracy had often relied on drawing explanations from the sectional divisions within the United States and for this reason the secession of the southern states, while not accepted as a fait accompli, took few by surprise.[206] The negative language of national American politics was seized upon by advocates of both sides (albeit dominated by pro-southerners) to supplement this accepted public knowledge of sectionalism and the battle for Britain during the American Civil War began.

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[206] Quoted in Amanda Foreman, *World on Fire: An Epic History of Two Nations Divided* (London: Penguin, 2011), 60.

Chapter Four: 'Dam [sic] the Federals. Dam the Confederates. Dam You Both!': Britain and the American Civil War

When, on the morning of Friday the 12th April 1861, the Virginian secessionist Edmund Ruffin fired the first shot of the Civil War against the defences of Fort Sumter he may not have appreciated that his was a shot which would be heard around the world.[207] The British, in particular, looked nervously across the Atlantic as events unfolded. Even if some were taken aback by at the disintegration of the Union, they were accustomed to view the United States as a divided polity and therefore had a variety of points of reference for the issues at stake in the conflict which was unfolding. Consequently, the British debate, even at the beginning of the war, was not so much characterized by shock at the ending of the Union, as by discussions about the rightfulness of the northern and southern causes. For the previous thirty years, the British had been used to viewing the United States in sectional as much as national terms. They did this primarily because their points of access to America; journalists, travellers and novelists, had presented the nation in this way. This chapter illustrates how the pre-war discourse of American sectionalism which had been constructed by intellectuals fundamentally informed British debates on the Civil War. It will make clear that when the British discussed the conflict they did not simply pluck ideas out of the ether; they drew on an extensive history of British engagement with American sectionalism and nationalism to construct their arguments in the knowledge that the public would be responsive. In terms of structure, this chapter follows events chronologically and incorporates both the propaganda efforts of pro-Federals and pro-Confederates and popular mainstream commentators including journalists, politicians and writers. In doing so I demonstrate the extent to which British ideas about the war were grounded in pre-war images.

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[207] Title quotation taken from an anonymous letter sent to the American legation in London on the 28th October 1863 see Foreman, *World on Fire*, 525-526.

Secession to the *Trent* Affair, Dec. 1860- Dec. 1861

As it became clear to the British that war would occur in the United States, popular commentators attempted to place the conflict in the context of what they (believed) they knew about the sectional nature of the United States. Integral to their understanding was free trade. The role of protective economic legislation in sectional relations from a British point of view had a history which reached back to the 1830s and the Civil War significance of the tariff was demonstrated starkly in the opening pronouncement of the conflict: Jefferson Davis's Inaugural Address on the 18th February 1861 and the passage by the Lincoln government of the Morrill Tariff on the 2nd March. While Davis had asserted in his speech that the Confederate States would be committed to 'the freest trade', this Federal tariff had raised import duties, something which would undoubtedly hit British exports and in consequence was unlikely to endear the North to Britain.[208] What is significant, however, in terms of placing this in a pre-war framework was that, as chapter three demonstrated, the notion of free trade was an identifiable element of southern identity had extensive roots in the work of cultural commentators such as Frederick Marryat and James Silk Buckingham. The Morrill Tariff therefore seemed to represent the fulfilment of pre-war fears about the nature of American sectionalism from a British perspective.

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[208] Bellows, 'A Study of British Conservative Reaction' 507. For verbatim reports of Davis's Address see *Daily News*, 4th March 1861; *Liverpool Mercury Etc,* 4th March 1861; *Morning Chronicle*, 4th March 1861; *Morning Post*, 4th March 1861; *Standard*, 4th March 1861; *Glasgow Herald*, 5th March 1861; *Leeds Mercury*, 5th March 1861; *Examiner*, 9th March 1861; *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire, &c.,* 9th March 1861; *Leicester Chronicle: or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, 9th March 1861; *Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 9th March 1861*; Reynolds's Newspaper*, 10th March 1861; Howard Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy: A History of Union and Confederate Foreign Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 18. For reactions to the Morrill Tariff see *Dundee Courier*, 15th March 1861; *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, 15th March 1861; *Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet, and General Advertiser*, 15th March 1861; *Preston Guardian etc*, 16th March 1861. For a recent work which emphasizes the significance of the tariff debate in Anglo-American Civil War relations and demonstrates the paucity of analysis it has received see Marc-William Palen, 'The Civil War's Forgotten Transatlantic Tariff Debate and the Confederacy's Free Trade Diplomacy', *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3.1 (March 2013), 35-61. For more on the tariff in a Civil War context see Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 93-95, 100, 105; Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 92-93. For the American debate over the Tariff see William R. Brock, *Conflict and Transformation The United States 1844-1877* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973), 165-166.

This tariff immediately altered the position of the Federal cause in Britain and helps explain British indifference to the Union from the earliest months of the war. Even Lord Lyons, then Her Majesty's envoy in Washington and a man with little sympathy for secession wrote to the committed British free trader, and later pro-Confederate activist, William Schaw Lindsay in 1861 to report a conversation he had engaged in with Vice-President Hannibal Hamlin in which he (Lyons) emphasized to Hamlin the power of free trade in transatlantic diplomacy. Lyons described to Lindsay how he had told Hamlin of the 'bad impression which the abominable new tariff has. . . produced' and contrasted North and South in explicit terms by recognizing that '[in] commercial matters in general the southern confederacy [are] of course disposed towards liberality.' Similarly, Lord Lyons wrote to the Foreign Secretary, Earl Russell, in April 1861 to describe the 'protectionist bigotry of the North.' The significance of sentiments of this sort were not lost on British pro-Confederates such as William Gregory, himself an MP and a key figure in the pro-Confederate lobby, who made sure to draw the attention of the Commons to the passage of the tariff. Moreover it is evident that the public did not view the Morrill Tariff question as something concerned simply with that specific policy. Instead it was seen as indicative of the longer term tensions between North and South and another illustration of the unfair treatment which the pre-industrial South had been subject to in the commentaries of many pre-war British observers.[209]

During the war, the liberal London newspaper the *Daily News* commented on the detrimental effect of the tariff policy on the South in an editorial which described the act as 'a selfish defiance cast by the North at the South.' In a similar manner, an American living in Glasgow, wrote to the *Glasgow Herald* in March 1861 and informed its readers that 'Mr Morrill's new tariff shows plainly to the world what the Southerns had always had to complain of.' The periodical magazine industry was equally vocal on the tariff issue during the first

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[209] Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*, 23; Lyons to Lindsay, 8th April 1861, WSLC, LND.7.461; Lyons to Russell, 1st April 1861 in James J. Barnes & Patience P. Barnes (eds.), *The Civil War Through British Eyes: Dispatches from British Diplomats Volume One: November 1860-April 1862* (London: Caliban, 2003); Brian Jenkins, 'William Gregory: Champion of the Confederacy,' *History Today* 28 (1978), 322-330, 325. It was Gregory who introduced Yancey to both William Schaw Lindsay and John Laird, both significant figures in the British Confederate lobby, see Foreman, *World on Fire*, 95.

exchanges of the American Civil War, with one of the key figures in the construction of pre-war ideas about the United States, Charles Dickens, producing an article in his own magazine *All the Year Round* entitled 'the Morrill Tariff.' In this article he argued that attempts such as this latest push for industrial protection to enrich the North at the expense of the South were at the root of the secession movement.[210] Given the number of pre-war accounts which had described the sectional relationship in similar terms, this was a perfectly viable claim, and just as journalists discussed tariffs, the official pro-Confederate lobby moved quickly to exploit the issue.

A letter sent by Robert Toombs, the Confederate Secretary of State to the three commissioners which the Confederate government sent to Britain at the outbreak of the war-Pierre Rost, William L. Yancey and Dudley A. Mann- was indicative of the significance attached to the tariff question by those within Jefferson Davis's government. The fire-eating secessionist Yancey, former Mississippi congressman Rost and former assistant secretary of state in Virginia, Mann, were appointed in March 1861 and advised by Toombs that, as part of their diplomatic efforts in Britain, it would be worth emphasizing the issue of the 1828 tariff which had ultimately lead to the nullification crisis. This emphasis would have rung true with the British public who had, since 1832, been aware of the significance of the tariff in American sectional relations. Toombs also highlighted a number of other issues which he felt Yancey, Mann and Rost should raise including the idea that the South had traditionally been economically exploited by the North, the established legal basis for secession and his belief that they should make clear to the British that the decision 'was not taken hastily or passionately.' It is clear that Toombs wished to place an emphasis on these grievances and it was a shrewd decision on his part given, not only the long-term British recognition of the tariff in sectional relations, but also the almost unanimous rejection of protectionist economics

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[210] *Daily News*, 18th March 1861; *Glasgow Herald*, 8th March 1861. Before the war Lindsay had corresponded on free trade and reform with a number of key Civil War actors in Britain such as Bright, Cobden and Roebuck see WSLC LND.4; LND.5.2. Roebuck worked with Lindsay as an advocate of the Confederate cause during the conflict while Bright and Cobden became key in the pro-Union lobby; Adrian, 'Dickens on American Slavery', 324.

among educated Britons and the pre-existing familiarity many had with state rights doctrines.[211]

This pre-war knowledge among the British population gave the tariff argument considerable sway, something which, as, Martin Crawford has noted, many historians have failed to appreciate. The Morrill Tariff was so significant as to produce what Crawford has described as 'astonishment' among the staff of *The Times,* who could not believe the Lincoln government would take such a protective course. The ideology of free trade had a strong hold on British intellectuals in the period, as literary scholar Patrick Brantlinger has noted: 'the list of writers who believed in free trade . . . Although most of them were not as dogmatic about it as Ebenezer Elliot or Harriet Martineau, [included] Dickens, Mill, Carlyle, Thackeray, Hood, the *Punch* radicals, R.H Horne, Elizabeth Barrett and Robert Browning.' Taking the eminent names on this list into account and considering the liberal political stance of some, it should come as no surprise that even those who would go on to be the fiercest supporters of the Union in Britain (including John Bright and Richard Cobden) were critical of the passage of the tariff. Its significance was such that even the long-time abolitionist Harriet Martineau considered severing her ties with American anti-slavery activists over the issue of protective duties.[212] In its entirety the names of those who repudiated the Union's tariff policy presents an impressive list which crossed almost all ideological boundaries, taking in the arch-conservative Carlyle as well as the reformer, abolitionist and feminist Martineau. Even though in the longer term Bright, Cobden and Martineau put aside the tariff issue and took up the Union cause, other liberals such as William Schaw Lindsay were not able to do so. It is not simply the wholesale rejection of protection which is worthy of notice here however, the language used in public and even diplomatic descriptions evoked the tradition, which harked

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[211] Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*, 16-17; Robert Toombs to Pierre Rost, Dudley A. Mann and William L. Yancey, 16th March 1861 in, Richardson (ed.), *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis*.
[212] Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 93-94; Brantlinger, *Spirit of Reform*, 115; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 21, 152. Cobden described the British as 'unanimous and fanatical' in their commitment to free trade see Palen 'The Civil War's Forgotten Transatlantic Tariff Debate', 35.

back at least to the nullification crisis, of the southern states as attached either against their will or economic interests to the American Union.

While the tariff was the first true controversy following the outbreak of the American conflict, a number of British commentators such as Bright, Cobden and Martineau were able to overlook the issues involved in the protection debate to some extent and based their analysis of the war on other factors. Harriet Martineau, despite her rejection of the Morrill Tariff, did publically come out in favour of the Union and on the 19th January 1861 she published an article entitled 'Anarchy in the South' in the *Daily News*. Here, Martineau depicted one of the stereotypical aspects of American political life, that of mob power, which commentators from Dickens to William Chambers had described, but did so in explicitly sectional terms when she noted the situation in Charleston:

The planters are flying to the North as fast as they can find means of doing so, it does not appear probable that they will resume the lead in the society of their own State, so as to carry on negotiations at Washington or anywhere else. As these gentlemen themselves say, on arriving at a place of safety, or when they can send letters in some secure and secret way, the state of society is like nothing but the period of mob rule in the first French Revolution.[213]

She similarly stated that in the South 'mob-rule is a system of pillage' and 'that money is fast disappearing.' Martineau here deployed negative tropes typical in pre-war literature of the United States but did so in a sectional manner in an attempt to construct an image of the Confederate nation which incorporated the worst aspects of the pre-war United States.[214]

The negative tropes which Martineau utilized here were inverted and used by the pro-Confederate lobby with reference to the North, something which encouraged by the Davis administration. Robert T. Hunter, who replaced Toombs as the Secretary of State in July 1861, advised the Swiss born Alabamian, Henry Hotze at the same time that he was appointed as a southern agent to Europe, that it would be worthwhile placing an emphasis on

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[213] *Daily News*, 19th January 1861.
[214] Ibid.,

the tyranny of the Lincoln government as part of the propaganda efforts. The mode of description he used was very much in keeping with the pre-war despotism notion so often attached to the United States and which can be traced back to at least the presidency of Andrew Jackson.[215] The images of sectional characteristics here, which are drawn from both the pro-Union and pro-Confederate lobbies, are illustrative of the significance of pre-war national tropes in a sectional context during the Civil War. The ideas of the American mobocracy or the despotism of the majority possessed a rich history of negative associations and attaching these images to a particular section offered a potentially crucial propaganda tool in Anglo-American relations.

In thinking about the propaganda of the war it might be expected that, on the subject of slavery at least, a clear sectional division with obvious moral connotations would be discernible in British discourse. Placing the war in a broader chronological context of sectional relations, however, it becomes easier to understand why this was not the case. It also becomes clear that the lack of an explicit recognition of abolition as a war aim stultified the Union cause. Crucially, Abraham Lincoln's inaugural address, given on the 4th March 1861, had specifically rejected the cause of the Union being that of abolition and his failure to equate the war with anti-slavery alienated potential supporters in Britain. Both *The Times* and *Economist* concluded, in the wake of Lincoln's address, that the war must be a fight for domination, an apparently understandable assumption based on Lincoln's refusal to place the conflict on a moral footing. The significance of the Union government's failure to immediately declare its opposition to slavery should not be underestimated. As the historian Royden Harrison correctly recognized, 'so long as "Emancipation" was not inscribed upon the Union banners, British workmen could be asked to respect the right of the Southern States to independence' a conclusion which holds true not solely for the working-classes but for the population at large. The pro-Union clergyman William Arthur certainly appeared to see things

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[215] R.M.T Hunter to Henry Hotze, 14th November 1861 in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis*. For biographical information on Hotze see Oates 'Henry Hotze', 131-154.

in this way and attempted to reassure his readers that, in truth, the war was about slavery and that the only reason for the Lincoln government not taking action against the peculiar institution was their fidelity to the constitution. While this active effort was made to associate the North with abolition, others took the opposite position and associated the southern cause with that of slavery. *Punch*, very much an organ of mainstream British opinion, noted in its 9th March 1861 issue that:

The Southern Secessionists must be admitted to be blest with at least the philosophical virtue of self-knowledge. They term their new league "The Confederate States of America." Thus they call themselves by. . .their right name. They are confederates in the crime of upholding Slavery. A correct estimate of their moral position is manifest in that distinctive denomination of theirs, "Confederate States." The title is a beautiful antithesis of that of the United States of America. The more doggedly confederate slavemongers combine, the more firmly good republicans should unite.[216]

Punch further developed this theme the following month by publishing a song entitled 'Rule Slaveownia,' in a mocking attack on the Confederacy and its peculiar institution.[217]

Evidence that the cause of Confederacy was explicitly that of slavery was also noted by the propagandist William Arthur who juxtaposed his anti-slavery assertion about the North to the Confederate Vice-President Alexander Stephens 'cornerstone speech', given in Savannah (Georgia), on the 21st March 1861. This address had seen Stephens assert that 'our new Government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas [to those of the Union]; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition.' In claiming the moral high ground for the North another propagandist, the pro-Union Quaker and social reformer William Tallack emphasized the development of

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[216] For British coverage of Lincoln's inauguration see *Birmingham Daily Post*, 19th March 1861; *Daily News*, 19th March 1861; *Morning Post*, 19th March 1861; *Caledonian Mercury*, 20th March 1861, *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 24th March 1861; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 19; Phillips, *The Cousins War*, 491; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 206-208; Harrison, 'British Labour and the Confederacy', 304; William Arthur, *The American Question* (London: Sampson, Low & Son, 1861), 3,5; *Punch*, 9th March 1861.
[217] *Punch* 20th April 1861.

abolitionism in the North in his own text and explained that 'the Southern insults at length aroused the North to put forth or rather to make manifest its claim. . .for [every] one anti-slavery man that there was in the North twenty years ago there are now a hundred.' Tallack also described a large torch-light parade in Philadelphia in favour of 'liberty and Lincoln.' The description of North and South given by Arthur and Tallack were clearly intended to construct a northern cause centred on abolition and a Union identity built around this which would make the decision of any Briton on the conflict an apparently obvious moral one rather than a complex political conundrum. The intention of both was to simplify a complicated American debate for a British audience.[218] The problem was that writers such as Arthur and Tallack who produced this early propaganda which equated the cause of the Union with abolition were attempting to undermine thirty years of inherited wisdom about American abolitionism which had, for the most part, failed to establish a clear North/South dichotomy on the subject.

The letters which the Yancey, Mann and Rost group sent back to the Confederate government reveal a great deal about the significance of the slavery issue in the early stages of Confederate diplomacy. Yancey and Mann wrote to Robert Toombs in May 1861 explaining that 'the public mind here is entirely opposed to the Government of the Confederate States of America on the question of slavery.' Evidently these figures were well aware of Britain's abolitionist heritage and knew that they would need to appeal to the nation on different grounds. A subsequent letter to Earl Russell sent on the 14th of August, saw Yancey, Mann and Rost repeat their appreciation of British feeling on slavery when they confirmed to the minister that they recognized 'the anti-slavery sentiment [which is] so universally prevalent in England.' Accordingly, the three men emphasized to the British that slavery was not a major issue in the conflict: 'the great object of the war, therefore, as now officially announced, is not to free the slave, but to keep him in subjection to his owner, and to control his labor through the legislative channels which the Lincoln Government designs to

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[218] Arthur, *The American Question*, 10; William Tallack, *Friendly Sketches in America* (London: A.W Bennett, 1861), 228.

force upon the master.' Another Confederate diplomat, Edwin de Leon, echoed this point in a letter to *The Times* in May 1861 in which he classed slavery as a 'mere pretext' for the war on the part of the Union. The fact that the southern representatives contended that slavery was not significant in the conflict is not all that surprising. What is noteworthy, however, is that despite the powerful anti-slavery rhetoric of the British, the southern cause had popular sympathy and many subscribed to the claims of the Confederate lobby. In March 1861, the same month that it criticized the slave-holding of the South, a poem was printed in *Punch* which demonstrates that slavery was just one of the factors influencing the British public:

'O Jonathan and Jefferson/ Come listen to my song;/ I can't decide my word upon,/ Which of you is most wrong./ I do declare I am afraid/ To say which worse behaves,/ the North, imposing bonds on Trade/ Or South that man enslaves./ And here you are about to fight,/ And wage intestine war,/ neither of you in the right:/ What simpletons you are.[219]

This verse provides compelling evidence of something that Martin Crawford has suggested; that the tariff had a position of comparable importance to slavery in British engagement with the war. During the summer of 1861 another poem in *Punch* made this connection explicit:

We for North and South alike/ Entertain affection;/ These for negro Slavery strike;/ Those for forced Protection./ Yankee Doodle is the Pot;/ Southerner the Kettle:/ Equally moral, if not/ Men of equal mettle.[220]

While slavery may have been integral to initial British reactions to the Civil War, it does not provide a full explanation for British opinion. Thanks to writers and commentators such as Marryat, Lyell and Houstoun the British saw slavery in the United States as a complex phenomenon which did not necessarily have clear sectional consequences. As such it was

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[219] Yancey & Mann to Toombs, 21st May 1861 in, Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis Volume Two*. Yancey, Mann & Rost to Toombs, 14th Aug 1861 sent as an enclosure in Walker Fearn to Robert Toombs, 14th August 1861, in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis Volume Two*; De Leon quoted in Palen, 'The Civil War's Forgotten Transatlantic Tariff Debate', 45 *Punch*, 25th May 1861.
[220] *Punch*, 17th Aug 1861.

frequently described as being of similar importance in the conflict to issues such as the tariff, at least before the Emancipation Proclamation.

The diary of one of the members of the American legation in London, Benjamin Moran, reveals a great deal about the tensions in the relationship between Britain and the Union cause in the early years of the conflict and the false impression many Americans had of British opinion toward slavery in the United States. Writing on the 7th January 1861, Moran made clear that he personally placed the peculiar institution at the very core of the Confederate cause, and for this reason considered the lack of British support for the Union to be illustrative of the reality of British attitudes towards abolition. Of course what Moran failed to grasp was that most British observers did not see a particularly strong connection between the cause of the Union and that of abolition since it had little pre-war credence and the Federal Government had failed to act on the issue with the outbreak of conflict. Later in the year Charles Dickens commented to this effect in the December edition of *All the Year Round* explaining that if the Union was actually committed to the cause of abolition it would allow the South to secede thereby ridding itself of slavery, something also suggested by both Walter Bagehot in the liberal *Economist* and Lord Cecil in the conservative *Quarterly Review*. Such a logical conclusion sat comfortably within pre-war notions about sectional differentiation and seemed to lead to the belief that the Civil War was, on the part of the Union, a war of domination.[221]

One specific event which annoyed Moran and which he saw as indicative of British attitudes towards abolition was the reception given to the Confederate commissioners Yancey, Mann and Rost upon their arrival in London in May 1861. He criticized the fact that 'the *noble* [original emphasis] merchants of the realm see nothing dishonourable in slavery now' and noted how he had been convinced that 'the Anti-Slavery of England is a mere sentiment.' Moran specifically highlighted the reception given to the commissioners at the

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[221] *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume One*, 7th Jan 1861; *All the Year Round*, 21st Dec 1861; Bagehot quoted in Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 154; Lorimer, 'The Role of Anti-Slavery,' 409.

Fishmonger's Company Hall in London and claimed to have found it telling that Yancey received applause despite being an avowed advocate of the re-opening of the slave trade. He concluded that 'the very journals that 8 years ago could not too loudly condemn slavery, and which lauded *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the skies, now see no great crime in the infamous system, and applaud the very slave owners.' Yet, as chapter one demonstrated, a level of complexity existed in British attitudes towards American slavery generally, and to the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* specifically which Moran failed to appreciate. Charles Francis Adams, the US minister to Britain, who could count among his acquaintances such political and intellectual luminaries as Lords Palmerston, Russell and Derby, as well as W.E Gladstone, Benjamin Disraeli, William Makepeace Thackeray and William Nassau Senior, recorded the views of these figures on the conflict and provided valuable evidence for understanding British ideas. While some (notably Senior) did offer support to the Union, Adams noted in a letter to his son that pro-Union feeling overall was, at best, lukewarm in Britain. In a sense therefore, Benjamin Moran probably interpreted the mood in the nation correctly even as he failed to truly understand it.[222] Even giving due weight to Moran's hyperbolic style, the level of indifference in Britain towards the Union appears real enough. The fact was that the Lincoln government had done nothing to equate its cause with abolition and when we consider the vast literature before the Civil War which had treated slavery as a *national* problem the views of men like Dickens appear to be the reasonable response of moderate anti-slavery Britons during the first year of hostilities.

In these early months of the war it is clear that the British administration was just as unsure about the issues at stake in the conflict as the literate public, particularly when it came to understanding the role of slavery. The ambassador to Washington, Lord Lyons, wrote to Earl Russell on the 18th February 1861 about the possibility of President Lincoln removing Secretary of State William H. Seward from the government due to the latter's assumed links

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[222] *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 30th Aug 1861, 19th Nov 1861,11th Nov 1861; Butler, *Critical Americans*, 75; Charles Francis Adams to Charles Francis Adams Jr. 18th July 1861; C F Adams to C F Adams Jr. 14th June 1861 both in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One*.

to immediatist abolitionists, a comment which Lyons echoed the following year when reporting the replacement of Simon Cameron with E.M. Stanton as Secretary of War. For those who saw the cause of immediate emancipation as being something which the British should be concerned about, as opposed to celebrating, this was not necessarily a negative development. Yet, it clearly dissociated the cause of the Union from that of abolition. Interestingly enough even those who were, or would be, key to the pro-Union machine in Britain were not immediately prepared to describe the war as an anti-slavery crusade. Francis William Newman observed in a letter in June 1861 that slavery was indeed significant to the conflict but that the North retained a 'pro-slavery faction.' Similarly, John Bright, the heart-beat of the northern cause in Britain explained in a speech in Lancaster during August that 'they say that they are not going to liberate slaves. No; the object of the Washington government is to maintain their own Constitution, and to act legally, as it permits and requires.'[223] It seems safe to conclude then that both publically and privately at this stage, the cause of the Lincoln administration, as far as the vast majority of Britons understood it, was not that of abolition. While abolitionism was certainly seen as *a* force in the Union states, it was not the pre-eminent political factor it later came to be viewed as. This perspective on the war was, in many ways, perfectly consistent with the descriptions of American slavery and its abolition given before the war by Martineau, Marryat and Lyell.

Of similar significance during the opening months of the war was the language those in Britain used to describe sectionalism, invoking well-rehearsed notions of Anglophobia and the cultural and ethnic proximity of each section to Britain. The aforementioned pro-Unionist William Arthur for example placed great store in the Anglo-American connection when he argued in favour of the Union, writing that 'in all contests, that Pro-slavery party was the Anti-

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[223] Lord Lyons to Earl Russell, 18th Feb 1861; Lyons to Russell, 14th Jan 1862, both Barnes & Barnes (eds.), *The Civil War Through British Eyes*; Francis W Newman to Dr Nicholson, 14th June 1861 in Giberne Sieveking (ed.), *Memoir and Letters of Francis W Newman* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co, 1909), 181; 'Extract from a Speech delivered at a meeting at Rochdale, to promote the Election of John Cheetham, Esq. for the Southern Division of the County of Lancaster, August 1, 1861' in *Speeches of John Bright, M.P on the American Question* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1865), 6.

English party, and was invariably swelled by the Irish Romanists', and that 'the South professes to be well effected to England. This is a "mere pretence."' Arthur here attempted to equate the traditional notion of the anti-English pre-war American politics with a southern, pro-slavery agenda despite its usual associations with the North (particularly New York). The notion of a strong sense of Anglophobia in the South was also commented upon by William Tallack during the early exchanges of the war, when he described the feeling towards an Englishman in the South as being 'most disagreeable.' Descriptions of this type brought the Anglophobic/Anglophilic rhetoric of the pre-war period into a Civil War context and what is more these comments were taken seriously as part of the debate.[224]

While for Tallack and other pro-Union figures it was the Confederacy which had an anti-British attitude, some members of the government held the opposite view when it came to the British relations with the partisans in the war. Lord Lyons, for example, wrote in the June 1861 to Earl Russell to inform him of the almost irrational desire on the part of some northerners to conquer the South quickly so that a campaign could be launched against European possessions in North America. Similarly, a letter published in *The Times* which had been sent by the American minister to Russia, Cassius Clay and claimed bombastically that England could not 'afford to offend the great nation,' further ruffled the feathers of the public and politicians. Even the editorial material in *The Times* during this period accounted for previous Anglo-American tensions in sectional terms claiming that they could be explained as a consequence of the policy of the North.[225] While a concerted effort clearly existed on the part of the pro-Federal lobby in Britain to exploit the Anglophobic image of the United States as developed in the works of Marryat, Lyell, Houstoun, Trollope and Dickens and to sectionalize it, claiming that it had been a policy driven by southerners and would (in theory at least) be abandoned by the Union, this was contested ground. Many in Britain who considered Anglophobia an integral part of American ideology saw it as primarily as a

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[224] Tallack, *American Question*, 7-8.
[225] Lyons to Earl Russell, 8th June 1861 in Barnes & Barnes (eds.), *The Civil War Through British Eyes*; quoted in Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 107-111.

phenomenon of the North rather than the South. This debate over the sectional nature of Anglophobia would resurface repeatedly throughout the war in attempts by the partisans of both sides to understand the rhetoric and policy employed by belligerents towards Britain.

Although not an active propagandist, one man who had more influence than many through the course of the American conflict was *The Times* journalist William Howard Russell, who reported from the South during the wars early years. Russell published extracts from his diary during 1861 under the title *Pictures of Southern Life Social, Political and Military*, within which he engaged with the various issues at stake during the Civil War. It is interesting to note that Russell personally was unsympathetic to secession and hated the slave system, yet his account was not simply a catalogue of the evils of the Confederacy. One of the striking aspects of his report was the extent to which he located his descriptions of slavery within a recognizable narrative of the paternal connection between slave and master. On the eve of the war he described how 'in the course of my journeying southward I have failed to find much evidence that there is any apprehension on the part of the planters of a servile insurrection, or that the slaves are taking much interest in the coming contest, or know what it is about,' he thereby undermined the notion of a potential slave uprising in the South. He also pointed to his experiences on the plantation of former Louisiana Governor Andre B. Roman, outside of Natchez, and reported that 'here were abundant evidences that they [the slaves] were well treated, for they had good clothing of its kind, good food, and a master who wittingly could do them no injustice,' a description which could have been taken from Emmeline Stuart-Wortley's experiences of Zachary Taylor's plantation a decade before. It should not be concluded from this that Russell simply accepted the paternalist myth. He expressed clear suspicion over the southern mantra which he heard repeated over and over that 'we are not afraid of our slaves' and his experience on a Mississippi steamer on which 'there were two blacks on board [in] irons- captured runaways- and very miserable they

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looked at the thought of being restored to the bosom of the patriarchal family,' was indicative of his cynicism.[226]

The published observations which Russell provided during the first year of the war can be supplemented by the private recollections from his diary during this period in the United States. During his time in the Union, Russell reported on a conversation he had with a number of political figures in Washington during the build-up to the war who had expressed to him their confidence that even in the event of a conflict the British would reject any diplomatic overtures from the South on the basis that the northerners would be fighting 'an active war of emancipation.' Although these politicians might have been confident that Britain would see the war as being about emancipation, Russell got no indications while in the United States that free American blacks were in a particularly enviable position in comparison to slaves in the South. He noted for instance, as he travelled up the Mississippi, that 'I [did not] find that the free Negroes, who acted as attendants possessed any advantages over their enslaved brethren a few miles lower down the river'; an observation which could have been taken from almost any popular pre-war travelogue. In terms of the treatment which southern slaves received, Russell was not necessarily impressed with the conditions they lived in; yet he did point to specific plantations held by the aforementioned Governor Roman and a planter named Mrs. Trescot and noted that 'such kindly acts as [he had seen on these plantations] are more common than we may suppose; and it would be unfair to put a strict or unfair construction on the motives of slave owners in paying so much attention to their property.' Even the plantation overseer received sympathetic treatment from Russell who described how 'at the sight of the overseer the little ones came forward in tumultuous glee.'[227] Descriptions of this type centred on the notion of the paternal, reciprocal relationship between

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[226] Crawford, 'William Howard Russell', 197; William Howard Russell, *Pictures of Southern Life, Social, Political and Military* (New York: James G. Gregory, 1861), 70, 95, 27, 111. For more on Russell see Illana D. Miller, *Reports from America: William Howard Russell* (Stroud: Sutton, 2001); Rupert Furneaux, *The First War Correspondent: William Howard Russell of the Times* (London: Cassell & Co., 1944).
[227] Russell subsequently published extracts from his 1861 diary in 1863 see William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South* (1965 repr. New York & Evanston: Harper Colophon, 1863), 29-30, 174, 77, 52, 75, 141, 149.

slave and master and were rooted in the common pre-war image of southern slavery as mitigated. It was the sort of mitigated slavery portrayed here, combined with prevailing opinion which emphasized the high levels of discrimination which blacks suffered in the northern states and a lack of legal action against slavery on the part of the Lincoln government, which allowed mainstream British thinkers, even those who rejected outright slavery in the abstract, to remain distant from the cause of the Union.

On the attitudes towards Britain in different areas of the United States, Russell made a number of claims in *Pictures of Southern Life*, which contradicted those made in William Arthur and William Tallack's earlier pamphlets. While in Charleston, for example, Russell reported that he had found 'an intense affection for the British connection, a love of British habits and customs, a respect for British sentiment, law, authority, order, civilization and literature.' Later, in Mobile, he observed, after meeting a lieutenant in the Louisiana regiment, that 'he is all admiration for English scenery, life and habits.' Russell contrasted this with the North and, after watching a Federal military parade outside of Cairo, he presented a drastically different image to that which he had given of the Confederacy, emphasizing the number of Irish recruits in each of the different companies as they passed him; this was the pre-war image of the New York Irish made representative of the North as a whole.[228]

These descriptions of ethnicity were just one of the ways that Russell engaged with the tradition of ethno-cultural sectionalism and Anglophobia. He also invoked the lack of cultural and ethnic homogeneity in the Union states both inside and outside of the confines of the military. He estimated, after spending time with the Union armies, that 'but two out of twelve of the soldiers were native-born Americans.' He additionally suggested that in the immediate wake of the fall of Fort Sumter, he found that 'the Carolinians regard the Northern States as an alien and detested enemy, and entertain, or profess an immense affection for Great Britain.' Possibly the most telling of Russell's descriptions was that which he gave of

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[228] Russell, *Pictures of Southern Life*, 3-4, 49, 117-118, 21.

Robert Toombs, who he categorized as 'something of an Anglo-maniac, and an Anglo-phobist- a combination not unusual in America- that is, he is proud of being connected and descended from respectable English families, and admires our mixed constitution, whilst he is an enemy to what is called English policy, and is a strong pro-slavery champion.'[229] Toombs of course was just one man but in this instance he presented a neat personification of the different pressures at work between Britain, the North and the South during the war. Russell illustrated his perceptive abilities in his discussion of Toombs latching on to the idea of the ethnically British and culturally Anglophile South while also recognizing the inherent Anglophobia of American politics and the disconnection between pro-slavery and Britishness, something his audience would have been fully aware of. This description was indicative of the malleability of the ethnic and cultural connection across the Atlantic and unsurprisingly propagandists on both sides attempted to exploit this ambiguity.

The utility of pre-war tropes was further demonstrated in discussions of democracy itself during the early months of the war, something which had been commented upon during the pre-war era but which was emphasized to a more significant extent during the conflict. Writing to his editor at *The Times*, J.T Delane, Russell attacked the mantra of democracy explaining that 'universal suffrage' had 'frightened moral courage' while noting in his diary a conversation with a group of men in Charleston who had openly discussed the possibility of drafting in an English Prince to take over as Confederate Head of State. The idea of an anti-democratic South in contrast to the North did have pre-war roots in, for instance, a *Blackwood's* article of April 1846 which had classed the institutions of Virginia as almost aristocratic. With the outbreak of the conflict, however, this took on new resonance. The interpretation offered by Russell, in which the Union embodied democracy in its most negative form, became an important pillar in pro-Confederate propaganda. The radical liberal John Arthur Roebuck, despite his political sympathies at home, made mention of this divergence of politics between North and South during his 'Sheffield Manifesto' the following

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[229] Russell, *My Diary*, 3, 191, 101-102.

year. The sentiments which Roebuck deployed apparently rang true with the middle-class liberal establishment of the city, a group of literate figures who may well have read with shock the accounts of American politics given by Charles Lyell, George Combe and their own former MP James Silk Buckingham and now saw the consequences of the political system which these writers had described.[230]

Russell's position at *The Times* gave him access to the centres of power while he was in the South and his description of a conversation with Edmund Rhett, a member of the infamous South Carolina 'fire-eating' secessionist family of the same name, would certainly have caught the attention his readership. Russell reported how Rhett 'declared there were few persons in South Carolina who would not sooner ask Great Britain to take back the State than submit to the triumph of the Yankees.' At the same time, he informed Russell that 'we are an agricultural people, pursuing our own system, and working out our destiny, breeding up women and men with some other purpose than to make them vulgar, fanatical, cheating Yankees.' This was the sort of differentiation which would have struck British readers with its invocation of both the 'cheating Yankee' image and emphasis on the agricultural vs. industrial element of American sectionalism. Russell's experiences in the South lead him to question the claims made by the Union Secretary of State, William H. Seward that secession did not reflect the will of southerners and to explain to his readers that 'I can see no sign here of the "affection to the Union," which according to Mr. Seward underlies all "Secession proclivities."' As he came to end of his time in the South, he was able to observe and report on the first battle of Bull Run on the 21st July for *The Times,* a military defeat which not only undermined

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[230] Russell, *Pictures of Southern Life*, 5; Russell to J.T Delane, 26th March 1861 in Martin Crawford (ed.), *William Howard Russell's Civil War Private Diary and Letters, 1861-1862* (Athens & London: University of Georgia Press, 1992). Richard D. Fulton claims that Delane considered himself to be 'the voice of Britain' during the period and certainly *The Times* was an incredible influential newspaper throughout the Civil War era see Fulton, '"Now Only *The Times* is on our Side": The London *Times* and America before the Civil War', *Victorian Review* 16.1 Summer 1990, 48-58, 48; Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*; William Howard Russell, *Civil War Diary and Letters, 1861-1862*, 45; Cruikshank, 'J.A Roebuck M.P,' 202. While Roebuck was a radical a strong emphasis on paternalism ran through his thought and in this sense his ideas were not incompatible with those of some conservatives see Christie, *The Transition from Aristocracy*, 21-22. For a detailed discussion of Roebuck's speech at Sheffield see page 235.

the martial prospects of the Union but confirmed to Russell the sense of commitment to secession on the part of the South. Indeed, he stated after the battle that 'I have now been in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and in none of these great States have I found the least indication of Union sentiment.' The highly critical reaction to Russell's report of the battle in the Union press drove the editorial staff of *The Times* further from the Lincoln government since, as Martin Crawford has noted, they began to see the North as coherently and aggressively Anglophobic. This Anglophobia was in itself something which had pre-war roots, and after Bull Run editorial material in *The Times* began to disconnect the South (at least as far as was possible) from unpopular pre-war foreign policy.[231]

Although the descriptions which Russell gave of the United States appear highly critical of the North, it is worth recalling that as far as Henry Adams, the son of the American Minister, Charles Francis, was concerned, Russell was a pro-northern British public figure.[232] Adams's comments on Russell are indicative of complexities of contemporary sectional debate in Britain, complexities which some scholars have overlooked. Russell appreciated the extent of sectional division and the various factors which needed to be taken into account for the British to respond in an informed manner to the conflict. This meant that even though he sympathized with the North broadly, he did not reduce the conflict to simplified categories which would have allowed him to actively preach the cause of the Union in the manner of John Bright.

It was during the first year of the war that probably the most influential piece of pro-Confederate propaganda was published. The text in question was authored by the Liverpool shipping magnate and political conservative, James Spence. In September 1861 he published *The American Union*; *it's Effect on National Character and Policy, with an Enquiry into Secession as Constitutional Right, and the Causes of the Disruption*. Spence's

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[231] Russell, *My Diary,* 54, 109, 78, 157-158; see also Crawford, 'William Howard Russell,' 198
[232] Henry Adams to C F Adams 8th May 1862, in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One*. For the British reaction to the Battle of Bull Run see Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 117-122, 111; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 122-130; Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*, 61-64.

contemporaries certainly took note of the publication and, according to the historian Marc-William Palen, Charles Dickens's pro-southern stance on the Civil War was a direct consequence of having read Spence's work. Similarly, the pro-Federal pamphleteer, Robert Trimble, explained that Spence's book had misled the British public, suggesting that its influence had been significant enough to worry Federal supporters in Britain. By the same token, a later Confederate diplomat, James M. Mason, wrote to the Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin in May 1862 attesting to the popularity of *The American Union* and informing him that the work had gone through four editions in less than a year.[233]

Spence's pamphlet clearly met with considerable success and its content provides one of the most comprehensive illustrations of the image which British pro-Confederates wanted to project. His work combined arguments which drew on both his antebellum knowledge of sectionalism in the British mind, and sectionalized many aspects of the United States. In taking this course, Spence, in a manner somewhat similar to W.H Russell, cast the Union as an extreme democracy, dominated by the mob and a rabid press. Significantly, this was a view consistent with the tropes deployed by figures like Charles Dickens through the pre-war period. Spence did not claim that the Union had been flawed from its inception, what he did instead was to place an emphasis on the lack of viability for the United States as a national entity as it grew. This territorial growth meant that among the people 'the only connecting link is a common desire for the success of the party' and this imperative for party gain was what underpinned secession. Spence also claimed that the territorial growth of the Union had exacerbated the economic differences between the sections meaning that 'the

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[233] Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 139. Spence was one of the most active pro-Confederate propagandists of the war and in addition to pamphlets he produced forty-five articles for *The Times* between February 1862 and January 1865. Some debate has occurred about the significance of Spence's pamphlet, Blackett contends that it had a singular influence while Duncan Campbell maintains that Blackett (and others) overstate its role, see Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 142; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 123-124. For examples of reviews of *The American Union* see *The Times*, 6th January 1862, *Morning Post*, 7th January 1862, *Examiner*, 12th April 1862. For an unfavourable review see *Daily News*, 2nd December 1861; Palen 'The Civil War's Forgotten Transatlantic Tariff Debate', 46; Robert Trimble*, A Review of the American Struggle in its Military and Political Aspects from the Inauguration of President Lincoln, 4th March 1861 till his Re-election, 8th November 1864* (London: Whittaker & Co, 1864), 46-48; James M. Mason to Judah P. Benjamin, 2nd May 1862 in Richardson (ed.), *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis*.

common view in the Southern States, is, that the South has been used as a tributary, drained for the benefit of the North. To some extent, though by no means to the extent they imagine, this had really been the case.' For Spence, the consequence of the changes in America were that 'to the Southern, the Union appears an artificial arrangement, wise at the time of its formation- rendered injurious now by the progress of events.' This emphasis on the different interests of the sections, and the political debates stemming from them obviously built on a basic narrative of sectionalism which reached back at least as far of the nullification crisis and which was used by Spence as an explanation and justification for the secession of the South.[234]

Spence's pamphlet also raised a number of constitutional points which echoed the comments made by earlier writers who had discussed the possibility of the Union dissolving. A certain irony exists here, in that the arguments which Spence deployed to convince his readers of the legality of secession were reminiscent of the ideas put forward by abolitionist travellers like Harriet Martineau and Joseph Sturge before the war, who had both emphasized the power of state over national governments. Spence did not make a direct reference to the works of Martineau and Sturge and it is true that the state rights argument they utilized had not been unique to abolitionists in the antebellum, yet the fact that all three writers presented such similarly positions is illustrative of British familiarity with state rights and southern nationalism. Spence liberally sprinkled his work with examples and quotations drawn from American history in order to illustrate the legitimacy of the southern cause, including the attempts by the State of Massachusetts to secede and a conversation which he claimed James Madison and Patrick Henry had had during the ratifying convention for Virginia during which 'Patrick Henry objected strongly to the words "we, the people," on the ground that the very construction might be given to them which is attempted at the present day. But Madison at once showed such a construction to be erroneous. He replied in these words: "the parties

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[234] James Spence, *The American Union; its Effect on National Character and Policy, with an Enquiry into Secession as a Constitutional Right, and the Causes of the Disruption* (London: Richard Bentley, 1861), 30, 193, 196.

to it were to be the people, but not the people as comprising one great society, but the people as composing thirteen sovereignties".'[235]

This same argument about legal status was used in another popular form by the journalist William Forsyth who produced an article in the *Quarterly Review* in which he contended that since the states predated the Union they must possess the right to withdraw from it. The reasons which lead Spence, and to some extent Forsyth, to conclude that secession was legal were essentially the same given by Joseph Sturge in 1841 for why the national government could not abolish slavery:

As each of the original States acceded to the Constitution by an act of convention, and this forms the only bond of union, it follows that each of those States, as a sovereign community, has, according to the principles of America, the inherent right to appeal that act.[236]

The American Union itself was therefore, in these terms, a pragmatic solution to a particular problem rather than a compact of national foundation, just as the majority of pre-war commentators had contended.

Secession, as Spence saw it, was a constitutionally sanctioned act and had been considered as such since the days of the founding fathers, something which the Federal Government was now attempting to dispute. It was not simply with regard to resisting secession, however, that the Lincoln government was usurping power which it did not rightfully possess. Spence extended this basic image and engaged with the tradition of the despotic democracy within his text, commenting on how 'the writ of habeas corpus is treated with contempt, whilst the police forbids petitions to the Government in violation of the express rights of the constitution. . .there is ample evidence that, whatever may have been the love of liberty in other days, it has become a thing of the past.' Spence starkly linked the images of democracy and despotism in his text when he rhetorically asked 'what, indeed, is really the

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[235] Ibid., 225-226.
[236] Spence, *The American Union*, 201, 209, 239-240. Forsyth quoted in Bellows 'British Conservative Reaction,' 516.

basis of democracy, except brute force?' All of this said, it would be incorrect to consider these associations merely the product of the pro-Confederate lobby. It is notable that William Howard Russell also described the doctrine of state rights as a reaction to the development of democracy in the North; in effect it had been an attempt on the part of the South to resist 'the blasts of universal suffrage.' Russell also cautioned readers, in a manner similar to Spence, that 'republics in crisis always [have] a recourse to dictators', a sentiment he offered as a warning with reference to the Lincoln government.[237] Here various political positions are brought to bear on the nature of American politics and how the American political system was related to secession. What they all convey was a general antipathy to American democracy; an antipathy expressed in pre-war terminology reminiscent of the warnings given by Frederick Marryat, Amelia Murray, George Combe and others about the nature of democracy and despotism but utilized in a Civil War context for explicitly sectional ends.

As would be expected in the work of a pro-Confederate, Spence was keen to lay claim to the pre-war image of the Anglophile South. His pamphlet, however, displayed an awareness of the tensions between the North, the South and Britain since the American Revolution. He conceded that during war of independence 'there were links of a common history if no inglorious memory- the interwoven ties of relationship and ancestry- old associations of habits, of thought, of sympathy. . .the reverence of the offspring for the parent,' and that 'all of them alike- Puritan of Massachusetts, Cavalier of Virginia and Friend of Pennsylvania- had gone out from the same home.' This was a sense of American pride grounded in British heritage, however, subsequent events had changed the way Americans viewed Britain. Spence informed his readers that the North, more so than the South had been the destination for immigrants and that New York was 'not really American. Its population is largely composed of foreigners of all nations, of the type and manners and of sentiment, [that] is essentially foreign to American soil.' This clearly resonated with the pre-war image of the

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[237] Spence, *The American Union*, 60, 70; Russell, *Pictures of Southern Life*, 6, 132; Mulvey, *Transatlantic Manners*, 31; Bellows, 'British Conservative Reaction,' 512-513.

city in earlier travel narratives and novels. Crucially within the context of the conflict Spence tied the Union's cause explicitly to that of New York (rather than Boston or New England) when he stated that:

Unfortunately, perhaps, for the liberties of the country, the Union has now a Paris. Whoever had studied [the] progress of the momentous events now occurring, will have seen, that the Washington government simply follows the impulse of the people; indeed, that in obedience to this impulse, it reversed the policy it had wisely adopted. But the people of the North, in their turn, implicitly follow the lead of New York.[238]

In this context New York was an invaluable point of reference for pro-Confederates in Britain. Boston had an undeniable British heritage, but the literature of the pre-war period had reinforced the image of New York as an alien city and if the cause of the Union was the cause of New York it was less 'British' than if it was the cause of New England.

The use of the Cavalier and Puritan mythology which can be seen in Spence's analysis also appeared in mainstream British opinion. Lord Wolseley for instance informed readers of *Blackwood's Magazine* that southerners were 'the descendants of our banished cavaliers,' by contrast northerners were 'descended from the offscourings of every European nation.' Similarly, the writer William Makepeace Thackeray suggested that southerners were inherently better than 'Dutch traders of New York and the money-getting Roundheads of Pennsylvania and New England' using images similar to those from his own 1859 novel *The Virginians*.[239] These appeals to Cavalier mythology and the ethno-cultural divisions of the United States are indicative both of the long-term influence of pre-war ideas and of the significance of the notion of distinctive identities which accompanied the claims for political self-determination.

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[238] Spence, *The American Union*, 85-86, 99, 57.
[239] *Blackwood's* quoted in Blackett, 'British Views of the Confederacy' 143-144; Phillips, *The Cousins War*, 495; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 352.

When it came to the thorny issue of slavery, Spence drew once more on well-rehearsed mainstream traditions in an attempt to render the cause of the Confederacy as appealing as possible to the British. He maintained a theoretical abhorrence of slavery both for its debasing effects on the slave themselves and by conceding the existence of instances of particularly cruelty by masters. Yet, as Spence described the system it was actually the white population of the South which suffered most since 'there is an absolute injury sustained by the whole white community, apparent to any observer.' While whites lost out, the seriousness with which slaveholders took their paternal responsibilities meant that the condition of the slaves was never as bad as might be assumed. Spence's position here echoed that of numerous pre-war travellers who had emphasized the mitigation of slavery including James Silk Buckingham, Charles Lyell, Charlotte Houstoun and Emmeline Stuart-Wortley. Along with emphasizing the paternal connection, Spence integrated a range of arguments rooted in the notion of racial hierarchy to justify the existence of southern slavery. In basic economic terms, he noted that it was in the interests of the planter to treat their slaves well and contended that:

The negroes have at all times abundant food; the sufferings of fireless winters are unknown to them; medical attendance is always at command; in old age they fear no workhouse; their children are never a burden or a care; their labour, though long, is neither difficult, nor unhealthy. As a rule, they have their own good ground, and fowls and vegetables, of which they frequently sell their surplus. So far then, as merely animal comforts extend, their lot is more free from suffering than those of many classes of European labour.[240]

The notion of 'European labour' as it was used here would have struck a particular chord in Britain among certain members of the labour movement who had criticized the freeing of slaves while white workers existed in 'a state of deplorable poverty and degradation.' This was a manifestation of what Dickens had termed 'telescopic philanthropy' and as a view of

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[240] Spence, *The American Union*, 125, 121, 130, 136, 122 150. For the racial underpinnings of Spence see *The American Union*, 121-122, 126, 129, 137.

abolition it clearly had roots well before the Civil War in the wake of West Indian

Emancipation.

It was undoubtedly true that many who would have been sensitive to the language of

labour such as Chartists and Owenites had a long history of working with American

abolitionists and some had played a prominent in the formation of the Anti-Slavery League in

1846. Even so, the critical way of viewing abolition deployed by Spence was utilized by those

involved in radical politics such as Joseph Rayner Stephens, who had attacked what he saw

as white children labouring so that freed slaves could have an eight-hour working day.

Notable Chartists including Bronterre O'Brien also expressed concerns over abolition in

Britain on the basis that 'when one listens to the Abolitionists one might think that outside of

the Blacks there was no slave under British rule.' Similarly the socialist Robert Owen had

informed an American audience before the war that although 'from an early period he was

opposed to Negro slavery and also to slavery of all kinds. . . [a]t home in England he had

seen far worse slavery than he had witnessed among the coloured population.'[241] If nothing

else these sentiments put paid to the idea of a connection between domestic political

persuasions and the perspective held by individuals on the American Civil War as here

conservatives and socialists were singing from the same hymn sheet. Yet, these examples do

more than that: they demonstrate that while abolitionist commitment may have been strong in

Britain, it was the abolition of slavery in its abstract sense. When the British discourse of

mitigated southern slavery is placed against the backdrop of the lukewarm rejection of the

peculiar institution in practice, it is easy to see how the significance of slavery to the Civil War

became obscured in the British mind.

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[241] Betty Fladeland '"Our Cause Being One and the Same" Abolitionists and Chartism' in Walvin (ed.), *Slavery and British Society*. For O'Brien and Owen quotes see Harrison 'British Labour and the Confederacy,' 310-311. For more on British radical opinion on the Civil War see Kevin J. Logan, 'The *Bee-Hive* Newspaper and the British Working Class Attitude Toward the American Civil War,' *Civil War History* 22.4 (1976), 337-348; Michael J. Turner 'Perceptions of America and British Reform during the 1860s', *Civil War History* 59.3 (Sept 2013), 320-357.

At the same time as he provided various excuses to his readers for the continuation of slavery in the southern states, Spence attacked the implausibility of abolition as the principal cause of war in the North. In the first place, he questioned the morality of the original abolition of slavery in the northern states at the end of the previous century, suggesting that there was no moral push to abolish the institution and that it had been a purely economic measure. Within the context of the Civil War, Spence drew his readers' attention specifically to the address in which Lincoln stated that the Union would not interfere with slavery, and an amendment passed by the new Congress to the same effect. The notion that the North lacked the legal right of interference was subscribed to in a more mainstream sense by the writers of *The Times* who also held that most northerners had little interest in abolition. Even Benjamin Moran noted something to this effect in his diary in August 1861 when, in discussing the Pennsylvania Democrat and Minister to Britain George M. Dallas, he observed that 'neither he nor indeed any of his class in the North, is a conscientious friend of slavery. But a hunger for office has seared conscience: and now we are reaping the fruits of the seed sown by men of his type.' Spence also asked rhetorically why, if the Union was earnest in abolition, it had not already removed the peculiar institution from the District of Columbia (something it did go on to do in 1862). As Douglas Lorimer's analysis of the role of anti-slavery demonstrated, Spence was far from alone in terms of his interpretation of slavery in the conflict and Lorimer correctly affirmed that 'the proclaimed anti-slavery sentiment of England appeared to be no bar to pro-Southern sympathies.' The simple reason for this was that 'English observers did not see Lincoln as the defender of blacks, for informed journalists, politicians, and philanthropists were well aware of northern racial prejudice.'[242]

This was the intellectual climate into which Spence's ideas entered and as such they were perfectly acceptable given that, since before the war, popular commentators from Charles Dickens to *The Times* had been frequently critical of the North on the basis that the

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[242] Spence, *The American Union*, 93-94,141,149; Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 82; *Diary of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 31st Aug 1861; Lorimer 'The Role of Anti-Slavery Sentiment', 406, 420.

people had done little for abolition. With the idea that the North had little commitment to abolition taken into account it should come as no surprise that within government itself Lord Palmerston would respond to the American historian John Motley's assertion that the Union was against slavery, by asking it to prove it 'by joining us in our operations against the slave trade.' Key to Spence's propaganda work was his attempt to impress on his readers the political nature of the slavery debate as distinct from its moral dimensions. He noted for instance, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 as evidence that the South had wished to extend slavery not for the purposes of utilizing it as a labour system to any significant extent (something which Spence maintained was not viable in the case of New Mexico), but in order to maintain a balance between slave and free states in national politics. This was Spence essentially engaging directly with the slave power argument which had been broached in Britain before the conflict, but attempting to subvert it. He maintained that the reason for the expansion of slavery was not to retain it as a viable labour system but to keep a political balance. In fact, this politicization of slavery was used by Spence as an explanation for the active defense offered by some southerners of the system. As he saw it, 'originally, slavery was on the defensive, admitted to be an evil, deplored as a sad necessity; but stung by the language of the North, the Southerners have turned round upon them, and have wrought themselves into the monstrous belief, now prevalent throughout the South, that slavery is actually a blessing.' Consequently, the politicization of slavery and its integration into southern identity was not based on a genuine belief in its moral acceptability, but a reaction against the North and its political agenda, a political agenda which had so frequently been commented upon before the war.[243]

This politicization of slavery was of equal interest to the Scottish educationalist, Hugo Reid who published *Sketches in North America, with some Account of Congress and of the*

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[243] Spence, *The American Union*, 99-100, 109, 152-153; Lawrence Goldman '"A Total Misconception" Lincoln, the Civil War, and the British, 1860-1865' in Jay Sexton & Richard Carwadine (eds.), *The Global Lincoln* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 113; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 146-147.

Slavery Question while employed at Dalhousie College in Nova Scotia. While emphasizing to his readers that he abhorred slavery, Reid noted that 'slavery is recognized and supported by the constitution of the United States, and by repeated Acts of Congress' which he claimed asserted that 'each State is regarded as sovereign in respect of its own domestic institutions.' In addition, when it came to the political tensions between the sections, Reid maintained that 'the States of the North are in great part responsible for the present condition of this unhappy conflict and the bad feelings between North and South.' Their culpability stemmed from a variety of factors including 'Personal Liberty Acts, calculated (though, ostensibly for defence of their own citizens) to impede or prevent the capture of fugitive slaves.' These legislative acts were, according to Reid, 'at variance with the constitutional compact between them and the slave States, as well as with various deliberate acts of Congress.'[244] Here was a reassertion of a state rights stance and a belief that the actions the national government in the growing tensions between the Union and South had been unconstitutional.

The consequence of this legal wrangling was that 'when pressed hard by the doctrines of the Abolitionists' pro-slavery Americans had 'boldly advanced to higher ground, and maintained that slavery is right, founded on justice, reason, and humanity, supported by Scripture, and in reality a beneficent institution, advantageous to the Negro.' In his account Reid attempted to explain the shift to a 'positive good' interpretation of slavery as a political reaction to northern pressure in a similar manner to Spence and pre-war commentators. Reid also noted how, as the political balance tilted in the favour of the North, the South 'drew from the Constitution the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty in the Territories, and used it to overthrow the Missouri Compromise, and bring the whole of the Territories within their reach.' As far as Reid was concerned this should have encouraged northern secession since:

When the free States came to loathe the odious task assigned to them of delivering up runaway slaves, and desired that the curse of slavery should not be admitted into new regions, which they were

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[244] Hugo Reid, *Sketches in North America, with some Account of Congress and of the Slavery Question* (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1861), 97-98, 202-203, 176-177. Reid made specific mention of Archibald Prentice's travelogue.

able to people with free men, and in which they judged it right that only free institutions should be implanted, their course was clear; they should have given notice of their determination to withdraw from a Union which imposed an odious thralldom upon them.[245]

As it was, this course was not followed and in consequence 'the slave-owners of the South have been maddened by the wild and incendiary proceedings of the Northern Abolitionists.' This meant that in Britain 'we cannot be surprised that the South hated the North with a fierce hatred that has never been surpassed, or that the Southern States desire to secede and save themselves from the tyranny of an arrogant and insulting Northern majority.'[246] The role of slavery in the war as it was constructed by Reid therefore was essentially political in nature rather than moral. In describing abolition in these terms Reid was consistent with prevailing pre-war wisdom and consequently collapsed any simple good vs. evil dichotomy.

Mentions of terms such as 'Northern Abolitionist' as used here by Reid are actually slightly misleading when it comes to his overall interpretation of the conflict, given that he, consistent with other commentators, did not see the war as a crusade against slavery and was clearly unimpressed with the treatment of free blacks which he had seen while in the northern states. In the nation as a whole, Reid observed that 'the poor negro is in a truly unhappy condition in North America; there is no resting-place for him on that continent'; and despite noting something of the paternalism of slavery in his recognition that the slave was 'no doubt kindly treated and contented in many families in the South', Reid was no apologist for southern slavery: 'he [the slave] has no security for that happiness; is rigorously held in bondage, frequently cruelly used.' However, the worst of this negative treatment had been 'greatly aggravated in severity since the Northern abolition movement.' The implication here was that southerners 'now hold that blacks are a race so far inferior as to be incapable of

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[245] Reid, *Sketches in North America*, 193.
[246] Ibid., 204-205.

maintaining their position in competition with the whites,' thereby claiming culpability for the North in the condition of the southern slave.[247]

While Reid was not an advocate of slavery, the situation as he saw it for blacks was hardly better in the North and the people of that section had objectionably views on both race and slavery. Reid drew his audiences attention to a New York newspaper which had told readers: 'so far from believing negro slavery a curse, we regard it as a great blessing in the tropical climates, and in the Southern States of our republic- a blessing to the slave, to the master, and to this Union.' In addition, he discussed the views of the New York politician John Cochrane who had apparently claimed 'I sympathize, sir, deeply sympathize with our friends of the South' and had censured 'that which has occurred and is occurring all over the North, endangering the peace of the Union, and teaching rebellion to its constitution.' Reid offered his own view on the situation noting that even outside of the slave states 'blacks are despised and shunned' and that 'in the cities in the northern United States separate omnibuses are provided for "coloured persons".'[248] This image of the North clearly built upon the ideas of pre-war writers including Charles Augustus Murray, Thomas Brothers, James Johnston and even the distinctly pro-northern Harriet Martineau. For Reid, as for these commentators, the position of black Americans varied little between the sections in practice, whatever the legal distinction between slavery and freedom. In essence Reid and others felt that the slavery issue in sectional politics had molded these men and women into pawns on the political chessboard and the abolition debate of the Civil War was an extension of this.

Of additional significance in Reid's case, and following very much the pre-war geography of the nation established by cultural commentators, were the ethnic and cultural differences between the regions of the United States. Reid maintained that 'the Americans cannot be spoken of now as one race; climate, and institutions are developing at least two sections, nearly as distinct as British and French, or English and Irish- the North and the

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[247] Ibid.,158-159.
[248] Ibid., 162-164, 106-107.

South.' These divisions in turn had a relationship to European ethnicity and culture since 'the Southerners seem, in other respects, to have deviated least from the type of their ancestors, having the quiet and composed bearing of the English.' He drew the contrast with the North which possessed a 'large amount of the Celtic element.'[249] This was yet again the distinctiveness of ethnic geography in the United States which presented the South as an embodiment of a Britishness (of sorts) and the North as an ethno-cultural other.

One further characteristic of the Yankee which Reid recognized drew on a distinctive pre-war trope, that of the financially corrupt 'smart dealing' American. In many instances this had been a national trope, on some occasions a New Yorker, or northerner more broadly yet rarely a southerner. In a Civil War context it was deployed as a type for the Federal supporter. He described 'the Northerner, the New Englander, the real Yankee' as 'the very embodiment of the spirit of scheming speculation, and enterprise, [he] has faith in himself, goes-a-head with a reckless confidence and headlong stick-at-nothingism.' Here we have, in a Civil War context, northern financiers in the mold of Frances Trollope's Mr. Fad and Mr. Scam from *The Barnabys in America* or the Van Den Bosch family from Thackeray's *The Virginians*. Interestingly James Spence had also made a passing reference to the idea of financial mismanagement in *The American Union*, noting the state debt repudiations of the 1830s and even as he conceded that 'Mississippi offers the most bold and outrageous case,' he asserted that 'there is no more meaner [sic] than that of the great State of Pennsylvania.' In a similar manner, one of the original Confederate commissioners to Britain, William L. Yancey wrote to the Liberal MP for Sunderland, William Schaw Lindsay, in September 1861 outlining a number of aspects which he contended defined the 'Yankee', aspects which fit comfortably within the notion of selfishness and commercialism in New York and Philadelphia.[250]

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[249] Ibid., 39-40, 51.
[250] Reid, *Sketches in North America*, 40-41; Spence, *The American Union*; Yancey to Lindsay, 22nd Sept 1861 WSLC LND.7. Lindsay was one of the most active pro-Confederates in parliament despite being a close associate of both Bright and Cobden. His free trade activism was central to his adoption

Hugo Reid's work was indicative of British writings on the Civil War in its earliest phase. Reid, along with journalists like William Howard Russell and propagandists from both sides examined the conflict through the lens of well-established pre-war images. Consequently, they debated the sectional and national nature of politics, ethnicity and slavery in America, and did so in a relatively abstract sense simply because Britain had little diplomatic or direct political involvement in the conflict. This changed at the end of 1861 when events conspired to ratchet up British engagement with the war.

The *Trent* Affair to Emancipation Dec 1861- Sept 1862.

It was during the closing months of 1861, when 'most Britons regarded the North as aggressive, irrational and rabidly Anglophobic' that the worst fears of the public were confirmed in one of the most explosive incidents of the Anglo-American relationship during the Civil War; the *Trent* affair. The seizure of the Confederate commissioners James M. Mason and John Slidell from the British mail packet the *Trent* by Captain Charles Wilkes of the *USS San Jacinto* on the 8th November and his returning them to Boston on the 25th stimulated an intense Anglo-American debate over the legal rights of Wilkes's actions and whether he had breached British sovereignty. When news of the *Trent* affair reached London it was greeted with considerably consternation and Benjamin Moran (a consistent Anglophobe and anti-southerner) noted in his diary that it would 'do more for the Southerners than ten victories, for it touches John Bull's honor, and the honor of his flag.' Though the British government had no stomach for a war against the Union it was a genuine possibility at this juncture and, for only the fourth time in its history, the cabinet took the course of establishing a war committee in response to Wilkes's act. In the end the Lincoln government did back down and release Mason and Slidell, notifying Palmerston's administration of the

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of the Confederate cause, a decision which according to the historian Charles Hubbard 'came from the heart,' see Hubbard, *Burden of Confederate Diplomacy*, 142; Jones, *Blue and Grey*, 99.

fact on the 8th January 1862, but doing so without a formal apology in an attempt to save face.[251]

British popular reaction to the conduct of the Union during the *Trent* affair was overwhelmingly negative and the responses to it drew heavily on previous British commentary about the Anglophobic United States, only now this was transferred to a northern context. According to R.J.M. Blackett, the event 'had done incalculable damage to the British public's view of the United States' and certainly the press reacted immediately and with indignation. An editorial piece in the *Birmingham Daily Post*, for example, suggested that Wilkes's actions were 'simply piratical', while the *Morning Post* conjectured that 'the British Government will be entitled to reparation and apology.' An 'indignation' meeting was even held in Liverpool as a response to the seizure. On a similar note, according to Benjamin Moran, on the 12th December the Adelphi Theatre in London replaced the stars and stripes hanging outside with the Confederate flag. The perception that popular reaction in the northern states supported Wilkes's actions was rife in Britain and a clear turn against the Union came about in the mainstream press, which, in the case of *The Times*, continued on the trajectory it took at this stage through to the end of the war. In a letter printed in the newspaper on the 3rd December 1861, William Howard Russell reported the popularity of Wilkes's actions in almost all quarters before raising the spectre of Charles Dickens's unscrupulous newspaperman from *Martin Chuzzlewit* in his observation of 'a writer, an officer of the Congress, who this morning invites all the Monarchs of Europe generally to come on if they like and join the South, in the Jefferson Brick style.' Russell, however, did not counsel

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[251] Campbell, *Unlikely* Allies, 149; Bourne, *The Balance of Power*, 218-247; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 170; Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*, 83-111; *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 27th Nov 1861; Jordan & Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War*, 28-47. For more on *Trent* and possible conflict between Britain and the Union see Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 95-104; Jones, *Blue and Gray Diplomacy*, 83-92; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 150-152, 168-170; Jones, *The Balance of Power*, 218-247; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 173-195; Brock, *Conflict and Transformation*, 249-252; Stephen C. Neff, *Justice in Blue and Gray: A Legal History of the Civil War* (London & Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010); Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 218-237; Mahin, *One War at a Time*, 66-73; Charles Francis Adams 'The Trent Affair' *American Historical Review* 17.3 (April 1912) 540-562; Victor H. Cohen 'Charles Sumner and the Trent Affair' *Journal of Southern History* 22.2 (May 1956), 205-219.

war. Despite his own views and the wave of anti-Unionism which swept Britain, diplomats within the political machine had no intention of starting a conflict. Even so there was an appetite for war among some in the British government over this attack on national sovereignty. The Prime Minister Lord Palmerston observed with anger that Britain should 'read a lesson to the United States which will not soon be forgotten', while the following *Punch* cartoons attest to the levels of popular feeling against the Union and the rhetoric, if not the actual desire, for war. [252]:

WAITING FOR AN ANSWER.

LOOK OUT FOR SQUALLS.
JACK BULL. "You do what's right, my Son, or I'll blow you out o the water."

[253]

Fig. Two: *Punch* 'Waiting for an Answer' (14th Dec 1861) & Fig. Three, *Punch* 'Looking Out for Squalls' (7th Dec 1861).

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[252] Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 61; *Birmingham Daily Post*, 29th Nov 1861; *Morning Post*, 28th Nov 1861; *Liverpool Mercury etc.* 28th Nov 1861. For further examples see *Bradford Observer*, 28th Nov 1861; *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 28th Nov 1861; *Dundee Courier and Daily Argus*, 28th Nov 1861; *The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 28th Nov 1861; *The Standard*, 28th Nov 1861. See also Jordan & Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War*, 29-31. This must be seen quite a shift for the Adelphi theatre given the fact that, according to Sarah Meer the management team had antislavery sympathies during the 1850s see Meer, *Uncle Tom Mania*, 156-158; *The Times*, 3rd Dec 1861; Adams 'The Trent Affair', 544, 547; Crawford, 'William Howard Russell' 203; *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 12th Dec 1861; Crawford, *The Anglo-American Crisis*, 96-97; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 150; Palmerston quoted in Foreman, *World on Fire*, 172.
[253] *Punch*, 14th Dec 1861; 7th Dec 1861.

While the *Trent* might have been a disaster for the pro-Union cause in Britain, one of the leading names involved in the campaign, John Bright, took to a stage in Rochdale on the 4th December 1861 and attempted to save face for the North. Privately even Bright, and for that matter many other committed pro-Federals, including Harriet Martineau, could not countenance Wilkes's actions. Even when Bright publically attempted to repair the damage done by the *Trent* affair his support was hardly considered a boon at this stage of the war anyway. As Henry Adams described the situation in a letter written on the 20th November 1861, 'his assistance at such a time as this is evidently a disadvantage to us, for he is now wholly out of power and influence.'[254] Whatever the complexities which lay behind it and the questions over his influence John Bright's speech at Rochdale in response to the *Trent* is still worthy of note given his integral role in the Federal cause.

Bright began his oration by outlining the issues at stake in the war and doing so from an explicitly pro-Union perspective, something which is just as enlightening about the significance of the pre-war period as southern propaganda. On the slavery issue, Bright tackled the claim that the North had no abolitionist heritage and maintained that 'the conscience of the North [had never been] satisfied with the institution of slavery.' However, it had been unable to take action since 'if we look at the government of the United States. . .since the formation of the Union, we shall find the Southern power has been mostly dominant.' Bright similarly attempted to tackle the tariff problem from a pro-Federal position and to undermine the role of free trade in the war by claiming 'that no American, certainly no one I ever met with, attributed the disasters of the Union to that cause [the tariff]' as well as noting that 'whatever might be the influence of the tariff upon the United States, it is as pernicious to the West as it is to the South.' With this he was actively critical of those defending the South on the protection issue claiming that anyone who 'contends that it is the

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[254] *The Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 7th Dec 1861. As James Vernon has noted John Bright was at the cutting edge of giving speeches with the express intention of their publication and as such, in all likelihood, he knew this speech would receive national attention see Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 149; Henry Adams to C.F Adams Jr, 20th Nov 1861 in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One*.

tariff, or anything whatsoever else than slavery, [that had stimulated the war] is either himself deceived or endeavors [sic] to deceive others.' [255]

All of this rhetoric, of course, said little for American unity. Indeed some commentators including the novelist Anthony Trollope speculated on the division of the United States into three regions, North, South and West. Yet, Bright used it in this context to undermine some of the claims of the Confederacy with regards to the sectional nature of protective legislation. Bright also downplayed the image of the Lincoln government as a despotism which pro-Confederates had built on pre-war foundations, comparing the decision to suspended Habeas Corpus to a similar act in Britain during the 1848 revolution in Ireland. On the topic of the *Trent,* Bright essentially rejected the interpretation of Crown law officers that Wilkes's actions were illegal while he maintained that 'the act which has been committed by the American steamer, in my opinion, whether it was illegal or not, was both impolitic and bad.' Even though Bright did not claim to support Wilkes's action, he directly criticized the coverage given by *The Times* of the *Trent* affair and suggested that the newspaper's editorial stance had been an active attempt to persuade 'people that this is merely one of a series of acts which denote the determination of the Washington government to pick a quarrel with the people of England.' This was something Bright contended was not true and he may have had a point given the ongoing attempts by Delane and his writers to 'sectionalize' American Anglophobia in the period. As might be expected, the levels of vitriol did reduce after Mason and Slidell had been released and a somewhat calmer period of Union/British relationship set in. The *Trent* affair, however, had demonstrated the combustibility of British engagement with the Civil War.[256] The real significance of Bright's rhetoric in the Rochdale speech was the extent to which it demonstrated an engagement with the key tropes of the pre-war era as they were

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[255] *The Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 7th Dec 1861.
[256] *The Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 7th Dec 1861; Anthony Trollope, *North America Volume One* (Leipzig: Bernard Tauschitz, 1862), 159-165. For more on Trollope see Graham Handley, *Anthony Trollope* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999); Andrew Sanders, *Anthony Trollope* (Plymouth: Northcote House, 1998); James Pope-Hennessy, *Anthony Trollope* (London: Phoenix, 2001); Cohen 'Charles Sumner and the Trent Affair' 236; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 152; C.F Adams to C.F Adams Jr, 10th Jan 1862, in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One*; E.D Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 236; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 152-152.

integrated into British discourse on the conflict. Bright emphasized the historical abolitionist sentiments of the northern states and Anglophilia of the Washington government while rejecting the role of the tariff in the conflict, utilizing similar language as his adversaries, but to a very different purpose.

The reaction of much of the press to Bright's speech is illustrative of the fact that his interpretation of the war was far from the unanimously accepted one. *The Times* described Bright at this juncture as a 'devil's advocate' before dismantling his view of the *Trent* affair and concluding with a description of him as a 'voice without an echo,' apparently emphasizing the lack of political power he could exert, just as Henry Adams had noted. Through this article, however, *The Times* trumpeted its own neutrality even as it invoked obviously sectional tropes which emphasized the difference between North and South. For instance the article stated that 'we may not, perhaps, be prepared to accept Mr. Bright's creed as to the Yankee Millennium, and to hound on the North to exterminate the South- as if the Anglo-Saxons of the South were not as much our kinsmen as the mixed races of the North.' Evidently, neutrality and the acceptance of the forcible reforming of the Union were not interchangeable for *The Times*. The *Blackburn Standard* on 11th December 1861 began its own response to Bright in stark fashion claiming that 'John Bright is against England and in favour of the Federalists of America,' before declaring that on the topic of slavery, 'Mr. Bright, in the face of nearly the universal opinion of this country, of perhaps all Europe, and of many of his own friends, contends that the North is fighting against slavery in the South.' This editorial not only explicitly rejected the abolitionist crusade narrative of the Union but also noted, in line with the notion of the descent of democracy into despotism, that 'majorities may be tyrants as well as individuals.' In addition, the article played up the image of the South as being negatively effected by its connection to the Union since 'England never attempted to tax the United States half so much as the North have taxed the South over and above her due share for the purposes of the Union.' Similarly, *Punch* published a satirical poem entitled 'John Bright' which mocked his views on *Trent* and the American conflict generally during this

period, describing him as an unhesitant apologist for the actions of the Union, criticizing his hypocritical neutrality and suggesting that if he failed to recognize international law then he might recognize 'the two Yankee laws, Mob and Might.' These loaded pre-war tropes had most definitely taken on a sectional meaning by this point and it was a meaning which undermined the cause of the Lincoln government.[257]

One of the most significant pro-Confederates, the MP, businessman, journalist and Southern Independence Association (SIA) member A J B Beresford-Hope, made an important contribution to the propaganda battle in the wake of the *Trent* in his 1862 pamphlet *England, the North and the South*. Beresford-Hope's text drew on pre-war tropes in much the same way that James Spence's work had, offering a similar assessment on the position of slavery in the conflict to Spence. Beresford-Hope explained that the division into slave and free states had come about as a result of the economic impracticability of slaveholding in the North and that even after the abolition of slavery the merchants and bankers of New York and Boston had continued to fund the slave-trade and to mortgage plantations worked by slave-labour. This continued involvement was something which even the abolitionist and passionate pro-New Englander Harriet Martineau had conceded in her 1837 travelogue. He also explained that 'the Northern States grow a certain amount of grain, but it is a manufacturing rather than a purely agricultural [region]. . . [in the South] the pursuits are almost solely agricultural.' This was an interpretation of sectional differences which echoed pre-war British commentators including William Cobbett and Frederick Marryat as well as other Confederate advocates in Britain and more neutral commentators including the *Morning Chronicle* which informed its readers that 'England should begin to investigate the very important fact, where her true interests lie- whether the manufacturing and commercial North, or the agricultural South.' Beresford-Hope also attempted to show that since '[in the Constitution] each of the colonies retained certain substantial rights as an independent "State",' the different interests

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[257] *Glasgow Herald*, 9th Dec 1861; *Blackburn Standard*, 11th Dec 1861; *Punch* quoted in *Glasgow Herald*, 13th Dec 1861.

of each should have been protected, and in reality it was the interests of the South had been jeopardized by the northern protectionist policy. This was yet another idea which had propounded before the war by Cobbett, Buckingham and Charles Lyell as well as the popular press and offers another illustration of the extent to which the intellectual climate created in the pre-war set the terms for the Civil War debate in Britain.[258]

Beresford-Hope placed his contentions on the subject of slavery within the context of the contemporary political arena and noted how President Lincoln had countermanded General John C. Fremont's order for immediate emancipation in Missouri in 1861, something described by *The Times* as 'undermining the abolitionist argument.' In doing this he drew on a tradition which was prevalent before the war which contended that whites in the North had expressed a more active aversion to free blacks than white southerners had towards slaves. He noted for example that 'in the free States the negro is treated with unchristian cruelty, excluded from the same church, from the same table, from the same railway carriage, from the same alter of god.' In contrast to this treatment of blacks in the North, he maintained that 'in the South, no doubt, the slave is held as a chattel, but he is well treated; in social matters he is regarded as a fellow creature; he kneels at the same altar as the white man, and travels in the same train.' These sentiments could be found in travel narratives going back at least to Frances Trollope and are particularly reminiscent of Edward Sullivan's remark that 'he [the black American] is treated equally as a dog in both [sections], with this difference, that in the south he is sometimes a pet dog, whereas in the north his is always a cur, kicked and hooted on every occasion.' In addition to the idea of the black population being more socially

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[258] A.J.B. Beresford-Hope, *England, the North, and the South: being a Popular View of the American Civil War* (London: James Ridgway, 1862), 58-59, 6-7. Beresford-Hope was a political conservative who, as the historian Bruce Coleman has noted was something of a romantic and believer in 'paternalistic philanthropy' see Bruce Coleman, *Conservatism and the Conservative Party in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London, Baltimore, Melbourne & Auckland: Edward Arnold, 1988), 127. The SIA publically called on the Confederacy to eventually abolish slavery see Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume Two*, 220. See also Wharncliffe Muniments, Sheffield Archives, in particular Wh.M 460 & Wh.M 461; *Morning Post* quoted in Palen 'The Civil War's Forgotten Transatlantic Tariff Debate', 40. For Fremont's order see Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge, Mass, London: Harvard University Press, 2011), 94; James Oakes, 'Reluctant to Emancipate?: Another Look at the First Confiscation Act', *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3.4 (Dec 2013), 458-466.

integrated in the South in comparison to the North, Beresford-Hope also picked up the paternalism thread (which connected English and southern traditions), telling his readers how 'the best slaveholders make its chains as light as possible- they educate their blacks, they make them Christians, while in Africa they would have remained savages.'[259] The position of slavery and abolition within the United States as described in this pamphlet was characterized by a sense of continuity with much of the pre-war literature on the subject. This literature had flatly rejected a strict differentiation between the free and slave states, favouring instead a more nuanced image which undermined the idea of the Union fighting for abolition.

The slavery rhetoric of the pro-southern lobby as represented by figures such as Beresford-Hope involved a wholesale rejection of the 'positive good' thesis of slavery in favour of a mitigated evil one which seemed perfectly consistent with the pre-war writings of many. It is for this reason that a letter sent to the *Daily News* and published on the 3rd February 1862 attacked William L. Yancey not so much for his slaveholding (others would have been just as open to this critique) as his apparent desire to reopen the slave trade. This accusation clearly touched a nerve and later in 1862 Henry Hotze explicitly rejected the claim that the Confederacy had any such intention, maintaining that it would not be in its interest. Hotze had arrived in Britain at the beginning of 1862 and had immediately began to have letters published in the *London Post*, *Standard* and *London Herald*, before eventually establishing a pro-Confederate newspaper, entitled the *Index,* in April of that year. Hotze's intention with this weekly newspaper was to, in his own words, make it a 'worthy representative in journalism of the highest ideal of the Southern civilization which is as yet only in its infancy.' Even though in terms of circulation the paper never exceeded 2,250 copies sold per week, its point was never to reach a mass audience anyway; instead Hotze wanted to influence those 'by whom public opinion is formed.' It was in the pages of this newspaper that Hotze rejected the claim made against Yancey that the Confederacy intended

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[259] Beresford-Hope, *England, the North, and the South*, 36-37, 67, 10-12, 59; Lyons to Russell, 16th Sept 1861; Lyons to Russell, 14th Oct 1861 in Barnes & Barnes (eds.), *The American Civil War Through British Eyes*; Goldman, 'A Total Misconception', 113; *Index*, 8th May 1862.

to re-open the international slave trade. The debate over the trade neatly invokes another element of the pre-war discussion. With the exception of Thomas Carlyle and some of his clique, few in Britain subscribed to the 'positive good' thesis of slavery advanced by southerners such as George Fitzhugh and Albert Taylor Bledsoe.[260] For many in Britain, the paternal connection was a mitigation of the already existing slave system, yet the reopening of the slave trade implied the acceptance of the 'positive good' ideology and as such the pro-Confederate lobby in Britain vehemently rejected such a suggestion.

This explicit rejection of the 'positive good' thesis of slavery as used by Hotze was significant in undermining Union claims, but southern nationalism had to be endorsed in positive terms as well; it could simply be a defensive reaction to northern critiques. The problems which had resulted in secession were, at least in Beresford-Hope's text, a fusion of the inherent differences of the regions, and the development of democracy and party. It was this which gave the South a distinctive national identity and therefore a claim to nationhood. Although the historical accuracy might be questionable, Beresford-Hope told his readers that 'the Whigs became more and more identified with the North, and really represented the Democratic principle-the Democrats became more and more identified with the South and represented the Conservative and landed interests.' By aligning politics in this way, Beresford-Hope was able to associate the controversial idea of democracy, so negatively described in the works of Dickens and Trollope before the war, with the northern states. In doing this he rendered the Union the inheritor of this negative political system while the Confederacy forged a new political identity. He also picked up on the questionable financial history of much of the North, an image which predated the war in the works of Henry Tudor, Charles Murray, George Combe and others by stating that 'in plain words, with its reckless

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[260] *Daily News*, 3rd Feb 1862; *Index*, 2nd Oct 1862; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 169; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 214-215, 273. The format of the *Index* was a sixteen page weekly newspaper see Mahin, *One War at a Time*, 21; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 145; Oates, 'Henry Hotze', 140; Henry Hotze to George Witt, 11th Aug 1864, in Burnett, (ed.), *Henry Hotze*. For more on Hotze and the *Index* see the introduction in Burnett, *Henry Hotze*; *Index*, 21st Aug 1862; Terry A. Barnhart, *Albert Taylor Bledsoe: Defender of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2011); Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*; Bonner 'Proslavery Extremism Goes to War.'

trading and bubble banks, [New York] had been for years setting itself up as the commercial capital of the New World. . .New York is to America what Paris is to France- the bad influence at head-quarters which pervades and demoralizes the whole body.' Beresford-Hope additionally explicitly disconnected New York from the South in historical terms telling his readers that it had 'all along been pre-eminently grasping.' The New York connection is particularly significant here. The ingrained antipathy to New York was exploited to make the cause of the Union undistinguishable from that of the city; somewhere which had been described in almost every pre-war account in deeply negative terms as ethnically heterogeneous, financially corrupt, anti-abolitionist and a victim to the power of the mob and press.[261]

This mob image was in itself powerful and Beresford-Hope was particularly vocal within this work in his attempts to sectionalize it as an expression of American politics and the political tyranny identified by pre-war writers. Just as William Howard Russell had done the previous year, he dissociated the idea of a mobocracy and extreme democracy from the South and suggested instead that mob rule was resulting in 'a perfect reign of terror' in the North in which any anti-government activity was suppressed. Beresford-Hope later went on to place Lincoln in the role of archetype dictator, much as Henry Hotze had done, telling his readers how the President 'ordered the Provost-Marshall at Washington to station a sentry at Judge Merrick's door. . .not allowing him to administer the common law of the land!' Beresford-Hope extended this image across the Union and played on the fear of the mob in his contention that 'elsewhere in the North a perfect reign of terror exists. The mobs destroy newspaper offices and silence all free thought.' In a letter published in the *Morning Post* newspaper Hotze drew on this as well and mentioned the political arrests and the passport system instigated in the Union. All of these claims exploited powerful imagery and the influence they had should not be underestimated since they tapped into a vein of pre-existing

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[261] Beresford-Hope, *England, the North and the South*, 14, 65, 20, 58, 61; Spence, *The American Union*, 105.

ideas about the nature of America and appeared to possess more than a grain of truth. Certainly one of the most prominent British pro-Confederates, William Schaw Lindsay received a letter from an American friend in New York which informed him that 'the respectable portion of our citizens, men of property and intelligence are so thoroughly intimidated by the government that they will not publically express their sentiments.'[262] That a liberal such as Lindsay would have struck by these apparently flagrant abuses of power is unsurprising, but this negative imagery which balanced ideas of despotism and the mob with democracy, gave the cause of the South an equal appeal to the most committed, anti-reform conservatives in Britain.

It was not simply in terms of the machinery of politics that Beresford-Hope aggressively sectionalized tropes about the pre-war United States, he also did so with reference to the press. In his description of the newspaper industry as 'violent, untruthful, scurrilous to a degree which we cannot imagine in this land' and his specific description of 'the ribald press of New York' he invoked a spectre which was represented in its most popular form in Dickens's 'New York Stabber' and 'New York Peeper,' the morally bankrupt New York press. The image of that city's press was similarly noted, with specific reference to the *New York Herald,* by W H. Russell and it is apparent that genuine concern existed about the influence which the newspapers in the city could wield. *Punch's* commentary on this topic offered further detail and tied another pre-war trope, that of the ethnic heterogeneity of the North, directly to the press with reference to the Irish and the *New York Herald* remarking that the newspaper presented '[the] characteristic effusions of Irish malignity which render the Federal papers ludicrous.' Even the Union diplomats in Britain, Charles Francis Adams and Henry Adams at least partially blamed the New York press for scuppering their own diplomatic efforts.[263] These various associations between the press, the Irish and the city of

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[262] Beresford-Hope, *England, the North and the South*, 33-34; *Morning Post*, 22nd Feb 1862 G. Taylor to Lindsay, 20th Oct 1862, WSLC, LND.7.
[263] Beresford-Hope, *England, the North and the South*, 12-13, 26, 21; William Howard Russell to John T Delane, 16th July 1861 in Crawford (ed.), *William Howard Russell's Private Diary*; Oscar Maurer '"

New York brought with them a range of negative images which both propagandists and journalists linked to the cause of the Union.

During a lecture given in Maidstone (Kent) which was subsequently printed in pamphlet form in 1862, Beresford-Hope further developed an idea which he had previously explored in *England, the North and the South*: the ethnic and cultural relationship between Britain and the South. He asked his audience rhetorically 'do you believe that those Southern men and women, speaking our own tongue, with our own blood running in their veins would quietly endure the iron yoke?' This echoed his earlier pamphlet in which he explained that 'the South has nearly 9,250,000 of inhabitants, of which almost 6,000,000 are white, nearly all of English blood, with the exception of the French stock in Louisiana; while the addition of the Border States would add 2,500,000 of whites to less than 500,000 slaves. The North had rather over 19,000,000 of a very mixed race.' He connected these ethnic profiles to the attitudes of each region towards Britain noting that 'the South is not devoid of political sympathies with England. Formerly the South was as guilty as the North in its swaggering, bunkum and tall talk. . .[it] has become moderate.' This was directly contrasted with the fact that 'the friendship and affection of the North is not very strong at this moment,' and an emphasis on the sort of political bifurcation in terms of relations with Britain which had reached its pinnacle during the *Trent* affair. Within the pamphlet he even claimed that the ethnic homogeneity of the South acted as a check on American democracy in its most disconcerting forms since 'Germany. . .and Ireland, and other countries continue to pour in their streams of discontented, destitute immigrants. In the South there is the same universal suffrage among the whites, but there, owing to the large landed proprietors and the conditions of the country, the mob has not the same power,' a sentiment similar to those expressed by Sir Charles Lyell in 1845. Henry Hotze evoked the same cultural and ethnic distinctions as Beresford-Hope in one of his so-called 'moderator letters' to the *Morning Post* in March 1862

Punch" On Slavery and Civil War in America 1841-1865' *Victorian Studies* 1957, 17; C F Adams to C F Adams Jr, 1st Aug 1862; Henry Adams to C F Adams Jr, 7th Nov 1861; Henry Adams to C F Adams Jr, 25th Oct 1861 all in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One.*

in which he drew the attention of his readers to the fact that 'for half a century the North has absorbed the surplus population of Europe' while the South had 'relied on the natural increase of the parent stock.'[264] This was an ethnic and cultural division writ large and intended to emphasize the difference between North and South and to relate it to politics, presenting the Confederacy in the most palatable terms possible. In doing this both Hotze and Beresford-Hope built on an extensive tradition of sectionalism in British commentary grounded in ideas of culture and ethnicity.

While Hotze attempted to advance the cause of the Confederacy among the public during the Spring of 1862 one of the most vocal supporters of the South in parliament attempted to pressure the government to take action against the blockade of southern ports by the Union. The man who brought the motion to this effect was William Gregory, the liberal-conservative MP for County Galway. Gregory had extensive contacts in the South having travelled in the region before the war. He could boast of a correspondence with Robert Hunter, James M. Mason and William Porcher Miles and it seems that it was from these figures that he had been imbued with the state rights doctrine. The motion which Gregory presented on the 7th March 1862 was predicated on the assumption that the Union was operating an illegal paper blockade of the South which he attempted to prove by highlighting the success of blockade running operations. Within the House, Gregory received support from the Conservatives Sir James Fergusson and Lord Robert Cecil as well as Lindsay. As it was, Gregory's the legal position was roundly rejected with the reforming MP for Bradford, W.E Forster, the key figure in the resistance to what the liberal *Leeds Mercury* described as 'the mischievous motion of Mr. Gregory.' While concerned on the surface with a specific legal issue, both Gregory and the public were aware that his motion had resonance for the debate about the position of the Confederacy in Britain in more general terms. Gregory himself had

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[264] A.J.B Beresford-Hope, *The Results of the American Disruption: The Substance of a Lecture Delivered by Request Before the Maidstone Literary and Mechanics Institution, in Continuation of a Popular View of the American Civil War, and England, the North and the* South (London: James Ridgway, 1862), 28, 18-20; Beresford-Hope, *England, the North and the South*, 74; *Morning Post*, 20th March 1862.

made clear 'his strong sympathy with the struggle for independence now being carried on by the Confederate States, and declared that the separation of the South from the North, and re-construction of the Union were the only means by which we could hope to see slavery abolished in the United States.' He supplemented this argument in a speech later in the year with the contention that it had been the North which had dominated the international slave trade, emphasizing the sections' culpability in the system while also maintaining that the signature of a treaty between Lyons and Seward to suppress this trade had only been made possible by secession itself. Although Gregory argued that abolition would come about as a consequence of secession, many did not agree. The *Leeds Mercury* commended the Commons on its rejection of the motion both for legal reasons and since 'it is creditable too, to the House of Commons that this movement on the part of the friends of the slaveholders met with such scanty and feeble support.'[265]

Even the rejection of this motion, however, was interpreted by some (even those who had not actually supported Gregory) as a decision with the potential to have negative consequences. The primary reason for this was the apparent Anglophobia of the North and, in particular, William H. Seward. The *Liverpool Mercury* for instance warned its readers, with reference to Gregory's motion, that 'Mr. Seward will [never] be persuaded that the foreign policy of England is otherwise than profoundly selfish and immoral.'[266] Gregory's motion and the debate which occurred around it, within government and in the public sphere, are indicative of the level of complexity which existed in British discourse about the nature of secession and British involvement (or not) in the American conflict. Despite being grounded very much in the events of the war itself, both Gregory's emphasis on the chances of slavery

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[265] Jenkins, 'William Gregory' 323-325; Hubbard, *The Burden of Confederate Diplomacy,* 78; *Leeds Mercury*, 10th March 1862. For coverage of Gregory's motion see *Belfast News-Letter*, 8th March 1862; *Dundee Courier and Daily Angus*, 8th March 1862. For blockades and blockade running see Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 165-166, 179-183.

[266] *Liverpool Mercury*, 10th March 1862. For more on Seward as an Anglophobe see Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 147-148; Brock, *Conflict and Transformation*, 223-224; Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 263-270; Mahin, *One War at a Time*, 161-171; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 405-7. For a detailed account of his diplomacy see Norman D. Ferris, *Desperate Diplomacy: William H. Seward's Foreign Policy, 1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

ending with the acceptance of secession, and the Anglophobic label attached to William H. Seward by the *Liverpool Mercury* had a pedigree in pre-war discourse.

While propagandists waded into the debate about the nature of American sectionalism during the Civil War, it would be wrong to think that the issue was no longer discussed by neutral figures and in very popular forms. In May 1862 Anthony Trollope, the novelist and son of Frances Trollope, published his travelogue *North America*, which documented his reactions while travelling around the United States during the first year of the Civil War. Like so many of those before the conflict, Trollope came back to Britain with tales which, although unquestionably not positive about slavery, did not vindicate the image of a northern abolitionist cause. He explained to his readers that 'as a rule, the men of New England are not abolitionists' while when it came to the Boston lawyer Wendell Phillips (somebody who Trollope did not doubt was an abolitionist) he stated that 'to me it seemed that the doctrine he preached was one of rapine, bloodshed and social destruction' a description very similar to that given by the explicit pro-Confederate, Beresford-Hope of Phillips. The overall conclusion which Trollope drew when it came to slavery in the Civil War was that 'abolition, in truth, is a political cry. It is the banner of defiance opposed to secession' and while disagreeing with the assumption of the abolitionists 'that the negro is the white man's equal' he attacked the racial hypocrisy of the North which meant that 'an American abolitionist would not sit at table with a negro. He might do so in England at the house of an English duchess; but in his own country the proposal of such a companion would be an insult to him. He will not sit with him in a public carriage if he can avoid it. In New York I have seen special street cars for coloured people.' These are exactly the sort of images which Charles Dickens' descriptions of New York abolition had conjured up in the 1840s. In fact, Trollope provided one of the best accounts of the complex relationship between sectionalism and slavery and the relationship they had to the Civil War:

The South is seceding from the North because the two are not homogenous. They have different morals, and a different culture. It is well for one man to say that slavery has caused the separation; and

for another to say that slavery has not caused it. Each in so saying speaks the truth. Slavery has caused it, seeing that slavery is the great point upon which the two have agreed to differ. But slavery has not caused it, seeing that other points of difference are to be found in every circumstance and feature of the two people. [267]

The notion of different interests which extended beyond the bounds of the slavery issue in was as typical of pro-southern propaganda as it was of Trollope's own mainstream liberal perspective. He actually speculated that 'the great political Union hitherto called the United States of America may be more properly divided into three rather than into two distinct interests,' explaining that 'it must be remembered that on commercial questions, the North and West are divided. The Morrill Tariff is as odious to the West as it is to the South. . .the North is a manufacturing country. A poor manufacturing country as regards excellence of manufacture- and therefore more anxious to foster its own growth by protective laws.' Once again this dichotomy between protection and free trade had clear pre-war roots in the travelogues of Lyell and Buckingham, as well as the British press. Trollope was especially harsh on New York, particularly for its financial dealings describing how 'every man worships the dollar' although he did also note the past debt repudiations of Mississippi and Pennsylvania as well.[268] These powerful images of financial mismanagement had, like much else of what he claimed, pre-war antecedents in Charles Augustus Murray, Charles Dickens, Frances Trollope and a host of others. The separate identities and economic interests of North and South which Trollope had invoked were similarly emphasized in a letter printed in the *Index* on the 1st of May 1862. The letter, signed 'a Liverpool Ship-owner' (this may have actually been James Spence or a member of Fraser, Trenholm & Son, a key Confederate merchant company with offices in New York, Liverpool and Charleston), saw the writer describe quite pointedly the cause of 'Free Trade and the Confederate States.' Creating this relationship was evidently important and the economic argument which integrated free trade

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[267] Anthony Trollope, *North America Volume One* (Leipzig: Bernard Tauchnitz, 1862) 174, 12; Trollope, *North America Volume One* (1987 repr. Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1862), 354; Anthony Trollope, *North America Volume Two* (1987 repr. Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1862), 86-87.
[268] Trollope, *North America Volume One* 158, 175, 291.

into southern nationalism continued to have a considerable public influence throughout 1862. Charles Dickens for instance wrote a letter to William F. De Cerjat on 16th March in 1862 in which he asserted that slavery had nothing to do with the war and that the conflict was about the South attempting re-assert its own economic and political independence, while concluding that there was not 'a pin to choose between the two parties.'[269]

In the same way that Spence and Beresford-Hope had before him, Trollope gave a distinctly sectional complexion to American democracy, noting variations in the political process and attitudes of the people across the nation toward the system. He asserted to his readers that 'Massachusetts, as we know, is democratic in its tendencies, but South Carolina is essentially aristocratic,' a description reminiscent of that given by *Blackwood's* to the state of Virginia's political system in 1852. This provided a clear sectional identity to American democracy, something which Henry Hotze also claimed existed from an avowedly pro-southern perspective in the *Index*. It is should be noted that Trollope was not necessarily endorsing either an aristocratic or democratic government here. He actively criticized the hypocrisy which he saw in southern planters who claimed to be democrats, yet held slaves. Even taking his personal reservations into account, however, his sentiments were being read by those who had thirty years' worth of literature which had criticized American democracy including the accounts of liberals and radicals like Dickens, Brothers and his own mother Frances who had turned away from the system after seeing it in operation in the United States. Even if his intention was not the same as the pro-Confederate writers in Britain, Trollope's statement was similar to those of Spence and Beresford-Hope in the way that it sectionalized the democratic nature of the United States and thereby associated the negative aspects of the American system with the Union.[270]

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[269] *Index*, 1st May 1862; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 21; Dickens quoted in Adrian 'Dickens on American Slavery', 324-325; Dickens quoted in Slater, *Charles Dickens*, 505-506.
[270] Trollope, *North America Volume Two*, 80; Cullop, *Confederate Propaganda in Europe*, 57.

Interestingly for somebody who generally had a modicum of sympathy for the North, Trollope built on the image of the despot in American politics and attached it specifically to the North and the person of William H. Seward in a manner similar to Beresford-Hope. The negative images which Trollope used seemed to be based on the belief that Seward was an Anglophobe who actively wanted war with Britain and had admitted as much in a conversation with the Duke of Newcastle in 1860. Certainly Seward was an easy target for any British writer of the era given that, before the Civil War, he had been heavily associated with Anglophobic politics, and during the early months of the conflict his name became linked with idea of the 'foreign war panacea.' In essence this was a plan to reunite the North and South by provoking a conflict with Britain over Canada in the belief that the majority of Americans would rally behind a war against the United States' traditional enemy. Genuine concern existed in Britain that the Union might make a military move of this sort, a situation not calmed by newspapers such as the *New York Herald* and *New York Times* who suggested at various points that Canadian lands could replace the seceded areas of the South. When the British mentioned this plan it was invariably connected in some way to the person of Seward. The Secretary of State's Anglophobe reputation was further enhanced when, against the background the *Trent* affair, a portion of his diplomatic correspondence was published which was permeated by anti-British rhetoric. The generally measured Trollope was unusually insulting towards the Seward, yet it seems he was simply voicing a sentiment held by many Britons, as Charles Francis Adams emphasized in letters to his son throughout the conflict. The comments which Trollope made about Seward, and indeed those of Adams need to be placed in the context of the *Trent* affair which had coincided with the novelists time in the United States and appeared to goad him into describing how Seward 'instituted a system of passports, especially instructed to incommode Englishmen proceeding from the States across the Atlantic. He resolved to make every Englishman in America feel himself in some way punished because England had not assisted the North.' In the same way that a number of Confederate propagandists portrayed Lincoln as the logical outcome of the

American democratic system, Trollope concluded that Seward was the result of a political system which encouraged 'governing by the little men' while describing him at other points of his narrative as being guilty of incompetence, ignorance and arrogance as well as reveling in the 'privilege of unrestrained arrests,' thereby attaching the despot tag to him.[271] These then are the pre-war tropes of the American politician made explicitly sectional. While Trollope attached them to Seward and others did so to Lincoln the key point is that it was northern politicians who were associated frequently with the image of the aggressively Anglophobe despot whipping up the popular passions of the mob.

Events in the United States during the war gave the Confederate lobby in Britain a great deal of ammunition when it came to using the image of the northern despot, something not limited to Seward in its application. As much, if not more of the British ire was directed at the Union General Benjamin Butler who occupied the city of New Orleans from April 1862. Popular perceptions in Britain were that Butler had enforced an unnecessarily harsh regime on the people of the city and unsurprisingly among the Confederates there was considerable concern over his actions. Judah P. Benjamin, for instance, wrote to Mason and Slidell in July 1862 discussing Butler's actions in a concerned tone. Even though John Bright attempted to defend Butler's conduct as an expediency of war many other significant British politicians, including the Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, were considerably less sympathetic to the General. In a sense Butler must have been seen by figures such as Palmerston as the fulfilment of the warnings about the despotic American which had been offered by *John Bull*, Frederick Marryat and George Combe during the 1830s and 1840s. Unsurprisingly, the *Index* took the tyrant image of Butler on board and suggested that not only was he a domestic menace but also that he had an aggressively anti-British international outlook. The actions of Butler in New Orleans fed into the more general discourse in Britain which built on the image

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[271] Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 113; Bourne, *Britain and the Balance*, 211; Bourne, 'British Preparations for War', 601; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 58-59; C F Adams to C F Adams Jr. 21st June 1861, 20th Dec 1861, 21st June 1861 all in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One*; Anthony Trollope, *North America Volume One* 366-370; Trollope, *North America Volume Two*, 237, 304, 281-282; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 36-38; Crook 'Portents of War' 168; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 156-157; Phillips, *The Cousins War*, 491.

of the democratic despotism and often incorporated the possibility of martial law in the North. This discourse was frequently critical of the tyranny of Lincoln's domestic policies and at its most extreme drew comparisons between the Federal Government and that of Robespierre and Danton during the French revolutionary 'terror.' The decision to sink a stone fleet in Charleston harbor was interpreted through the same lens as another instance of tyranny which would devastate the economic prospects of the city in both the short and long term.[272] For many in Britain the actions of Butler, the rhetoric of Seward, the sinking of the stone fleet, the suspension of Habeas Corpus and countless other aspects of the Union were examples of the despotism and tyranny which were the logical outcome of the polity of the United States. This was a polity which had apparently been taken to its extreme by the Lincoln government.

Key to the propaganda on both sides was the integration of pre-war tropes into Civil War debates. Within Britain itself the so-called cotton famine provided another point of contact between the war and pre-war periods and was consequently engaged with frequently. John Arthur Roebuck's speech at Sheffield on the 14th August 1862 while attending a banquet as part of the Annual Cutlers Festival at Cutlers' Hall on Church Street provides a revealing illustration of the place of the cotton trade in British views of the Civil War. Roebuck followed Lord Palmerston on stage and the orations of the men are indicative of pro-southern and mainstream opinion, the former represented by Roebuck and the latter by Palmerston. As he neared the end of the speech the Prime Minister 'referred to the distress in Lancashire, complimenting the operatives on their endurance, but he thought all would admit that government was wise in not attempting to relieve that distress by an interference in the American War.' While Palmerston rejected any diplomatic moves in favour of the South on the basis of the impact of the war on cotton imports (a significant economic issue since

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[272] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom:* 420; Judah P. Benjamin to John Slidell and James M. Mason, 19th July 1862 in Richardson (ed.), *The Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis*; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 106-107; Crook, *The North, the South and the Powers*, 206; *Index*, 4th Sept 1862, 12th June 1862, 5th June 1862, 16th June 1862, 10th Nov 1862; *Diary of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 1st Aug 1862, 12th Aug 1862, 20th Jan 1862; Dudley Mann to Jefferson Davis, 1st Feb 1862, in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis.*

around one seventh of the British population relied on Cotton for their livelihood) Roebuck saw it as the responsibility of the British government to act. Within his speech he emphasized all of the key pre-war tropes in his advocacy of recognition describing northerners as 'people possessed of irresponsible and almost omnipotent power, as a people that could not be trusted.' He similarly noted that in terms of the causes of war 'slavery was a mere pretence' and within 'the North the feeling against the black man was stronger than in the South, and if North and South were re-united to-morrow slavery would be more firmly fixed than ever.'[273]

Roebuck also sectionalized the Anglophobe credentials of the United States when he noted that 'America had been intolerant and overbearing towards England, and we had, on almost every occasion given up to her. The consequence was seen in the affair of the *Trent*.' He concluded in similarly sectional terms that 'the Northerners would never be our friends. Of the Southerners we could make friends. They were not the scum and refuse of Europe, but Englishmen.' Interestingly, even the reactions to the speech which were explicitly critical of Roebuck's stance, continued to apply many of the tropes he had used. A letter to the editor of the *Daily News,* for instance, mentioned the power of the Puritan and Cavalier myth with reference to the speech.[274] It is worth dwelling on Roebuck's oration at this point as it provides an illustration of all the pre-war tropes constructed about the North and South being fused together in order to construct a distinctive identity for the regions in a Civil War. It also makes manifest the extent to which Civil War rhetoric operated within an existing framework

[273] For the Cotton Famine in Britain see Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*; Ellison, *Support of Secession;* Campbell, *English Public Opinion*; Crawford, *Anglo-American Crisis*; Foner, *British Labor and the Confederacy*; Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*; Kinser, *The American Civil War in the Shaping of British Democracy*; Myers, *Caution and Cooperation*; Brauer 'British Mediation and the American Civil War'; Michael Brook 'Confederate Sympathies in North-East Lancashire, 1862-1864' *Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 75-76 (1977), 211-217; Waller 'Charles Kingsley and the American Civil War'; Claussen, 'Peace Factors'; Gentry 'Confederate Success in Europe'; N. Hall 'The Liverpool Cotton Market and the American Civil War' *Northern History* 34 (1998), 149-169; Harrison 'British Labour and the Confederacy'; Hernon 'British Sympathies'; Lebergott 'Through the Blockade'; Frenise A. Logan 'India-Britain's Substitute for American Cotton, 1861-1865,' *Journal of Southern History* 24.4 (November 1958), 472-480; Douglas Maynard 'Civil War "Care": The Mission of the George Griswold' *New England Quarterly* 34.3 (September 1961), 291-310; Park 'The English Workingmen'; Foreman, *World on Fire*, 281-282; *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 17th Aug 1862; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent,* 14th Aug 1862; *Bradford Observer*, 14th Aug 1862; *Newcastle Courant Etc.,* 15th Aug 1862; *York Herald*, 16th Aug 1862.
[274] *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent,* 14th Aug 1862; *Bradford Observer*, 14th Aug 1862; *Newcastle Courant Etc.,* 15th Aug 1862; *York Herald*, 16th Aug 1862; *Daily News*, 14th Aug 1862.

of both national and sectional ideas about the United States, a framework, which as a consequence of concentrating too heavily on the Civil War period, historians have failed to appreciate.

The educationalist, Hugo Reid, who had published a pamphlet in 1861 re-entered the debate on the American War in 1862 with a new work in which he called explicitly for the recognition of the Confederacy. Reid placed an emphasis in his text on the ultimate abolition of slavery as something to be aimed at but explained that, in the context of the Civil War, 'the gradual and ultimate emancipation of the negro, or such ameliorations of his condition [as] are practicable, are much more likely to come as acts of grace from their owners than by compulsion.' He also warned British readers that, given the military situation, 'the only prospect for success for the North lies in a course which one shudders to contemplate- weakening the South by exciting a slave insurrection.' Reid additionally emphasized the socio-economic differences he saw between the sections and the political consequences which these differences had fostered describing how 'the United States are divided into two great sections, the North and South, with interests quite at variance in many important particulars' and contended that the South had been forced to 'break the connection and save themselves from the insane meddling and tyranny of a reckless, domineering, and insulting Northern majority.'[275] A political domination which had been noted by British observers such as Charles Daubeny, Thomas Brothers and James Stirling for the previous thirty years and was therefore familiar to the public when used by journalists and propagandists during the conflict.

The power of James Spence's 1861 pamphlet *The American Union* in setting the terms of the Civil War debate in Britain continued to be felt well after its publication and it remained a crucial point of reference for later propagandists. In 1862 for instance, even though events had changed the complexion of the war to some extent, the Liverpool reformer

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[275] Hugo Reid, *The American Question in a Nut-Shell: or, Why we Should Recognize the Confederates* (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1862), 18, 21, 13.

Charles Edward Rawlins, Jr., published an explicit rebuttal to his fellow Liverpudlian's text which attests to its continued influence. Rawlins described *The American Union* as 'at once the most brilliant and most mischievous works' on the conflict before going on to quote the positive responses given to the book by the *Quarterly Review* and *All the Year Round*. Rawlins then proceeded in an attempt to dismantle Spence's argument based on a refutation of the image of the South as being politically and economically subjugated by the North in the Union, despite what prominent commentators such as James Silk Buckingham and William Cobbett had claimed before the war. Firstly, Rawlins claimed that 'nearly all the presidents have been Southern men' and the 'the North, absorbed in commerce, and hitherto exhausting their love for the Union in vapid words, have been the passive instruments of Southern slaveholders.' He also contended (and in this way implicitly accepted the culpability of the North in slavery for seventy years) that the *Dred Scott* decision 'had at last fairly awakened Northern Freemen from their culpable indifference.' The result of this was 'the election of Mr. Lincoln as the representative of a party not desiring to interfere with slavery in the States, but to prevent its further extension. And herein lies the immediate cause of secession.'[276] Even in his rebuttal of Spence, however, Rawlins betrayed the continuing weakness of the Federal cause in the first years of the Civil War from a British perspective. Active abolition was not at the heart of the Union war effort and, since the northern states had both failed to prove their aversion to slavery on many previous occasions and failed to announce abolition as a war aim, there was no reason for the public to revise the ideas which had prevailed before the outbreak of conflict.

The nearest pro-Union challenger to Spence's work in terms of influence was the eminent economist John Elliot Cairnes's book *The Slave Power: It's Character and Probable Designs: Being an Attempt to Explain the Real Issues involved in the American Contest*. Cairnes, while evidently set against slavery, was deeply unimpressed with the Union

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[276] Charles Edward Rawlins Jr. *American Disunion: Constitutional or Unconstitutional? A Reply to Mr. James Spence upon the Question "Is Secession a Constitutional Right?" Discussed in his Recent Work, "The American Union"* (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1862), 8-9, 22.

government, as many others in Britain were, and therefore his text, which went into a second edition and was included in the popular circulating library of Charles Edward Mudie, was no Federal hagiography. A central tenant of the thesis Carines constructed against the Confederacy was the rejection of the oft-repeated claim that the tariff was the cause of the conflict. Cairnes noted that 'with the exception of the Morrill Tariff, Congress has never passed a more highly protective law than the tariff of 1842; and this tariff was supported by a large number of Southern statesmen.' He also highlighted that 'the interest of the Cotton States in free exchange with foreign countries is not more obvious than that of Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin', something Anthony Trollope had recognized in *North America*. Even while attempting to downplay the role of the tariff, Cairnes still noted that 'the North fancied she had an interest in protection; the South had an obvious interest in free trade. On this and other questions . . . North and South came into collision, and the antagonism thus engendered had been strengthened and exacerbated by a selfish struggle for place and power -a struggle which the constitution and political usages of the Americans rendered more rancorous and violent than elsewhere.' He contended that 'as for slavery, it was little more than a pretext on both sides, employed by the leaders of the South to arouse the fears and hopes of the slaveholders, and by the North in the hope of attracting the sympathies of Europe and hallowing a cause which was essentially destitute of noble aims.'[277]

The most striking aspect of Cairnes's work is the extent to which this key text of the pro-Union lobby in Britain signally failed to emphasize the slavery issue. Cairnes's position on the slavery question was almost entirely political in nature and in this sense it had a certain similarity to the pro-Confederate Spence. Given that *The Slave Power* was something of a canonical to British pro-Unionists it appears that the notion of the Union fighting an active war

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[277] Jordan & Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War*, 74; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 200; Harrison, 'British Labour', 91; Jenkins, *Britain and the War for the Union Volume Two*, 39; J.E Cairnes, *The Slave Power: It's Character and Probable Designs: Being an Attempt to Explain the Real Issues involved in the American Contest* (New York: Carleton, 1862), 'Preface xi', 22, 24, 18. For a biography of Cairnes see Adelaide Weinberg, *John Elliot Cairnes and the American Civil War: A Study in Anglo-American Relations* (London: Kingswood, 1970). For the 1842 tariff see Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 593-594, 765.

for abolition was propounded by few outside of the Bright and Cobden school and held little appeal or plausibility to most of the public.

The appreciation of the lack of abolitionist feeling in the North on Cairnes's part may seem something of a surprise given his advocacy of the Union, yet his text is laden with observations of which seemed to undermine his cause, including a recognition of the financial involvement of northern cities in slave based industry before the war. Within the context of the conflict itself, Cairnes conceded that 'when slaves have escaped to the Federal army, instead of being received by the general with open arms as brothers for whose freedom he is fighting, they have been placed upon the footing of property, and declared to be contraband of war,' a statement indicative of the attitudes towards free blacks in northern society which had something in common with the published observations of William Mackenzie, Marshall Hall, William Chambers and Harriet Martineau before the war. In addition Cairnes drew attention to the decision of General Fremont to Emancipate slaves in Missouri describing how 'when a Federalist general, transcending his legitimate powers, issues a proclamation declaring that slaves shall be free. . .it is not a proclamation of freedom to slaves as such, but only to the slaves of "rebels," while no sooner is this half-hearted act of manumission known at head-quarters than it is disavowed and over-ruled.' This was hardly evidence of an abolitionist Union and did little to legitimize the war. The influence of these events and there frequency as topics for popular discussion in Britain forced Cairnes to engage with them yet he maintained that the nature of discussions on the subjects had mislead the public about 'the great and cardinal realities of the case.'[278] While it may seem at first sight surprising that Cairnes as a pro-Federal neglected the issue of slavery to the extent that he did, it is worth noting that his decision to do so might actually have been predicted based on an understanding of prevailing British ideas as they had been constructed by pre-war commentators.

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[278] Cairnes, *The Slave Power*, 103, 19; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 352-358.

Despite apparent concessions to the Confederate cause on many points, in legal terms Cairnes rejected outright the constitutional status of secession since 'it was absurd to suppose that one half of a nation should separate from the other because a first magistrate had been elected in the ordinary constitutional course.' He tied this claim specifically to the slave power thesis since 'the proximate issue with which the North had to deal was not slavery, but the right of secession. For the constitution [has] recognized slavery within the particular states, so long as the South confined its proceedings within its own limits.' Even as he constructed a legal justification for the cause of the Union in the war Cairnes did, however, appreciate the cultural distinctions between the sections which he grounded in the Cavalier/Puritan mythology describing those from 'Massachusetts and the other New England States' as being 'from the elite of the middle and lower classes,' while 'the early emigration to Virginia, Maryland and the Carolinas was for the most part composed of the sons of the gentry.'[279] Essentially Cairnes accepted the long list of differences between North and South many of which had clearly discernible pre-war roots, and emphasized the lack of legal status which secession possessed, building his argument on this footing.

One of the most striking of Cairnes's political observations involved a discussion of democracy in sectional terms. He noted that:

Democracy, beyond all doubt, has been a powerful influence in moulding the character of the Americans in the Northern States; it would be absurd to deny this; but it would be no less absurd, and would be still more flagrant in defiance of the most conspicuous facts of the case, to deny that character has also been profoundly modified by the influence of Southern institutions, acting through the Federal government, in the persons of Southern men- institutions which I repeat are the reverse of democratic. It is the Slave Power, and not the democracy of the North, which for half a century has been dominant in the Union.[280]

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[279] Cairnes, *The Slave Power*, 17, 27, 34.
[280] Ibid., 63.

This statement explicitly tied the image of democracy to the Union, something which would have been fine *if* American democracy had possessed a particularly positive image in Britain. Similarly it may have held some sway if it could appeal to the British liberal community, yet many radicals and liberals such as Frances Trollope, Charles Dickens and Thomas Brothers had been disillusioned by the experience of American democracy they had during the pre-war period. Thus, the United States, and subsequently the Union no longer possessed an iconic status in the vocabulary of British reformers and during the conflict itself some of the most dedicated advocates of the Confederate cause were members of the radical or liberal establishment.

So what argument did Cairnes make in favour of the Union? The key to understanding his claims is clear in the title of this text, *The Slave Power,* as well as his rejection of the legal right of secession. It was the political and territorial advance of the slave states which Cairnes primarily critiqued and used as an explanation for the war, describing the history of the United States as a 'record of aggressions by the Slave Power, feebly, and almost always unsuccessfully, resisted by the Northern States, and culminating in the present war.' More specifically Cairnes stated that since the Missouri Compromise:

What has been the career of the Slave Power since that time? It is to be traced through every questionable transaction in foreign and domestic politics in which the United States has since taken part- through the Seminole war, through the annexation of Texas, through the Mexican war, through the filibustering expeditions under Walker, through attempts upon Cuba, through the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, through Mr. Clay's compromises, through the repudiation of the Missouri Compromise so soon as the full results of that bargain had been reaped, through the passing of the Nebraska Bill and the legislative establishment of the principle of "Squatter Sovereignty," through the invasion of Kansas, through the repudiation of "Squatter Sovereignty" when that principle had been found unequal to its

purposes, and lastly, through the Dred-Scott decision and the demand for the protection of slavery in the Territories.[281]

With this record of abuses noted Cairnes informed his readers that 'the true cause of the American contest is to be found in the character and aims of the Slave Power' and that 'slavery alone was thought of, alone talked of, Slavery was battled for and against, on the floor of Congress and in the plains of Kansas; on the slavery question exclusively was the party constituted which now rules the United States; on slavery Fremont was rejected, on slavery Lincoln was elected; the South separated on slavery.' This, of course, did not mean that the North was fighting for abolition. In fact, Cairnes conceded that 'such has certainly not been its motive.' Yet while he noted that the British had been disappointed with the realization that the war was not 'anti-slavery crusade', he suggested that within the Union states 'the anti-slavery feeling is rapidly gaining on the mere unionist feeling, and bids fair ultimately to superseded it.'[282] It seems justifiable to conclude that Cairnes here was being pragmatic in his attempt to sell the cause of the Union to the British public and in doing so he betrayed a great deal about British attitudes to the war and slavery. It is clear that Cairnes was of the opinion that, while the British public had a great deal of sympathy for abolition, they did not see the Civil War as being between slave-holding and freedom (despite the claims of some pro-Unionists). It seemed reasonable then for Cairnes to concede the ground which pre-war writers had established and acknowledge the lack of unanimous abolitionism among northerners.

While Cairnes may have rejected slavery as the original explanation for the conflict he took some care to attach the 'positive good' thesis which was so unpalatable to most Britons, even wholehearted pro-Confederates, to the cause of the South. He noted the development of the position of slavery in the South which had taken it from being viewed' as a barbarous institution' to 'a system admirable for its intrinsic excellence,' a frequently recognized

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[281] Ibid., 21.
[282] Ibid.,26, 130, 29-31, 36.

transition in both pre-war and wartime texts. As evidence of the acceptance of the 'positive good' thesis in the Confederacy, Cairnes pointed to Alexander Stephens's cornerstone speech in which he had asserted the centrality of the slave system to the section, as well as emphasizing that 'slavery in the South is something more than a moral and political principle: it has become a fashionable taste, a social passion.' In addition, Cairnes drew attention to an apparent movement in the Confederacy to reopen the international slave trade informing his readers that 'it was proposed in the *True Southern*, a Mississippi paper, to stimulate the zeal of the pulpit by founding a prize for the best sermon in favour of free trade in human flesh.'[283] These were apparent illustrations of a change in perspective among southerners which shifted slavery from being a system to be endured until it could be safely ended, to an attempt to actively support its continuance. Cairnes was essentially performing a discursive balancing act within his text, something which was, in all likelihood, an attempt on his part to tailor his thesis to mainstream British opinion. His own opinion, while evidently not in favour of slavery, did not involve an acceptance of the image of the Civil War propounded by John Bright. As Duncan Campbell has noted, there has been a tendency among historians to ascribe an undue influence to Bright's view of the war. In truth, however, Cairnes was probably more representative of British opinion.[284] Certainly he was prepared to concede more to the pre-existing British engagement with sectionalism than Bright while he still advocated the cause of the Union on a more nuanced anti-slavery basis.

On the topic of Emancipation, certainly before President Lincoln's provisional Emancipation Proclamation, the southern lobby in Britain carefully integrated pre-war British ideas about the position of slavery in the United States into its rhetoric. In an article entitled 'What does Union mean?' published in the *Index* on the 19th May 1862, Henry Hotze speculated that Emancipation might very well come about as a result of the war, but rejected the notion that this would improve the lives of former slaves. Considering the descriptions

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[283] Ibid., 89, 90, 123.
[284] Campbell, *English Public Opinion*.

given of free northern blacks by Frances Trollope, Robert Godley, Joseph Sturge and Edward Sullivan this was certainly not an unreasonable claim. Despite advancing this view, which seemed to suggest that slavery might be defensible, the newspaper still specifically stated that 'it is not our intention nor our desire to defend the institution of slavery.' As the possibility of practical Emancipation measures began to be discussed in the Summer of 1862, the *Index* played on well established British fears about a servile revolt. Hotze also emphasized instances of the harsh treatment which both enslaved and free blacks had suffered under Federal rule, suggesting to its readership that if emancipation was to come about it would be merely a cynical political ploy.[285] The purpose of these editorials was to reassert the pre-war image of the North as lacking any commitment to abolition as a moral cause (something most Britons claimed their own abolition movement had been) and recasting it in terms of political opportunism.

During the summer of 1862 the military situation provided a backdrop for vocals calls for the recognition of the Confederacy. Even Palmerston raised his voice in the cabinet in favour of recognition in some form. Speaking in the House of Commons on the 18th July 1862 the pro-Confederate MP William Schaw Lindsay reminded his fellow politicians that Lincoln's inaugural address had specifically rejected abolition as a motivation for the war. Like many other commentators he asserted that 'the great majority of the people of the North had no desire to see slavery abolished, and considered with the South, that it was, if not wise, then at least a necessary solution.' This attitude was typical of the pro-Confederate British in its acceptance of slavery as a temporary and justifiable evil as opposed to a 'positive good', as Alexander Stephens claimed. Still the stance of Lindsay and those like him lead to accusations on the part of some pro-Union American politicians that Britain was offering tacit support to slavery. Certainly Benjamin Moran believed this was the case, noting in his diary on the 21st June 1862 that 'the entire British people with but few exceptions are heart and soul in favour of slavery and rebellion.' Despite Moran's claims, as far as the members of

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[285] *Index*, 19th May 1862; 17th July 1862; 7th Aug 1862; 18th Sept 1862.

Confederate government operating in Britain were concerned, the anti-slavery commitment of British people could really not be questioned. John Slidell commented in a letter to Judah P. Benjamin on the 29th September, after an informal meeting with the Earl of Shaftesbury that: 'they [the British public] were now satisfied that the chances of negro emancipation were much better' if the Confederacy was established as an independent nation. He also reported, however, that Shaftesbury had in turn encouraged Slidell to pressure the Confederate government to promise future emancipation. Over the summer of 1862 as the federal armies struggled on and the war continued with no tangible moral footing from British perspective, a level of confidence existed in the Confederate lobby. This confidence was typified by James Mason's assertion that within Britain 'the educated and enlightened classes are in full sympathy with us, and are becoming impatient at the supineness of the Government.' [286]

Emancipation, Sept. 1862-Jan. 1863

As it was, Mason's confidence in British opinion was misplaced and despite the hopes of the Earl of Shaftesbury it was Abraham Lincoln rather than Jefferson Davis who took action against slavery by issuing the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on the 22nd September. News of Lincoln's momentous decision could only be transmitted by ship across the Atlantic meaning a delay before the British public became aware of it. This delay presents something of a riddle when it comes to understanding one of the key moments of the Anglo-American relationship during the Civil War, William E. Gladstone's Newcastle speech. The Chancellor gave his speech on the 7th October 1862, the same day that Lincoln's Proclamation was announced in the British press. Gladstone's diary (which it must be said rarely provides much in the way of detail) makes no note of him having read about Lincoln's decision in the newspapers prior to giving his address. Yet, it is unlikely he would have been ignorant of such a significant development in the conflict. Regardless of what Gladstone knew or did not know

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[286] Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume Two*, 18; Brauer, 'British Mediation and the American Civil War', 49; Speech of W.S Lindsay to the House of Commons, 18th July 1862; *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 21st June 1862; Slidell to Benjamin, 29th September 1862; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis Volume Two;* Mason to Benjamin, 23rd June 1862, Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Jefferson Davis Volume Two.*

at the time, his speech was unquestionably inflammatory even though it dealt with a variety of topics, and it was only as he neared his conclusion that Gladstone actually broached the subject of the Civil War.[287]

The Chancellor approached the war from a very practical standpoint, discussing the impact of events in the United States on the cotton industry in Britain before engaging with the issues at stake in the conflict more broadly. While Gladstone spoke from the centre of government it is worth noting the significance of the cotton argument in pro-Confederate propaganda. When James Spence reappeared in print again in 1862 he supplemented the idea that Britain and the Confederacy were culturally analogous with a deeply practical explanation for why the South had a pro-British outlook based on cotton; 'we are their best customers [in terms of cotton exports], not their competitors; we have no adjoining province that tempts their desires; they regard our aristocratic institutions with admiration not hatred.' Spence conceded that he could 'well understand the argument of those who think that it is particularly to be desired in the interests of the negro race that the American Union should be reconstituted,' but questioned their judgment since, as far as he was concerned, the constitution prevented coherent anti-slavery action. For essentially the same reasons given by Spence here and Roebuck earlier, Gladstone, despite no affiliation with the pro-Confederate lobby in an official sense, subscribed to the point of view that slavery would be easier to abolish gradually after the Confederacy had been accepted as a nation within his Newcastle speech. The conclusion to his thoughts on America summed up his pragmatic interpretation of the conflict:

We may have our own opinions about slavery- we may be for the South or against the South, but there is no doubt, I think, about this- Jefferson Davis and the other leaders of the South have made an army-

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[287] For the decision to pass the proclamation within the context of American politics and the reaction to it across the United States see McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 357,489, 502-505, 510, 545, 557-562, 567; *Morning Post*, 9th Oct 1862.

they are making, it appears, a navy- and they have made what is more than either- they have made a nation.'[288]

This final sentiment was, according to the *Morning Post's* description, received with 'enthusiastic cheering which was prolonged for some time.'[289] Members of the SIA and politicians like Lindsay, Roebuck and Beresford-Hope may have been southern sympathisers as a consequence of a deep-seated commitment to the Confederate cause and in a sense this was different from the pragmatic and popular pro-southernism (one is tempted to say anti-Federalism) as represented by Gladstone at Newcastle. Even so, the vocabulary of both was grounded in the tropes of pre-war sectionalism and anti-Americanism and consequently intersected at many points.

The reactions to Gladstone's speech were of a type that would be have been anticipated with figures such as Benjamin Moran expressing genuine concern that the speech might be the pre-cursor to official Confederate recognition. In truth, Moran was far from encouraged by the British response to the Emancipation Proclamation itself, describing its reception in Britain as being characterized by laughter and jeers and contending that 'the London newspapers try to argue away Mr. Lincoln's emancipation project.' This reaction added to Moran's belief that the British, despite their protestations, had little commitment to emancipation. This was a view further reinforced when Moran met Jefferson Davis's former slave and coach driver Andrew Jackson, who claimed to have found the English either hypocrites or dupes for their sympathy with the South. On Gladstone's speech specifically,

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[288] *Morning Post*, 9th Oct 1862; Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume Two*, 47; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 19; James Spence, *On the Recognition of the Southern Confederacy* (London: Richard Bentley, 1862), 14, 38; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 30. For the arguments for and against 'King Cotton theory' see Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*; Ellison, *Support of Secession;* Campbell, *English Public Opinion*; Crawford, *Anglo-American Crisis*; Foner, *British Labor and the Confederacy*; Jones, *Blue and Grey Diplomacy*; Kinser, *The American Civil War in the Shaping of British Democracy*; Myers, *Caution and Cooperation*; Brauer 'British Mediation and the American Civil War'; Brook 'Confederate Sympathies in North-East; Claussen, 'Peace Factors'; Gentry 'Confederate Success in Europe'; Hall 'The Liverpool Cotton Market'; Harrison 'British Labour and the Confederacy'; Hernon 'British Sympathies'; Lebergott 'Through the Blockade'; Logan 'India: Britain's Substitute for American Cotton'; Maynard 'Civil War Care'; Park 'The English Workingmen'; Sadie Daniel St Clair 'Slavery as a Diplomatic Factor in Anglo-American Relations During the Civil War' *Journal of Negro History* 30.3 (July 1945), 260-275.
[289] *Morning Post*, 9th Oct 1862.

Moran found it particularly galling that the Chancellor had failed even to note the Emancipation Proclamation: 'Mr. Gladstone has been making a speech at Newcastle at which he stated, amid loud cheers, that Jeff. Davis had made a nation of the South, but said not a word about Mr. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.' Gladstone's speech was, in many ways, the high point of pro-Confederate opinion in Britain, certainly in terms of the public pronouncements of political figures, yet it would be wrong to claim that Gladstone, in taking the position he did, was advocating slavery. It was simply that he failed to see the war as one for abolition and even though he subsequently regretted his actions they are indicative of the complexity of American sectionalism during the Civil War from a British view point.[290]

When it came to the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation itself, various concerns existed in Britain about its effects. *The Times* journalist George Wingrove Cooke raised questions about the viability of the measure on a number of fronts. On racial grounds, he suggested that it might lead to a violent uprising, and even if this did not occur, a lack of discipline among former slaves would mean that they were not able to operate in a free labour system, one of the central point's made by Carlyle in his 1849 *Occasional Discourse*, itself a hangover from the British experience of West Indian Emancipation. The Proclamation was frequently characterized as a cynical war move intended to undermine the Confederacy, something which, to the British, smacked of desperation. Crucially, descriptions which classed Lincoln's act in this negative way bore little relation to an individual's perspective on slavery. For example, the eminent Leeds industrialist and abolitionist Wilson Armistead described it as a 'hostile movement against the insurgent,' rather than a 'declaration against slavery.' Unsurprisingly this cynical manner of presenting the act was embraced wholeheartedly by the *Index* which added its own embellishments in the spectre of a servile uprising. The image of revolt, however, also permeated the mainstream with both Earl

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[290] *Diary of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 9th Oct 1862, 16th Oct 1862; *Diary of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 6th Oct 1862, 8th Oct 1862, 8th Nov 1862; E.D Steele, *Palmerston and Liberalism 1855-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Robert L. Reid (ed.), 'William E. Gladstone's "Insincere Neutrality" during the Civil War' *Civil War History* 15 (Dec 1969), 293-307, 294.

Russell and Richard Cobden expressing similar reservations. *The Times* characterized the final act itself, coming as it did on the heels of the Union's military defeat at Fredericksburg (11-15th December 1862), in distinctly negative terms, while the *Economist* presented it as an attempt to encourage Confederate soldiers to return home and defend their property.[291] As James Mason noted 'even the Emancipation Proclamation, which it is believed was issued under the promptings of their Minister Adams, as the means of warding off recognition, had little other effect than to disappoint the Anti-slavery party here, and met with general contempt and derision.'[292] Even positive action on the part of the Lincoln government against slavery was evidently not enough to alter British opinion. This is not surprising given the decades' worth of literature from the likes of James Silk Buckingham, Charles Dickens and William Chambers which had characterized American abolition as weak and not a significant factor in sectional relations leading to a level of suspicion in response to emancipation.

While determining the extent of Gladstone's knowledge of the Emancipation Proclamation at the time of his Newcastle speech may not be possible, the influence of Lincoln's decision on British interpretations of the war was ultimately profound. In a public lecture given on the 20th of October 1862 and subsequently printed as a pamphlet, the pro-Union advocate and theologian Newman Hall placed slavery at the heart of the southern cause for war in his assertion that 'the South seceded and took up arms in order to preserve and extend slavery' while he noted that although 'the immediate object of the North is the suppression of the rebellion and the preservation of the Union. . .resistance to slavery is the real cause of the war.' While Hall contended that the motivation for the South had always been to preserve slavery he maintained that the Republican party had always intended to end the system, something which the government was doing as part of a gradual progression in

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[291] *The Times*, 7th Oct 1862; St. Clair 'Slavery as a Diplomatic Factor', 268; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 108. For more on Wilson Armistead see Temperley, *British Antislavery 1833-1870*, 237-238, 245-247; *Index*, 9th Oct 1862, 16th Oct 1862; Campbell, *English Public Opinion*, 131; Christopher Ewan 'The Emancipation Proclamation and British Public Opinion', *Historian* 1 (March 2005), 1-19,15-16.
[292] Mason to Benjamin, 7th Nov 1862 in Virginia Mason (ed.), *The Public Life and Diplomatic Correspondence of James M. Mason with Some Personal History* (New York & Washington: The Neale Publishing Company, 1906).

which 'slavery has been formally forbidden in all the Territories of the Union. Slavery has been abolished in the District of Columbia. . .a treaty has been entered into with Great Britain for the more effectual suppression of the Slave trade.' While Hall might have claimed all of these for feathers in the Union cap before October, it was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation which gave the most credibility to his argument at this point in the war. Even so, Hall felt the need to defend Lincoln from a number of accusations.[293]

The first question which he identified being asked by critics of the act was why Lincoln had not moved sooner if the cause of slavery had been at the heart of the war (a question pro-Confederate's had been asking since the beginning of the conflict). Hall answered 'that President Lincoln was restrained by the laws he was sworn to administer, from interfering with the domestic institutions of the several States. The most he [could] do [was] to offer compensation.' This emphasis on the legal impediments which stood in the way of emancipation had their own pre-war roots in the texts of those such as Frederick Marryat, Joseph Sturge, George Combe and James Johnston who had recognized the inability of the Federal Government to interfere in such matters. Hall, however, also contended that 'in quelling a rebellion he [Lincoln] may use whatever means become necessary.' It was only as a measure of war that Lincoln was able to offer Emancipation and as Hall described it:

Feeling strongly, but not too strongly, the monstrous wickedness of slavery, and not experiencing the difficulties of Mr. Lincoln's position, it is natural we should think had we his power, we would at the first have declared slavery to be sinful, and fought against it on the highest and holiest ground. Had the North done this they would at once have received the sympathy of the friends of freedom throughout the world. But the abolitionists of America who wished to do this, were a minority and had not the power. It was surely better to take instalments of liberty than to get nothing.[294]

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[293] Newman Hall, *The American War: A Lecture Delivered in London 20th October 1862* (New York: Anson, D.F Randolph, 1862), 23-25, 27-29. The treaty being referred to here was signed between Lyons on Seward on 7th April 1862 see Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War Volume One*, 275.
[294] Hall, *The American War,* 23-25, 27-29.

Now that positive action against slavery was being taken by the Lincoln government pro-northerners in Britain like Hall had an identifiable moral cause around which to build their arguments.

This commitment to abolition on the part of the North was juxtaposed to the apparent determination in the Confederacy to defend slavery, with Stephens's 'cornerstone speech' used by Hall as evidence of this. Even as he emphasized the commitment to abolition on the part of the Union, however, he was perfectly prepared to concede ground when it came to an acknowledgement of the bad treatment of free blacks in the North as described before the war by Thomas Brothers, Charles Lyell and Marshall Hall among others. He stated that 'we lament that the negro, though free in the North, is deprived of the rights of citizenship, and is often treated, even when learned and refined, as socially inferior to the white man,' but also rhetorically asked 'are those Northern negroes themselves willing to go South? Do fugitive slaves ever voluntarily return?' For Hall these questions could be answered 'no' and answering them allowed him to deal with another of the ingrained tropes which had been appropriated for Confederate propaganda in Britain, the idea that British industrial workers were treated little better than southern slaves. Hall rejected this maintaining that 'it would be possible to convey a very horrible but false notion of our social system. But these offences are opposed to and punished by the law of England: the cruelties of slavery are protected by the law of the South.' In a final flourish Hall invoked the names of some of the figures integral to the abolition movement in Britain- Clarkson, Wilberforce and Buxton- in an attempt to reassert the anti-slavery credentials of the nation, describing it as somewhere in which 'every grain of sand. . .testifies to its abhorrence of slavery.'[295] As Nicholas Edsall noted in his biography of Richard Cobden, the move to an emancipation platform during the Civil War was essential in changing the perspective of many liberals on the conflict as it 'provided precisely

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[295] Ibid., 30, 37-38, 41-42, 46.

that distinction in principle between North and South that was most likely to rouse the moral fervor of the English middle class.'[296]

In two letters sent by James Mason to Judah P. Benjamin it is possible to get an indication of the strength of anti-slavery feeling in Britain in the final months of 1862. This feeling was encapsulated in the deteriorating relationship between James Spence and the Confederate commissioners, as Spence flatly refused to repudiate the cause of abolition as a long-term aim for the South despite the shifting ground of the war. On the 4th of November, Mason reported a dinner with Lord Donoughmore in which it was emphasized to the southerner the importance of the Confederacy taking some sort of action towards abolition and the apparent significance attached to this up to the highest levels of the British government. Only three days later, however, another letter from Mason to Benjamin discussed the cool reaction of the British public to Lincoln's Proclamation.[297] It seems reasonable to conclude that in the wake of preliminary emancipation, even while the terms of the Civil War debate were changing, and changing in an absolutely fundamental way, pre-existing images of American abolition continued to undermine Lincoln in British eyes. If Mason was right it might still have possible, had action been taken by Jefferson Davis against slavery, to have stoked a popular reaction in favour of the South among the British.[298]

While Newman Hall's speech provides a valuable indication of the changes to the debate which occurred in the wake of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, it would be incorrect to assume that Confederate support simply evaporated after October 1862, or even that pro-Confederates abandoned the claim that the North had no intention of abolishing slavery. A memorandum penned by Gladstone for a cabinet meeting on the 25th October

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[296] Edsall, *Richard Cobden,* 388-389.

[297] Mason to Benjamin, 4th Nov 1862; Mason to Benjamin, 7th Nov 1862, both in Mason (ed.), *The Public Life and Diplomatic Correspondence*.

[298] Near the end of the war the Confederate government did consider offering abolition in return for recognition from Britain. On the 27th December 1864 Jefferson Davis instructed Duncan F. Kenner to go to London and offer Lord Palmerston this deal. Kenner's hopes were disappointed after his eventually meeting on the 14th March 1865, and in truth the perception was that this was a desperate measure by a nation on the brink of collapse see Foreman, *World on Fire*, 731-732, 748-749; Jones, *Blue and Grey*, 318-319; Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 184-186; Crook, *The North, the South,* 356-359.

1862 attests to the continuing ambiguity during this period on the subject of the war. The Chancellor expressed concern in this memorandum that 'the people of England are being rapidly drawn into Southern sympathies,' despite it being 'seriously tainted with slavery.' He also saw, among other things, the conduct of Benjamin Butler in New Orleans as being detrimental to the Union's image in Britain while at the same time timidly speculating that the Confederacy may well abolish slavery after independence under moral pressure from Britain, just as William Gregory had claimed in his motion earlier in the conflict. From a very different political perspective but offering similar evidence, the popular radical *Bee-Hive* newspaper continued to claim that Lincoln's decision was little more than political and military opportunism through to the end of the year.[299] Gladstone's memorandum was as representative as Mason's letters of the continued ambiguity of this period in which many pre-emancipation images (themselves indebted to pre-war tradition) were in the process of revision to reflect the new realities of the war.

The Emancipation Proclamation was such a significant and headline-grabbing act that the pro-Confederate lobby in Britain could not simply ignore it. The pages of Henry Hotze's *Index* newspaper presented a response which placed an emphasis on the apparent hypocrisy of the decision, noting in an editorial entitled 'the English View of Federal Abolitionism' that the act only offered abolition in the rebel states, excluding the slave states loyal to the Union from its provisions. In addition to this the same article attacked what was termed the extremism of New England, embodied by Harriet Beecher Stowe, who according to this editorial exhibited 'fanatical spitefulness.' Furthermore the author of the article explained that 'we know that if the South were to emancipate the slaves to-morrow the thirst of the clergy of New England for Southern blood would not be assuaged.' The central thrust of this piece was a continued attempt on the part of the pro-Confederate lobby in Britain to dissociate the

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[299] Memorandum (Secret) by Mr. Gladstone on the War in America- Printed for the Use of the Cabinet on 25th Oct 1862 in Philip Guedalla (ed.), *Gladstone and Palmerston being the Correspondence of Lord Palmerston with Mr. Gladstone 1851-1865* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1928); Logan, 'The *Bee-Hive* Newspaper', 344-345.

cause of abolition (on a moral British model) from the Union cause.[300] This article is invaluable as it provides a glimpse of the basic disconnect between southerners in Britain like Mason or Hotze and the native pro-southern lobby, something which took on more prominence after emancipation. For the Alabamian, Hotze the cause of abolitionism and the values associated with New England were distinctly negative aspects of the American Union, while for the British it was the cynical politics and racial hypocrisy of New York which had sat at the heart of anti-northern discourse. Once abolition became an explicit aim of the war, however, these two different notions became antithetical and consequently the identity of the American Union and the Confederacy began an irreversible change. This was something illustrated in the loss of coherence in the later propaganda produced by British and southern pro-Confederates.

On the final day of 1862, a large meeting was held Manchester's Free Trade Hall to coincide with the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation which, for all practical purposes, ended both a distinctive phase in British understanding of American sectionalism and, after which, any political involvement in the Civil War by the British government was highly unlikely. Of course, in the same way that the preliminary proclamation had failed to destroy the southern cause in Britain, many still supported the Confederacy through to the end of the war. Even veteran abolitionists including Charles Buxton and Lord Brougham vocally expressed their concerns over Lincoln's act, with the latter telling an audience in Edinburgh that it had been passed 'not for the sake of emancipating the slaves, but for the sake of beating the whites.' *Punch* expressed a similar sentiment in February 1863, while Benjamin Moran continued to complain about the treatment of emancipation in the British press into the New Year.[301] As indications of the prevailing ambiguity of mainstream opinion these observations demand the recognition that pro-Southern sentiment in Britain did not

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[300] *Index*, 22nd January 1863.
[301] Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 81; Lorimer, 'The Role of Anti-Slavery' 413-414; Brougham quoted in Goldman 'A Total Misconception', 114; Maurer '*Punch* on Slavery', 19; *Journal of Benjamin Moran*, 13th Jan 1863.

simply disappear on the 1ˢᵗ January 1863. Nonetheless, a fundamental change did take place

from this date and a new phase of British engagement with American sectionalism began.

With hindsight it seems obvious that by 1863 any chance of Confederate recognition

by the British government had evaporated. Even though historians such as Phillip Myers,

Duncan Andrew Campbell and R.J. M. Blackett have offered their own particular

interpretation of the reasons for this, all would agree that slavery was at the heart of the shift.

In truth, few in the British political sphere could continue to push the cause of the South in a

conflict which had taken on the aspect of a war against slavery, an issue which, now that it

was explicit, could be used to undermine the various other claims made to a positive

Confederate identity. This change in perceptions was attested to, at least in part, by the

changes in the editorial stance of the working class *Bee-Hive* newspaper which performed an

about turn and came out publically in favour of the Union cause despite two years of

publishing pro-Confederate articles. The correspondence of key figures during the early

months of 1863 further demonstrates this change in attitude. Within America itself, Charles

Sumner confirmed to the Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles that 'any alliance with slavery

will be so unpopular with the English people as to restrain the Government,' while from Britain

both Charles Francis and Henry Adams waxed lyrical about the positive consequences of the

Emancipation Proclamation. Henry Adams described on the 30ᵗʰ January 1863 how 'the anti-

slavery feeling of the country is coming out stronger' and that 'every allusion to the South was

followed by groaning, hisses and howls' as well as describing how 'the Emancipation

Proclamation has done more for us here than all our former victories and all our diplomacy. It

is creating an almost convulsive reaction in our favor.' Charles Francis Adams echoed this

describing how 'the President's proclamation is doing much for us on this side. . .the middle

classes generally see and comprehend the existence of a moral question apart from all

political disquisitions' while he later contended that 'the anti-slavery feeling has been

astonishingly revived by the President's proclamation.' Even the usually cynical Moran noted

in his diary on 22ⁿᵈ January that 'the President's Proclamation continues to be productive of

much good here. People now see that slavery is at the bottom of this war, and that the Government is fighting for freedom.' Even while recognizing the beginning of this change it would be wrong to conclude that the shift was absolute and many in the public arena continued to be ambivalent towards Lincoln's government while pro-Confederates in Britain like Roebuck, Gregory, Beresford-Hope and Spence retained their faith well past the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Even these relationships, however, began to break down, possibly most significantly in the case of the Confederacy's most effective propagandists, James Spence. His case is particularly informative since he lost his position in the southern lobby and broke with Henry Hotze precisely because he refused to subscribe to an openly pro-slavery position, just at the time that Hotze and his *Index* began an editorial offensive against the Union by placing an emphasis on ideas of racial science to undermine the positive reaction to emancipation. Perhaps the most telling moment of all for the Confederate cause in Britain, and the southern section as it had been understood, came in January 1863 when Henry Hotze finally conceded that 'a changing wind was becoming apparent in public feeling.' This was a change that neither Hotze nor anyone else had the power to resist and even if it did not necessarily mean a change in outcome for the Civil War, it effectively re-wrote thirty years' worth of Anglo-American discourse which had given the British public a particular understanding of sectional and national identity in the United States.[302] After Gladstone's Newcastle speech popular pro-Confederate thought in Britain began to decline, and from that point the tide turned in favour of the North in a slow but sure process. With the Emancipation Proclamation, the pro-Confederates had a central prop of their argument knocked away and while they could continue to advocate the cause of the South through pre-war notions of politics and ethnicity,

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[302] Oates 'Henry Hotze', 151-152, 145-146; Burnett, *Henry Hotze*, 26; Myers, *Caution and Cooperation*, 6; Campbell, *Unlikely Allies*, 158, 160; Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 32; Lorimer, 'The Role of Anti-Slavery', 420; Logan 'The *Bee-Hive* Newspaper', 347; Gideon Welles, 7th April 1863 in Howard K. Beale (ed.), *Diary of Gideon Welles: Secretary of the Navy Under Lincoln and Johnson Volume One* (New York: John WW Norton and Company, 1960); Henry Adams to C F Adams Jr, 30th Jan 1863; Henry Adams to C F Adams Jr, 23rd Jan 1863; C F Adams to C F Adams Jr, 27th Feb 1863; *Journal of Benjamin Moran Volume Two*, 22nd Jan 1863 all in Ford (ed.), *Cycle of Adams Letters Volume One.*

once the American Civil War had become a battle for active abolition these attempts came up against a manifestation of what R.J.M. Blackett described in the pre-war period as an 'anti-slavery wall.' All of which meant that the complexities of the pre-war South were eroded to be replaced with a simple slavery vs freedom dichotomy, a choice which, for most of the British population was no choice at all.

Epilogue: Britain and the 'United' States?

Just as the American Civil War ground on for over two years after Abraham Lincoln's

Emancipation Proclamation, so too in Britain, both pro-Confederate activists and popular

intellectuals continued to note the sectional divisions within the United States, sometimes

deploying language reminiscent of the pre-1863 era.[303] This post-1863 transitional period in

British ideas about American sectionalism cries out for further study, since it saw the

development of what was essentially a new period in Anglo-American identities. One of the

key reference points for British debates about sectionalism; that of slavery, had been

removed almost entirely from the discussion. Emancipation gave avowed pro-Unionists a

trump card to play to which would alter almost any debate in their favour. As John Bright

shrewdly observed in his response to a motion brought by John Arthur Roebuck for the

recognition of the Confederacy in June 1863 'I have not heard a word to-night of another

question. . .the [Emancipation] Proclamation of the President of the United States.' While at a

speech in Manchester a traveller recently returned from the United States, Mason Jones,

informed his audience in a very telling manner that 'the cause of the war was not

geographical position, difference of race, state rights, or tariffs, but wholly and solely slavery.'

What was surely more significant as far as his audience was concerned was that Jones could

point specifically to the Emancipation Proclamation as evidence of this describing the act as

'a veritable thunderbolt, forged in the armoury of eternal justice, and hurled from the hands of

Abraham Lincoln at the twin monster of slavery and rebellion.' As two southerners in Britain,

James Mason and Henry Hotze observed, the British would simply not tolerate being on the

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[303] Catherine C. *Hopley Life in the South from the Commencement of the War: Being a Social History of those who took part in the Battles, from a Personal Acquaintance with them in their own Homes, from the Spring of 1860 to August 1862* [Two Volumes] (1974 repr. London: Chapman & Hall, 1863); George Alfred Lawrence *Border and Bastille* (Leipzig, Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1863); Edward Dicey *Six Months in the Federal States* [Two Volumes] (London & Cambridge: MacMillan, 1863); Arthur James Lyon Fremantle *Three Months in the Southern States April-June 1863* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1863); A.J.B Beresford-Hope *The Social and Political Bearings of the American Disruption* (London: William Ridgway, 1863); Marquess of Lothian *The Confederate Secession* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1864); *Manchester Times*, 6th Feb 1864.

side of a nation which appeared to be actively fighting for the cause of slavery against abolition. [304]

As this thesis has demonstrated, the ideas which tended to inform British debates about the American Civil War, at least until the Emancipation Proclamation, were rooted in a rich tradition of British cultural commentary on the United States and on American sectionalism specifically which stretched back decades. The sectional elements of this commentary can be traced back to at least 1832 and the publication of Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. From then until the outbreak of the Civil War the United States was understood by most educated Britons as being defined by a set of complex interactions between national and sectional forces. Overarching most of the discourse on the United States produced by intellectuals during the period was the subject of slavery; yet the levels of complexity which characterized it have frequently been ignored by scholars of the Anglo-American connection in the nineteenth century. Crucial to British images about the free and slave states were ideas of slavery in the abstract and slavery in practice in the South. Few Britons questioned that, from a moral point of view, slavery was wrong; what is striking though is the remarkable level of frequency with which those who made this claim described slavery in the southern states of America as being mitigated, typically by a strong paternal connection between the planter and slave and in some cases positively compared the institution to the condition to the British industrial working classes. Even though the British appreciated the division between the legally free and slave states, it was rare that a British commentator constructed a difference between the two sections in terms which were particularly complimentary the North. Often, the free states were noted for their apparently shocking treatment of black citizens, which, to some observers, seemed worse than the condition of those enslaved in the South. Abolition was similarly rarely seen as a matter involving a North/South division and if it was ever given a particular regional accent this

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[304] *Speech in the House of Commons, on Mr. Roebuck's Motion for Recognition of the Southern Confederacy, June 30, 1863.*

equated it with New England rather than the free states as a whole. As a result, the prevailing pre-war attitude towards the relationship between the United States and slavery in Britain involved both a broad understanding of distinctions between free and slave states while at the same time eschewing a simple moral division which gave the North the status of an abolitionist section.

Many of these same British commentators had found themselves, while in the United States, confronted by a nation which, despite its roots as a British colony, was alien to them in many ways. This sense of both a cultural and ethnic otherness in the United States was, however, not always conveyed in exclusively national terms. Rather, authors projected to the British reading public a distinctive geography of the United States thereby creating the image of an ethnically and culturally British South, patterned primarily on the image of the Cavalier, and an ethnically and culturally British New England, distinctive from the South due to its apparent Puritan heritage. New York and (to a lesser extent) Pennsylvania were presented in stark contrast to the South, being characterized as ethnically and culturally heterogeneous, with large Irish and Dutch populations. Not only did this create clear divisions within the nation which contributed to the idea of secession being natural during the Civil War, but negative and positive associations came with these divisions. The position of the Irish in this regard was key due to the frequent associations of this group with negative imagery for the British of the period. Against a backdrop of Anglophobic national political policy and rhetoric coming from the United States, the Irish influence and the city of New York came to be integral in explaining apparently anti-British American ideas and policies. During the Civil War this division was manifested in the denigration of the cause of the North as being that of New York and consequently something non-British (of course this often meant conveniently overlooking the Anglophile heritage of New England) in contrast to the British Cavalier classes of the South. Certain events during the war itself gave additional strength to this mythology, particularly the negative associations which came with New York politician and apparently rabid Anglophobe, William H. Seward and the celebratory mood of the New York

press after the capture of the *Trent*. It was a perfectly understandable decision for pro-Confederates in Britain then to explicitly associate the cause of the Union during the Civil War with the ideas about the cultural and ethnic complexion of New York which had so characterized popular pre-war discourse.

It was similarly New York which dominated British rhetoric on another key feature of British engagement with sectionalism; politics. There was a pre-war awareness among the British population of both the politics of American sectionalism, and the development of a sectionalizable vocabulary about the American nation typified by the rough and tumble mobocracy of New York City. The image of the mob as a key figure in American political life was a subject of frequent comment for the British and even if before the war many mobs were identified in the South, during the conflict (often drawing on the image of the Irish in New York) the mob became an illustration of the flaws of the northern, as opposed to the national, political system. In contrast a tradition which had previously characterized the South as possessing an 'aristocratic' political system came to be increasingly exaggerated. A similar course was identifiable with regard to the image of financial mismanagement and fraud in the United States with a level of historical revision being undertaken in order to render it a peculiarity of the North. Crucial to an understanding of British reactions to the Civil War was the issue of the tariff which, as much as any other topic, had an extensive history of use for sectional differentiation in the published work of prominent intellectuals since the nullification crisis. Not only were attitudes towards tariffs and protective economic policy used to differentiate explicitly between the sections, but with this division came a very clear sympathy with one side over the other. The free-trading British found themselves in harmony with the people of the South on a crucial subject of similar importance to that of slavery. In the same way that the British did not see abolition as a northern cause before the war, the majority *did* see the tariff as a southern one, giving the South something around which to build their identity independent of slave-holding.

This complex discourse of American sectionalism before the Civil War meant that with the outbreak of the conflict there was no sense of a scramble to construct identities for the regions among the British. It is clear that some revision and redefinition took place among advocates for both the South and North as they disseminated propaganda for their chosen side which would have public resonance, sectionalizing negative tropes previously applicable to the United States. At the same time, however, they could exploit an already existing set of ideas which cultural commentators had been building up for the previous thirty years. They did this with enthusiasm and the cause of the South was claimed by its advocates to be that of ethnically British free-traders fighting against the northern mobocracy. This use of extant images and ideas allowed the subversion of the key argument deployed by the most active of the pro-Union commentators in Britain, in particular Bright and Cobden; that the war was a conflict between freedom and slavery. Because of the complex nature of British engagement with sectionalism this clear dichotomy was never dominant in the British mind until 1863. In fact, after the *Trent* and during the summer of 1862, the British government edged towards the recognition of the Confederacy, something which culminated in Gladstone's Newcastle speech, and which would have been unthinkable had the popular perception of the British been that the South fought expressly in favour of slavery.

When the American Civil War finally ended in 1865 it had already been two years since the Confederacy had entertained any real hope of British assistance in its fight against Lincoln's government. Yet, the long-term fall out of the war in Britain continued after its military conclusion. During in the Spring of 1869 through to 1872 complex Anglo-American negotiations took place over the so-called *Alabama* claims, essentially an attempt on the part of northerners to secure compensation from the British government for the damage done by Confederate ships which, as far as the United States government was concerned, had been illegally constructed in British ports. Even though this provided a difficult backdrop, the British seemed to look back to the Civil War during this period and attempt to smooth over some of the complexities which had been so evident in their engagement with it and which attest to

262

the sophisticated understanding of American sectionalism. The *Daily News*, a liberal newspaper which had favoured the Union during the Civil War, noted in December 1869 that during Reconstruction 'the generosity of the North toward the originators and leaders of the late rebellion is a guarantee that nothing will be wanting on their part to heal for ever the old feud between North and South, which arose out of the great and evil anomaly of slavery, and which with slavery is now removed.' Few, even committed liberals, both before and during the war would have agreed with such a simplified assessment of American sectionalism, but this image had contemporary utility. The *Pall Mall Gazette* got nearer to an accurate assessment of British opinion during the war when it contended in the same year that Britain 'did not refuse sympathy to a cause which in America was identified with anti-slavery principles, for the conclusive reason that for the first two years of the war- we suspect that the date might be put still later- the Northern cause was not identified with anti-slavery principles.'[305]

Possibly the most interesting opinion during the new period of Anglo-American relations, at least from the point of view of this thesis is that of William E. Gladstone. From his student days at Oxford to a podium in Newcastle in 1862, Gladstone, this seminal statesman of the Victorian era, has been an ever present feature and it is therefore fitting that he should close the study. On the 11th January 1869 the *Liverpool Mercury* reported a speech given by Gladstone during which he apparently confessed that his support for the Confederacy had been 'wrong,' but contended he had been misled by the belief that 'the abolition of slavery would surely be effected by the independent legislation of the Southern States.'[306] Casting a cynical eye across the speech it might seem that this was simply Gladstone, the consummate politician engaging in some 'damage control.' If he, however, can be considered representative of the educated population as a whole, his statement contains more than a kernel of truth. From a British point of view the American Civil War was a multifaceted conflict and any attempt to understand British opinion without recognizing this level of complexity

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[305] Sexton, *Debtor Diplomacy*, 193-229; *Daily News,* 18th Dec 1869; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 13th May 1869.
[306] *Liverpool Mercury*, 11th Jan 1869.

risks a significant misunderstanding of contemporary perspective. When British figures

commented on the Civil War their ideas were not presented to a British population which had

no knowledge of American sectionalism and could only engage with the war in simplified

terms. Pre-war commentators had created an awareness of the relevant issues and

developed a vocabulary which was utilized by the British during the conflict. For this reason,

to understand the views of Palmerston, Roebuck, Bright or Russell, not to mention Gladstone

himself and the general public more broadly during the Civil War, demands an appreciation of

the power of Sir Charles Lyell's account of feudal Georgia planters, or Charles Dickens's

fictional New York, or *Blackwood's Magazine's* analysis of the aristocratic politics of Virginia.

These, and countless other works, fostered an understanding of 'America' for the British

which informed how they engaged with the events of the Civil War and ultimately help explain

why the British chose the courses they did during the conflict.

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