

ple. This feeling rose almost to the point of anguish, though already, as those who were in the United States at the time testify, the Americans were ascribing the war to the machinations of Great Britain. The feeling against slavery and its partisans was also strong, and general. England was pledged to the Anti-slavery cause by her avowed principles, by her most cherished memories, by a great expenditure not only of treasure but of blood. If the aristocratic party at heart viewed the disruption of the great democratic power with not unnatural complacency, it did not venture openly to defy the traditional sentiment of the nation; and even the *Times* wrote against the slave-owners. But the avowal of the Northern Government that the war was not directed against slavery, the language of the American press, the publication by the American Government of the offensive despatch of Mr. Cassius Clay, the heroic energy and valour displayed by the South, the apparent want during the early part of the struggle of similar qualities on the side of the North, the Trent affair, the wearisome protraction of the conflict, and a growing impatience of the ruinous suspension of British industry—these circumstances, combined with the skilful propagandism of the South, wrought in course of time a partial change. The aristocratic party no longer feared to avow their political sympathy with the Southern aristocracy, and they were joined by a large commercial party which had its centre in the great cotton port.

On the other hand the popular party continued to manifest its unwavering and ardent sympathy with the North. It held public meetings in all the great cities; it waged an incessant war of opinion through the press; and in spite of a limited franchise, and an unreformed representation, it was strong enough, not only to prevent Great Britain from lending aid to the Confederates, but to prevent any motion for the recognition of the Confederacy from being even put to the vote

in the House of Commons. Nor were there any adherents of the Northern cause more staunch than the mechanics, whose bread was taken from their mouths and whose prospects were involved in the deepest gloom by the prolongation of the war. That these things are not forgotten by the people of the United States, appears from the use which they now make of the speeches of their old English friends and allies in framing their indictments against England.

Between the two parties whose sympathies were pronounced, there was a great mass which could scarcely be said to sympathize with either; but which, so far as it was swayed at all, was swayed partly by a vague feeling in favour of the weaker side, partly by the desire that the war might come to an end, and that the cotton trade might be restored. The feeling of aversion to a bloody, ruinous and apparently hopeless conflict largely prevailed, apart from any other sentiment, and was perfectly distinguishable from sympathy with slavery or with the South, though visited by the Americans with the same reprobation.

What the personal feelings of the several members of the British Government were, is not really known. It is confidently asserted that Lord Palmerston was friendly to the slave-owners; yet he had more than once embroiled England with foreign powers by his almost fanatical hostility to the slave trade. The Duke of Argyll and Mr. Milner Gibson were, it may safely be said, friendly to the North; and the Duke of Newcastle, a man singularly steady in love and hatred, retained a very warm recollection of the hospitable reception which he had met with in the States when he visited them in company with the Prince of Wales. Collectively, however, the Government took up and maintained to the end a position of neutrality. It refused to recognize the South. It refused to receive the Southern envoys. Even social courtesy was withheld from them by the Prime Minister, lest it should seem