

the governed, and to that avowed ex-President Adams had appealed as his justification for presenting a petition from some citizens of Massachusetts for the dissolution of the Union.\* President Lincoln, himself had used language in the early part of his career which reads almost like a vindication of the Southern Revolution. The idea of secession was not unfamiliar even in New England, when New England was groaning under the ascendancy of the Democratic party. These things are mentioned not to prove that secession was right; but to prove that those who thought coercion wrong were not necessarily enemies of mankind or even of the American people.

The new confederation had from the first *de facto* the characteristics of a nation. It had a regular government deriving its power from popular suffrage and completely commanding the obedience of the people throughout the whole of a vast and compact territory. It was perfectly organized for all the purposes of legislation, administration and public justice. It had on foot armaments sufficient to defend its territory, and enforce the respect of foreign powers.

After a vain attempt to effect a reconciliation by offering fresh guarantees to slavery,† the Northern Confederation proceeded to subjugate the Southern by force of arms. Its object in doing so was to restore the Union, in other words to recover lost territory and power. With the same object George III had attempted to subjugate the seceding colonies; but George III had not recognized the dependence of government on the will of the governed. With a small minority the desire to destroy slavery was from the first the ruling motive. But on behalf of the Government such a motive was distinctly disclaimed by Mr. Seward, who instructed his representative in England to

state that slavery was in no way threatened, and to reject any sympathy tendered on anti-slavery grounds. The recovery of lost territory and power was a natural object, and perhaps as the world goes not immoral; but it was not one which could be expected to excite the unanimous and enthusiastic sympathy of the human race, or in favour of which other nations could be called upon to suspend all ordinary rules of action. Great Britain especially might be excused for regarding it with comparative coolness, as she was warned from the first, with the usual violence of vituperation, by leading organs of American opinion that as soon as the South had been crushed, the victorious arms of the re-united republic would be turned against her American possessions.

The war was waged from the beginning to the end as a regular war between nations. In no single instance did the North venture to treat the Southerners or any of them as rebels. General Butler was lauded for having "hanged a rebel" at New Orleans; but the man in question was hanged, not for rebellion, but under the laws of war, for rising against the garrison after the surrender of the city. That the Southerners were mere rebels was a fiction which derived some colour from the circumstance of Secession and which was very naturally cherished at the North; but the conduct of foreign powers was necessarily regulated, and must in reason be judged, by facts and not by fictions. The trophies of which the North is full are not trophies of a victory over an insurrection; they are trophies of a conquest.

On the continent of Europe the war excited comparatively little interest. But Great Britain was so intimately connected by origin, language and commercial ties with the United States that the conflict may be said to have morally extended to her shores. The first feeling among the British was that of alarm at the impending ruin of the cotton trade, and with it of the industry which supported millions of the peo-

\*Congressional Globe, vol. II: p. 168.

†See the resolutions of Congress and those of the House of Representatives. Feb. 1861.