

tension. They look upon slavery as in itself wrong, and, though, from necessity they tolerate it where it exists and within its present limits they regard the extension of it as abominable. They cannot, therefore, as a matter of principle, allow themselves to be parties to such extension, or to aid or to second it in any way, direct or indirect, tacit or express. But they are parties to this extension if this extension goes on within the limits and by means of the power of that federation of which they are members. By giving their weight and strength to a Union which carries on such a morally objectionable policy they give their weight and strength to that policy—they allow themselves to be used for the support and extension of a morally bad cause. The support they give is given, indeed, indirectly and through a medium, the medium of the federation and the common and central Government; but, if the extension of slavery is wrong, the indirect support of it is just as wrong as the direct, and the Northern States are just as much substantially committed to what is done by a central power which they support and make what it is as if the same thing were done directly by themselves.

“Such is the present moral dilemma of ‘the North,’ and in this state of the case it is certainly open to ‘the North,’ if it chooses to take such a course, to clear itself of all responsibility in the extension of slavery, and to wash its hands of the guilt of it, by separating from that federation which adopts and carries on this policy. A dissolution of the Union would be one mode of solving this difficulty and getting out of the dilemma. It is open, undoubtedly, to the Northern States to relieve themselves from all participation in this act of the Union by ceasing to belong to the Union. But if ‘the North’ continued its adherence to the Union, we must frankly confess we see no other alternative before it but that of resistance. The extension of slavery must in that case be positively stopped; the Northern conscience can allow a membership of the Union upon this condition alone, and the extension of slavery, it is quite clear, can only be stopped, under existing circumstances, by resistance, and by armed resistance.”

Would to God that the hearts of slave-holders were so touched as themselves to initiate any likely scheme. They have more cause to tremble in the possession of such power as they still hold to, than cause to fear its abandonment. It is their own interest surely to count the cost of persisting in claims of property repudiated by the law of nature, revolting to the sentiments of mankind, and only depending on the forced ignorance and disunion of multitudes of beings possessing some idea of the grievous injustice under which they groan. May that be conceded by a love of right which the exhausted patience of millions of sufferers may dare to vindicate by methods at the thought of which one's blood runs cold !]

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