

PREFACE.

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humanities of life, and, under the allurements of fiction, breathe a humanizing and subduing influence, favorable to the development of the great principles of Christian brotherhood.

The hand of benevolence is everywhere stretched out, searching into abuses, righting wrongs, alleviating distresses, and bringing to the knowledge and sympathies of the world the lowly, the oppressed, and the forgotten.

In this general movement, unhappy Africa at last is remembered; Africa, who began the race of civilization and human progress in the dim, gray dawn of early time, but who, for centuries, has lain bound and bleeding at the foot of civilized and Christianized humanity, imploring compassion in vain.

The heart of the dominant, who have been her conquerors, her hard masters, has at length been turned towards her in mercy; and it has seen how far nobler it is in nations to protect the feeble than to oppress them. Thanks be to God, the world has at last outlived the slave trade.

We add to our brief notice a part of an article in the *London Times*, to show the great success of the work in England; and when that Journal devotes more than three of its columns to a criticism upon a single American book, it may be presumed that the reader will be curious to see its opinion—the more so, that the work under review has acquired such celebrity, and that the subject involved in it is one of the momentous topics of the hour. We give the first part of the article from the *Times* :—

"Twenty thousand copies of this book, according to its title page, are circulating among the American people, but three times as many thousands more have probably issued from the American press since the title page was written. According to the *Boston Traveller*, the authoress has already received from her publishers the sum of \$10,000 as her copyright premium on three months' sales of the work,—we believe the largest sum of money ever received by any author, either American or European, from the sales of a single work in so short a period of time." "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is at every railway bookstall in England, and in every third traveller's hand. The book is a decided hit. It takes its place with "Pickwick," with Louis Napoleon, with the mendicant who suddenly discovers himself heir to £20,000 a-year, and, in fact, with every man whose good fortune it has been to fall asleep Nobody, and to awake in the morning an institution in the land. It is impossible not to feel respect for "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

"The object of the work is revealed in the pictorial frontispiece. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe is an abolitionist, and her book is a vehement and unrestrained argument in favor of her creed. She does not preach a sermon, for men are accustomed to nap and nod under the pulpit: she does not indite a philosophical discourse, for philosophy is exacting, is solicitous for truth, and scorns exaggeration. Nor does the lady condescend to survey her intricate subject in the capacity of a judge, for the judicial seat is fixed high above human passion, and she is in no temper to mount it. With the instinct of her sex, the clever authoress takes the shortest road to her purpose, and strikes at the convictions of her readers by assailing their hearts. She cannot hold the scales of justice with a steady hand, but she has learnt to perfection the craft of the advocate. *Euclid*, she well knows, is no shield for effecting social revolutions, but an impassioned song may set a world in conflagration. Who shall deny to a true woman the use of her true weapons?"

It is scarcely necessary to give in this place and in detail the plot of Mrs. Stowe's striking production. The lady has great skill in the delineation of character; her hand is vigorous and firm, her mastery over human feeling is unquestionable, and her humorous efforts are unimpeachable. We know of no book in which the negro character finds such successful interpretation, and appears so life-like and so fresh. The scenes in which the negroes are represented at their domestic labours or conversing with each other reveal a familiar acquaintance with negro life, and a capacity for displaying it that cannot be mistaken. The slang of "Ethiopian serenaders" for once gives place to thoughts and language racy of the soil, and we need not say how refreshing it is to be separated for a season from the conventional Sambo of the modern Stage.