The Independent Republican.

"FREEDOM AND RIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY AND WRONG."

C. F. READ & H. H. FRAZIER, EDITORS. | MONTROSE, THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 1857. | H. H. FRAZIER, PUBLISHER---VOL 8. NO. 14.

Poet's Corner.

For the Independent Republican.

MY WIFE.

BY REV. T. HEMPSTEAD.

Dear name! first breathed in Paradise,
And warbled down the rosy air,
And wafted through the stainless skies
And up the silver vault, to where
The Heavenly splendors burn and glow
Around the Triune Mystery—
I ne'er, in mortal time, may know
The sweetness that is hid in thee.

On all the hills o'er which the wind
Rolls with its thousand-harping sound
Is not so sweet a cadence shrined,
Is not so rich a music found
As in that single holy name
Of "wife," first breathed by Angels' lips,
Ere they with eyes of golden flame,
Beheld the night of Sin's eclipse,
In tears and pain and blighting dew
Fall cold around the Primal Two.
Dear is the name of "friend" to those
Who sail this bleak, tempestuous sea
Of Human Life, while keenly blows
The gale of black Adversity,
And sweetly up the gulf of years
Returns the holy accent "mother,"
And "sister" calms our childish fears,
And manly is the sound "my brother;"
Yet, yet I know a sound as sweet,
With heavenly music more complete.
And richer than the golden song
Of birds upon the gate of Dawn,
While glancing wings the branches throng,
And June trips with her roses on,
Is that one word, with mystic art
Which binds us to some kindred heart;
O not the lordly shout that swells
From the green hills of earth to heaven,
And in its sweeping triumph, tells
The fetters from a nation riven;
Not marriage bells or fluting breeze
That roves through May's enchanted ground,
Nor music poured o'er moonlit seas,
While misty rocks give back the sound;—
All, all have not a tone to me
So fraught with glorious melody,
So moulded and attuned to be
A link between our souls and Him
Who is the Life, the Truth, the Love,
And round whose throne the listening Worlds
In high, melodious order move.
Dear golden sound! how art thou stained
By hearts corrupt and lips unclean!
The glory from thy soul hath waned—
Oft hath thy snowy vesture been
Trailed in the path of common dust,
And cradled in the arms of lust.

"My wife" hath trembled from the red
And reeking lips of him whose thought
Ne'er soared above the miry bed
Where the dull swine lies down to rot;
And the hoarse libertine hath drunk
In maudlin triumph to that name,
Which in his blighted soul hath sunk
Still deeper the hot bolt of shame.

O wedded Love! O symbol bright,
Of that most holy, deathless tie,
Which links the chosen sons of light
To Him who chose for them to die;
May the whose soul ne'er rose above
The miser's dust, a brute's desire,
Through Love's green paths of myrtle rove,
Or to his pearly heights aspire,
Or breathe the sacred balm that springs
Like incense from his silver wings?
No! let him wear his crown of dust,
His purest love is gilded lust!

My gentle wife, I sometimes fear
That Heaven hath poured too large a good
On one so frail and vile as I,
To feed me thus on Angel's food,
And drench me in the rosy wine
Of love so pure and deep as thine;
And well I know a fearful thing
It is, to win a human heart
Around our own to twine and cling
With strength which only Death can part.
Cheeks I have seen more like the rose,
And forms more delicate to view,
And foreheads more like mountain snows,
And locks that glanced a brighter hue,
And yet, of high or lowly birth,
On all our green and lovely earth,
There's not a lip that shames the rose,
Nor brow, though like the Alpine snows,
And bound with half the diadems
Snatched from the deep, relentless sea—
There's not a form, though locked in gems,
Half, half so beautiful to me
As that dear eye and brow of thine,
Because thy woman's heart is mine.

Afar from thee, Beloved One,
I still thy calm sweet face can see,
And o'er the distance wide and lone,
My thoughts fly yearning back to thee,
Like some lost bird that seeks her nest,
While night is brooding o'er the west.
O, come to me! the woods are sere
On Housatonic's regal hills,
Yet the bright robin's note I hear,
And Spring hath loosed the shouting rills;
Soon, soon the clover-sandaled May
Her check upon the buds will lay,
And every bough and turf shall be
A temple and a shrine to thee,
And bid the gentle stranger hail
To velvet bank and mossy vale.

NEW PRESTON, March, 1857.

"THE LOST SOUL."—Lieut. Herndon of the United States Navy, in his narrative of the exploration of the Valley of the Amazon, gives the following:

"After we had retired to our mats beneath the shed for the night, I asked the Governor if he knew a bird called *El alma perdida*.—He did not know it by that name, and requested a description. I whistled an imitation of its notes, whereupon an old crone, stretched on a mat near us commenced, with animated tones and gestures, a story in the linear language which ran somehow thus:

"An Indian and his wife went out from the village to work their chacs carrying their infant with them. The woman went to the spring to get water, leaving the man in charge of the child, with many cautions to take good care of it. When she arrived at the spring she found it dried up, and went further to look for another. The husband alarmed at her long absence, left the child and went in search. When they returned, the child was gone; and to their repeated cries, as they wandered through the woods in search of it, they could get no response save the wailing cry of this little bird, now heard for the first time, whose wild and wailing cry their anxious and excited imagination syllabled into *pa-pa, ma-ma*, (the present Inichua name of the bird.) I suppose the Spaniards heard this story, and with that religious poetic turn of thought which seems peculiar to them, called the bird *El alma perdida*—"the lost soul."

"The circumstances under which the story was told—the beautiful, still, starlight night—the deep dark forest around—the faint-red glimmering of the fire, flickering upon the old woman's gray hair, and earnest face as she poured forth the guttural tones of the language of a people now passing away—gave it a sufficiently romantic interest to an imaginative man."

☞ With many readers brilliancy of style passes for affluence of thought; they mistake buttercups in the grass for immeasurable gold mines under ground.—*Longfellow.*

Miscellaneous.

THE SALE OF A KINGDOM.

IT was a masquerade in the wood of Ardennes, and the 4 o'clock sun streamed slantingly through the aisles of the great forest, and upon the varied costumes of the temporary inhabitants. Never since the days of Rosalind and Jacques had so motley a crew danced beneath the umbrageous oaks, nor one half so splendid. Fine ladies of the court had thrown aside their hoops and powder, and stepped out in the native dignity of peasant girls, or ascended into a blazing guise of borrowed royalty. Atalantas with buskins and apples, Dianas with crescents and hounds, graces, muses, and dryads, all mingled their gay array with gods and satyrs, Turks and yeomen. The dancers were swinging around like a band of reeling bacchanals among the tree-boles, when one withdrew fatigued, and wandering to a little distance, flung herself on the sward beneath wide-spread branches. Dressed as a sea-nymph, she went by the name of Nathalie, and was by far the loveliest one among all the merry masqueraders; and so doubtless, thought the tall and graceful Apollo, who, with golden curls clustering around his temples and golden arrows slung across his shoulders, joined her.

"It is not," said he, "the first time Nathalie has been seen by her adorer; once or twice before in the evening shade of these woods has Le Norman worshipped her beauty, but never in guise so costly as now.—What spell has come over the maid of Ardennes?"

Nathalie slowly rose, showing in every motion the waving grace of a true sea-nymph, and stood leaning against the tree stem before him; her flowing robe was an iridescent pearly-colored stuff, changing now to the suggestion of a pale blue, now to the soft flesh tint of a shell, and now to a deep watery sheet of sea-green. Slender branches of scarlet coral made a vivid splendor in her dark hair, and hanging from their tips a veil of lace fell down and half-smothered the glow and sparkle of jewels that adorned her. Diamonds flickered with every breath upon her bosom, as she sat there in the sunbeams; wreaths of mock sea-weed trailed festoon-wise round her skirt, and rubies, emeralds, and opals, strewn with a profuse hand on her attire, and glistening with lavish lustre, transformed her into the image of one who, just rising from the sea, was blazing with the myriad dazzling water drops that dripped away from her, each first hiding in its bosom a sunbeam of this upper world to carry down into the still depths of twilight caves.

"Monsieur has perchance thought," returned she, "that because I lived with foster-parents in a hut among these woods, I had no ancestors; that because I wore russet, I could never wear satin; that because I decked my hair with flowers, I had there no precious heir looms. Monsieur, these jewels have been in our family more than six hundred years!"

"And my family scarcely counts beyond that," said the young man.

"And monsieur has then a family and a name?" she said.

"None nobler in the kingdom," he replied. "But, Nathalie, how came you here?"

"Ah, the marchioness was my mother's friend," said Nathalie, "and to-day is my birthday, Le Norman. To-day I am fifteen."

"So young and so lovely," thought Le Norman; "and if she loves me (as I cannot doubt she does,) born to how much trouble!" And he remembered with a double pang of both exquisite joy and pain the emotion manifested by her on the occasion of a slight accident to him. Then he had thought her a wild, charming forest girl, beautiful enough to beguile an hour away, although doubting even then if his feelings towards her were too deep for trifling. Now he found her of a certain noble rank—but what of that! It must be a high rank indeed which should smite down the barrier between them; and, nursed in different religious faiths, inexorable state laws must intervene, should all else prosper, and prevent their union. He should never dare to tell her of his love; she would recover her affections in a little while, if he were silent, and be happy again—he would not entail wretchedness on her young life—he would never speak. Having made this doughty resolution, while his thoughts were almost written on his face, he hummed a snatch of the distant dancing tune before he spoke again.

And of what was Nathalie thinking? Of sorrowful things, if her face was any index. It was a moment before he dared trust himself to look at her; at last when he raised his head her dark eyes were fixed upon him, welling over with tears. There is a moment of weakness that is irresistible; if he had withstood now he had been more than human. He need not ask if she loved him—he knew it. He need not swear his love for her—she would feel that. He took her in his arms, and lulled the grief that then first broke forth, with tenderest kisses and most endearing sentences. Alas for Nathalie!

A month had passed, and every day had witnessed an interview between the two lovers of the wood; and when once, half tremblingly, Nathalie had requested to know the name of her lover, an almost stern tone had come into his voice as he bade her not inquire again; and with a strange pain in his face, he warned her, that as it was, she would know all too soon.

"At least you are not one whom I need be ashamed to love?" she ventured to remark.

"Not that, indeed, my darling!" he replied; "but one who, knowing what lies before him in the future, should be ashamed to love you!" And Nathalie, feeling he could do nothing wrong, was satisfied.

Now she sat in the drawing-room of her friend the marchioness, in full dress, awaiting her lover, who was to accompany and present her at court. A coach dashed up to the door; another moment, and Le Norman stood in the apartment, with flushed cheeks and an anxious, vivid brightness in his restless eyes. As the marchioness turned and beheld his face, she began a sudden exclamation, but it was instantly checked by his warning look, and they were soon rolling along to the royal palace.

Whenever Nathalie had seen her lover before it had been in his simple hunting dress, or that of some fancy disguise. Now in court costume, almost too dazzling, Nathalie thought he could not look better than he did in the woods; and her heart swelled with joy as she thought of the happy rustic life she should lead for all her future with this titled forester, who despised rank and courtly baubles; and she pleased herself with delicious images of quiet contentment, as they rolled along. Coaches in the street made way for them by the flaring gas-light; ushers at the palace door swept open long avenues through the noble crowd, who respectfully withdrew. Bowing to the right and left, Le Norman, with Nathalie upon his arm and the marchioness following directly behind with the chamberlain, passed the halls and staircase, swept through the ante-rooms till the doors of the throne-room were thrown open, and they entered: while lords and ladies, who had been and still were patiently awaiting their turn, stepped aside. If the brilliancy of the ante-rooms had seemed gorgeous, what must the flood of lustre have appeared to her bewildered eyes as Le Norman paused at the threshold, giving her a lingering and re-assuring pressure!

Hitherto depending on him, she had been only the shrinking girl of Ardennes wood; now, as it were instantaneously, a new force seemed to develop within her—her figure grew a shadow more erect, the rich folds of her dress shook out with a somewhat prouder grace—a prescience of what was to come seemed to surround and strengthen her.—She cast her eyes round on the magnificent throng, and prouder and statelier than any empress, swept up the noble vista to the king. A moment, with Jove-like thunders, gathering on eye and brow, the old monarch gazed on the approaching pair, while all the court anticipated his action, and were smacking their mental lips over the expected scene. But like a balmy summer wind dispersing the clouds of tempest, a passing smile scattered the frowns; and advancing a step or two, the king briefly exclaimed, in a voice inaudible to any but them—"Son!"

"Father," said Le Norman, in the same tone, "wooing a peasant girl, I have found the Lady Nathalie d'Arens."

While he spake, Nathalie and the king measured each other with undaunted eyes.

"The prince, in his present passing fancy," said the king, "does the court honor. Let us hope that when this boyish freak is finished, the Lady Nathalie will regard it as leniently as it deserves! Mademoiselle, your father rendered me distinguished services; but for him, I should have lost my kingdom. Command from me any favor!"

"Sire," answered Nathalie, "beyond protection from royal and princely insults during the reception, I neither ask nor will receive any favor from your majesty!" And with a courtesy as superb as the least possible loyal submission could render so graceful an action, she sailed between king and prince, and stood beside the marchioness, a little in the rear upon the right of the unoccupied throne.

"Well sir," said the king to Le Norman, in the same low tone, savage in its almost inaudible intensity and slow pronunciation, while sunbeams could not equal the benignity on his noble face, "well, sir, I have heard something of this before. I was not unprepared. A pretty affair you made out of nothing!"

"Sire, I am in earnest," said Le Norman.

"And so am I, you graceless wretch!" returned the king. "Must drag into court all your awkward country dames?"

"I have never before intruded, I believe," said Le Norman.

"So much the worse now," said his father, "to find you entangled so uselessly at this late day!"

"Could you, sire, choose in any royal house of Europe a queenlier bride?"

"By heaven, young man, you won't want a queen till you are king! And if you think of this again, I'll declare your brother heir in your stead."

"Sire," said Le Norman, with coolness, "nothing would better please me!"

"Then, if that's your cue," returned his father, "you shall be both heir and king."

"I will not consent to be either, on any other terms than that my wife be Queen Nathalie," said Le Norman.

"Your wife!" whispered the exasperated king. "Has the boy ruined me? Are you married to her, sirrah?"

But nor deigning to reply, Le Norman bowed, and stepping aside joined Nathalie, while the chamberlain immediately continued the presentations. They stood in the shadow of a curtain, and as Le Norman again drew Nathalie's arm into his, with a decided gesture she withdrew it, and only lightly laying her hand on his, gazed steadily into his face. What reproach, what passion, what great sorrow suffused her countenance! Though he could not help loving her, nor, as we have seen, forbore vowing fidelity to her, yet his heart smote him that he had ever concealed his rank.

"You would never have loved me, Nathalie, if I had told you," murmured Le Norman. "Forgive me—fortune will favor us—I shall yet make you my wife—we shall yet be happy!"

A sudden dizziness, like the precursor of a swoon, overcame him, and in the midst her voice tolled out low and clear as a bell upon sultry air, the one word, "Impossible!"

Great must have been her self control; for in this moment of bitter pain, disappointment, and emotion, so lightly had her fingers touched his hand, that he was not aware when the pressure ceased, but only felt her face receding, as a vision fades, while she flitted backward and away from him into the throng, and out among side arches. With a low moan he reeled and fell; caught by an attendant, he was borne unseen to his own apartments, and the gaiety of the others continued. Thus, frequently under the gayest masques are the saddest tragedies enacted.

Scarcely had Nathalie gained a remote corridor, when a sudden rush and murmur proclaimed that the king had withdrawn and that the audience was broken up. While she paused to look around her she became sensible of an approaching step, and in a moment the king appeared, and taking her hand, led her into a private apartment, and courteously requested her to be seated.

"Madame," said he sternly, while seating himself opposite, "by what authority do you receive my son's addresses?"

Nathalie raised her eyes, and with her head somewhat thrown back, she answered, "I must be addressed altogether differently before I reply at all."

"Perhaps the lady Nathalie will instruct her slave in some suitable conversational terms!" said the king, his face slightly on one side, his eyes leering upon her, and in his most insinuating manner; nevertheless, if any voice was ever plainly suggestive of scaffolds and battle-axes, this was one.

Nathalie, forest girl as she was, could not condescend to battle the king with these his own weapons and as there did not appear to be any other, she thought best to make a feint of surrender, and calmly said, "I wished to leave your majesty possession of your son.—Be assured, I had no knowledge of the prince's rank when he offered me marriage. My religious faith will be an invincible bar to his wishes. I love LeNorman the hunter; I will never wed your son, the prince!"

"Madame," returned the King, "your frankness charms me! You have truly made me your friend. My son, I confess it, is more than a match for me. If you had been the daughter of a grand duke of a minor King, I would not have whispered a word against your faith; but as you well know, my kingdom, though recent, is important, and will become more so, strengthened by a royal alliance. Still, generous as you are to resign your lover, human nature is not infallible; it were too much to expect this of you. Let me guard you; let me always be your friend. As a proof of it, let me offer you a most worthy husband, in the person of the Count d'Entremer!"

The indignation of Nathalie was too great for utterance; but at last, as the king continued his harangue, it broke forth in wild and angry protest.

"Allow me, at least, to convey the future countess to a place not so liable to listeners," he said; and Nathalie accompanied him perforce through several devious ways till they stood in the dimly-lighted palace chapel.

"Now, Madam," said the king, who had so lately professed friendship, and now speaking in his lowest tones, "I give you a choice. This is what is called a civilized community; nevertheless, you are completely in my power. You have not a relative in the world!—If you do not comply with my demands, I have dungeons so deep that for all your life you will never see daylight again. Neither do I shrink from such terrific resources, although loth to mention them to ears polite, such as starvation, tight cords, hot irons——"

"I can never be frightened into submission," she said, interrupting him haughtily.

"Let me urge you, then," said the king, "while you are single, my son will never complete the alliance I design. He will be wretched and unhappy; while, if you marry, he will resign himself to forgetfulness. Do you wish to be the cause of his misery? I have no great affection in my nature; it is chiefly pride; therefore all those pangs with which I threatened you, I will inflict upon him, if you disobey. You can go forward to the altar where the Count d'Entremer awaits you, or back the way we came. In the latter case my guards will attend upon you, and you will be forced to witness how bravely the prince endures his tortures."

It is not likely the king would have performed an iota of this grandiloquent threat; but Nathalie could have given credence to any evil from him. She trembled an instant, and then with a firm step went forward, placed her hand in the Count d'Entremer's—never seen by her before—and being quickly and irrevocably pronounced his wife, received the congratulations of the smiling king and the few witnesses. Leaning against the altar, pallid and cold as sculpture, the first object her married eyes discerned was LeNorman. He moved forward, with an expression as if every second of time was a sharp sword that stabbed him, and appeared to offer his compliments.

"What ardor," he murmured; "what sincerity! what constancy! Madame la Comptesse is as firm as a rock in her determination to be faithless as shifting sand!"

* * * * * *

Time, too fast for the most of us, lagged sadly with the young countess, scarcely more than a child, as she sighed far away in distant France, and from the windows of her chateau, watched the shadows come and go on the purple Pyrennean slopes, while her husband was absent the greater part of his time at Paris, or at the court she had so lately left. Time passed not so slowly with the prince; indeed, LeNorman witnessed a thousand events for every one in the monotonous years of the Countess d'Entremer. Having recovered from the first severe shock of his loss and disappointment, with the native energy of his nature, not deeming it right to waste his life in idle despair, he wonderfully bestirred himself—superintending the education of his brother, arranging scientific expeditions, and performing all duties devolving upon him, but steadfastly refusing the royal match urged by his father, and clinging to the loose fragments of the love of earlier days.

Ten years had elapsed since the death of his father and his own coronation—his brother had entered into manhood, and LeNorman, as the king, had already commanded the admiration of all Europe by his daring genius, when the Count d'Entremer appeared again at court after a short absence, and for the first time since his marriage brought with him the countess. Of course all the world were on the qui vive to behold the meeting; but all the world found very little satisfaction in the calm nonchalant air of the countess, as she received the rather sarcastically polite welcome of the king; for though not quite twenty-five she was in the full vigor and bloom of womanhood, and perhaps lovelier, and with a better balanced mind than if she had not experienced these long, lonely years.

A few weeks had elapsed, and in one of the sea-shore palaces the whole court were assembled at summer festivities. The royal abode was on a cliff, which afforded in front of the building a promenade of several hundred yards, and abruptly terminating in a precipice, whose base was washed by the sea. On this cliff, one afternoon, a party of courtiers—among whom was the king, his brother, and the Countess d'Entremer, were watching the approach of a small boat, which was out on a fishing excursion, and could hardly reach the shore before the squall should burst upon it. Erect in the prow, a keen eye could not fail to recognize the lofty figure of the Count D'Entremer.

Leaning breathlessly over the cliff, Nathalie remained with her eyes fixed on the boat; for although she had no manner of affection for the husband forced upon her, she could not view his danger with indifference, nor desire any thing but his happiness. The boat was still far distant, the wind increasing—already it fluttered the ends of her white scarf into the air across the brink of the precipice, as with hands slightly extended forward she stood, silent and motionless.—The courtiers withdrew a little, and the king and herself remained nearest together upon the edge. Great raindrops fell, dashing down the banks of her hair, and soaking her garments, yet still she stood heedless of it.

The count saw her, for, doffing his cap, he raised his hand to his lips with a knightly gesture, and waved it towards her. He was so near that the wind might be seen lifting his hair, when the little mast cracked and broke, dragged the boat down and precipitated the occupants into the roaring gulf.—He was a strong swimmer; for after every wave broke its crest over him, he was seen riding the next one triumphant. Now lost to sight, now again appearing, now supporting a fainting comrade, and now with rapid strokes parting the waves—a weaker man would have sunk long ago. The rain and spray mingled their strength with the wind and the waves, and a thick, white, curling mist arose and hung round him, closing him, out from the sight of his wife, and hiding his beacon star from him. At last the wind veered, and the mist cleared away; little patches of blue sky smiled out from the south and west, and the waves rocked to and fro in stray sunshine. The countess still strained her eyes, surveying the broad vacant expanse; but neither count nor fisherman was there; and at the end of an hour's intense watching, three bodies were tossed high upon the strand. One was that of the Count d'Entremer.—Nathalie with outstretched hands instantly fell senseless.

A year's seclusion—due not to grief, but to respect—had passed, and the leafy echo of Ardennes had lulled Nathalie, for the moment, into complete forgetfulness of the last eleven years—and again she sat beneath the oaks and plucked the flowers growing in the self-same nook as in her girlhood. All but the first fifteen years of her life seemed visionary as a dream; and consonant with all around, the distant bugle of some royal hunting party stole up her ear like "horns of elfland faintly blowing." And thus when one stood before her in a garb of Lincoln-green, leading a red roan steed, it seemed as if all the interval had never been; and looking up merrily, she said "It is my birthday to-day, Le Norman! I am"—but here, as she would have said "fifteen," memory rushed back on her, and hiding her face in her hands, she turned, and would have fled, but his voice sternly arrested her.

"Stay a moment, madame!" he commanded. "Since Providence has thrown us once more together, let me return to you the troth you once gave me. It was broken by you, and rendered valueless to me, eleven years ago."

With a certain wild vehemence, she exclaimed, turning at bay upon him, "I was forced to break it! Had it been true troth, you had died in torture first! It was to save you from dying in torture that I sacrificed myself to worse than death—more than torture—to marry D'Entremer!"

A moment or two he regarded her, then said, "I have taken shame to myself for eleven years that I could not overcome my passion, while feeling its object to be faithless.—Must I undo the work of so long a time?"—She returned him no answer. "If that were done," he resumed; but she interrupted him.

"Your cruel father's death has not left in the inexorable state laws one obstacle the less!"

"I can annihilate all obstacles," he returned, triumphantly. Silence followed. Some time they thus stood confronting each other; at length he said, "A singular fancy strikes me, Nathalie. It is your birthday. How old are you, my friend?"

"I am fifteen," she returned.

"And I am nineteen," said he. "It seems to me that an hour ago we plighted troth.—Is it so?"

Not many days elapsed ere a strange rumor flew trumpet-tongued through the kingdom, and was proclaimed officially to all the crowned heads of Europe. More than one king of different realms had congregated in this capital, and an universal wonder was displayed in the countenance of every subject and plenipotentiary.

The seventh of October, with all the sweet decadence of summer in the air, came, and the cathedral was thronged for a triple ceremony. The procession left the palace to the sound of slow, pleasant music, amid the shouts and blessings of the populace upon Le Norman, "the dear king;" and in the cathedral, in the presence of subjects and brother kings, Le Norman took the crown from his own head and placed it on his brother's; and when the further ceremony of coronation was finished, knelt as count only in his paternal heritage, and was the first among his brother's new subjects to swear fealty.

The new king stepped aside, while all the world wondered the reason of so great a sacrifice. The reason? It came through the open door of an inner chapel, where Nathalie, unattended by any one save the spirits of radiant beauty, issued and advancing, placed her hand in that of the abdicated king, Le Norman; and, beneath the benedictal hand of the patriarchal archbishop, was declared the wife of the Count of Nassau.

TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES.—The Territory of the United States, which is now estimated at three million two hundred thousand square miles, has been derived from various sources. The thirteen English Colonies which united in the Revolutionary war, held nearly the same territory which they now possess, as States. Besides these, Virginia laid claim, by virtue of her charter, to an undefined tract to the west, including Kentucky, and what was afterwards called the *Northwestern Territory*—embracing Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.—These latter claims she ceded to the United States in 1787, making a small reservation of lands in Ohio, for the payment of certain State debts. Tennessee was originally a part of North Carolina. Alabama was mostly included in the original patent of Georgia. Maine was a part of the State of Massachusetts. Thus the whole of the present territory of the United States east of the river Mississippi, excepting only the State of Florida and the whole Gulf coast, came to us as the possessions of the original thirteen colonies. Florida and part of Alabama and Mississippi, were ceded to us by Spain in 1819, as compensation for spoliations upon our commerce. The Louisiana purchase, made in 1803, gave us the whole tract lying between the Mississippi river and the Rocky mountains, including the States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and Iowa, and the Territories of Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Indian. Texas was obtained by the Annexation treaty of 1845; Oregon by discovery and occupation; California, Utah, and New Mexico, by treaty with Mexico in 1848.—*Goodrich.*

Exclusion of Slavery from the Territories.

Remarks made by Mr. Webster in the Senate of the United States, on the 12th of August, 1848.

EXTRACTS.

THE Constitution of the United States recognizes it (slavery) as an existing fact, an existing relation between the inhabitants of the Southern States. I do not call it an "institution," because that term is not applicable to it; for that seems to imply a voluntary establishment. When I first came here, it was a matter of frequent reproach to England, the mother country, that slavery had been entailed upon the colonies by her, against their consent, and that which is now considered a cherished "institution" was then regarded as, I will not say an *evil*, but an entallment on the colonies by the policy of the mother country against their wishes. At any rate it stands upon the Constitution.—The Constitution was adopted in 1788, and went into operation in 1789. When it was adopted the state of the country was this: slavery existed in the Southern States; there was a very large extent of unoccupied territory, the whole Northwestern Territory, which, it was understood, was destined to be formed into States; and it was then determined that no slavery should exist in this territory. I gather now as matter of inference from the history of the time and the history of the debates, *that the prevailing motives with the North for agreeing to this recognition of the existence of slavery in the Southern States, and giving a representation to those States, founded in part upon their slaves, rested on the supposition that no acquisition of territory would be made to form new States on the Southern frontier of this country, either by cession or conquest.* No one looked to any acquisition of new territory on the Southern or Southwestern frontier. The exclusion of slavery from the Northwestern Territory and the prospective abolition of the foreign slave trade were generally, the former unanimously, agreed to, and on the basis of these considerations, the South insisted that where slavery existed it should not be interfered with, and that it should have a certain ratio of representation in Congress. And now, sir, I am one who, believing such to be the understanding on which the Constitution was framed, means to abide by it.

* * * * *

I have now stated, as I understand it, the condition of things upon the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. What has happened since? Sir, it has happened that above and beyond all contemplation or expectation of the original framers of the Constitution or the people who adopted it, foreign territory has been acquired by cession, first from France, and then from Spain, on our Southern frontier. And what has been the result? Five slave-holding States have been created and added to the Union, bringing ten Senators into this body, (I include Texas, which I consider in the light of a foreign acquisition also) and up to this hour in which I address you, not one Free State has been admitted to the Union, from all this acquired territory. * * *

Mr. President, what is the result of this? We stand here now, at least I do, for one, to say, that considering there have been already five new slave-holding States formed out of newly acquired territory, and only one non-slaveholding State at most, I do not feel that I am called on to go further! I do not feel the obligation to yield more. But our friends of the South say, you deprive us of all our rights! We have fought for this territory, and you deny us participation in it. Let us consider this question as it really is; and since the honorable gentleman from Georgia proposes to leave the case to the enlightened and impartial judgment of mankind, and as I agree with him that it is a case proper to be considered by the enlightened part of mankind, let us see how the matter in truth stands. Gentlemen who advocate the case which my honorable friend from Georgia, with so much ability sustains, declare that we invade their rights, that we deprive them of a participation in the enjoyment of territories acquired by the common services and common exertions of all. Is this true?—How deprive? Of what do we deprive them? Why, they say that we deprive them of the privilege of carrying their slaves as slaves into the new territories. Well, sir, what is the amount of that? *They say that in this way we deprive them of the opportunity of going into this acquired territory with their property.* "Their property!" What do they mean by "property." *We certainly do not deprive them of the privilege of going into these newly acquired territories with all that, in the general estimate of human society, in the general, and common, and universal understanding of mankind, is esteemed property.* Not at all. The truth is just this. They have in their own States peculiar laws, which create property in persons. They have a system of local legislation on which slavery rests; while everybody agrees that it is against natural law, or at least against the common understanding which prevails among men as to what is natural law.

I am not going into metaphysics, for therein I should encounter the honorable member from South Carolina, (Mr. Calhoun,) and we should find no end "in wander mazes lost," until after the time for the adjournment of Congres. *The Southern States have peculiar laws, and by those laws there is property in slaves. This is purely local. The real meaning then, of Southern gentlemen, in making this complaint is, that they cannot go into the territories of the United States, carrying with them their own peculiar local law,* a law which creates property in persons. This, according to their own statement, is all the ground of complaint they have. Now, here, I think, gentlemen are unjust towards us. How unjust they are, others will judge; generations that will come after us will judge. *It will not be contended that this sort of personal slavery exists by general law. It exists only by local law. I do not mean to deny the validity of that local law where it is established but I say, it is, after all, local law. It is nothing more. And wherever that local law does not extend, property in persons does not exist.* Well, sir, what is now the demand on the part of our Southern friends? They say, "we will carry our local laws with us wherever we go. We insist that Congress does us injustice unless it establishes in the territory in which we wish to go, our own local law."

This demand, I, for one resist and shall resist. It goes upon the idea that there is an inequality, unless persons under this local law, and holding property by authority of that law, can go into new territory and there establish that local law, to the exclusion of the general law. Mr. President, it was a maxim of the civil law, that between slavery and freedom, freedom should always be presumed, and slavery must always be proved. If any question arose as to the *status* of an individual in Rome, he was presumed to be free until he was proved to be a slave, because slavery is an exception to the general rule. Such, I suppose, is the general law of mankind. An individual is to be presumed to be free, until a law can be produced which creates ownership in his person. I do not dispute the force and validity of the local law, as I have already said; but I say, it is a matter to be proved; and therefore, if individuals go into any part of the earth, it is to be proved that they are not freemen, or else the presumption is that they are.

Now our friends seem to think that an inequality arises from restraining them from going into the Territories, unless there be a law provided which shall protect their ownership in persons. The assertion is that we create an inequality. Is there nothing to be said on the other side in relation to inequality? Sir, from the date of this Constitution, and in the counsels that formed and established this Constitution, and I suppose in all men's judgments since, *it is received as a settled truth, that slave labor and free labor do not exist well together.* I have before me a declaration of Mr. Mason, in the Convention that formed the Constitution, to that effect. Mr. Mason, as is well known, was a distinguished member from Virginia. *He says that the objection to slave labor is, that it puts free white labor in disrepute; that it causes labor to be regarded as derogatory to the character of the free white man, and that the free white man despises to work, to use his expression, where slaves are employed.* This is a matter of great interest to the Free States, if it be true, as to a great extent it certainly is, that wherever slave labor prevails, free white labor is excluded or discouraged. I agree that slave labor does not necessarily exclude free labor totally. There is free white labor in Virginia, Tennessee, and other States, where most of the labor is done by slaves. But it necessarily loses something of its respectability, by the side of and when associated with, slave labor.—Wherever labor is mainly performed by slaves, it is regarded as degrading to freemen. *The freemen of the North, therefore, have a deep interest in keeping labor free, exclusively free, in the new Territories.*

But, sir, let us look farther into this alleged inequality. There is no pretence that Southern people may not go into territory which shall be subject to the ordinance of 1787. The only restraint is that they shall not carry slaves thither, and continue that relation. They say this shuts them altogether out. Why, sir, there can be nothing more inaccurate in point of fact than this statement. I understand that one-half the people who settled Illinois are people, or descendants of people, who came from the Southern States, and I suppose that one-third of the people of Ohio are those, or descendants of those who emigrated from the South; and I venture to say, that in respect to those two States, they are at this day settled by people of Southern origin in as great a proportion as they are by people of Northern origin according to the general numbers and proportion of people South and North. There are as many people from the South in proportion to the whole people of the South, in those States, as there are from the North, in proportion to the whole people of the North.—*There is then no exclusion of Southern people; there is only the exclusion of a peculiar local law. Neither in principle nor in fact is there any inequality.*

The question now is, whether it is not competent to Congress, in the exercise of a fair and just discretion, considering that there have been five Slaveholding States added to this Union out of foreign acquisitions, and as yet only one Free State, to prevent their further increase. That is the question. I see no injustice in it. *As to the power of Congress, I have nothing to add to what I said the other day. Congress has full power over the subject. It may establish any such government, and any such laws, in the Territories, as in its discretion it may see fit. It is subject, of course, to the rules of justice and propriety, but it is under no Constitutional restraints.*

I have said that I *shall consent to no extension of the area of slavery upon this continent, nor to any increase of slave representation in the other House of Congress.* I have now stated my reasons for my conduct and my vote. We of the North have already gone, in this respect, far beyond all that any Southern man could have expected, or did expect at the time of the adoption of the Constitution. I repeat the statement of the fact of the creation of five new Slaveholding States out of newly acquired territory. *We have done that which if those who framed the Constitution had foreseen, they never would have agreed to slave representation.* We have yielded thus far; and we have now in the House of Representatives twenty persons voting upon this very question, and upon all other questions, who are there only in virtue of the representation of slaves.

Let me conclude, therefore, by remarking that, while I am willing to present this as showing my own judgment and position in regard to this case, and I beg it to be understood that I am speaking for no other than myself, and while I am willing to offer it to the whole world as my own justification, I rest on these propositions: First, That when the Constitution was adopted, nobody looked for any new acquisition of territory to be formed into Slaveholding States. Secondly, That the principles of the Constitution prohibited, and were intended to prohibit, and should be construed to prohibit all interference of the general government with slavery, as it existed, and as it still exists in the States. And then looking to the operation of these new acquisitions, which have in this great degree had the effect of strengthening that interest in the South, by the addition of these five States, I feel that there is nothing unjust, nothing of which any honest man can complain, if he is intelligent, and I feel that there is nothing with which the civilized world, if they take notice of so humble a person as myself, will reproach me when I say, as I say, as I said the other day, *that I have made up my mind, for one, that under no circumstances will I consent to the further extension of the area of slavery in the U. States, or to the further increase of slave representation in the House of Representatives.*