CHAPTER VI

THE NEGRO AFTER EMANCIPATION: (1) POLITICAL EQUALITY.

From the wide ranging and deep Scottish interest in the racial problems which beset the United States after the Civil War, it is abundantly clear that it was by no means only those Scots suffering from what Charles Mackay's old colleague Francis Lawley called "nigger on the brain"[1] who were prepared to acknowledge "the irrepressible Negro" as the corner-stone of Reconstruction policies and politics. And for so long as the supreme importance of the Negro question continued to be generally recognized, Scottish controversy and discussion naturally extended beyond concentration on the innate character and potential abilities of the race to include the voicing of opinion on more immediately tangible - though related - questions. Among the issues which during the Reconstruction era demanded direct assessment of current Negro capabilities and of basic Negro rights, those which most keenly engaged the attention of Scottish observers, and which tended to produce the most explicit and spirited comment, were the extension of the franchise to the freedmen, and the Negroes' general conduct after freedom - including the nature of the response to their new position as voters.

Understandably, attitudes to these issues were much more straightforward and clear-cut than were Scottish attitudes to the complex question of race. Of course, to a very large extent, attitudes towards the issues of political equality and the black population's use of freedom were governed by basic attitudes already formed towards the Negro race. But because they were practical as opposed to theoretical issues, issues which could be judged against known frames of reference, they elicited generally more positively defined and solidly reasoned opinions than did the abstract and thorny problem of

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1 Francis Lawley to Lord Rosebery, 13 May, 1874, Rosebery MSS., MS.Acc. 4070, Box 56, in National Library of Scotland.

racial equality per se. For instance, taking into consideration the immediate background of the freedmen - their lack of education, their lack of habits of self-reliance, their total ignorance of political procedures - it was obviously much easier for a Conservative Scot in the early post-Civil War years confidently and effectively to argue that because of these defects, the American Negroes should not immediately be granted the franchise, than to argue that simply because they possessed certain character deficiencies, they were innately and therefore permanently inferior to the white race. It could be argued that such deficiencies might prove to be merely the products of slavery times, and that as they progressed intellectually, culturally, and materially, the freedmen would perhaps lose most of these shortcomings. But so long as the Negroes were seen still to possess these important and critical failings, it was less easy for the Victorian mind to deny the validity of postponing their acquisition of the suffrage.

Once the Negroes had become voters, American accounts of their political behaviour were added to pre-existing prejudices about granting them the suffrage to produce fairly clear and unequivocal attitudes towards the entire question of Negro enfranchisement. Similarly, the first-hand evidence furnished by Scottish travellers, and the concrete reports from the United States on how the Negroes were responding to the difficulties and challenges posed by freedom made possible the emergence of strong, definite views on this subject. At the same time, these views were also, of course, often based to a large extent on certain previously accepted opinions about the inherent ability - or, more frequently in this context, inability - of the race responsibly and profitably to face up to its dramatically altered circumstances.

Indeed, among Conservatives, and the majority of Whig, observers in Scotland, there was a tacit acceptance of an intrinsic, fundamental inter-relationship not only between the question of early Negro enfranchisement and the question of the rate of the black population's social and economic progress,

but also between these two issues and the question of the basic existing character traits and intellectual standards of the Negro race. Thus it was widely argued in these quarters that because of the persistence of serious character defects in the emancipated slaves, the black freedmen were essentially irresponsible and incompetent. As such, having proved themselves unfit immediately to come to terms with their new economic and social status, the Negroes, it was further maintained, clearly should not immediately be invested with political power. Obviously, then, the ultimate base of this opposition to Negro suffrage can be traced back to a deep scepticism about the rapid improvement of the black race, running at times into a more solid conviction about its innate inferiority.

This vicious triangle of reasoning thus reinforced three vital strands of Scottish Conservative-"moderate Liberal" thinking on the status of the Negro within the United States during Reconstruction and on those who sought, by legislation and otherwise, to mould and define it. Firstly, in isolating basic failings in the freedman's character as the root cause of the Negroes' failure to make an impressive transition to freedom, these elements were renewing the emphasis on the great endemic differences which they believed would for long continue to exist between the white and black communities in the United States. Secondly, by insisting on the unsatisfactory nature of the freedmen's response to many aspects of their new condition, they were again implicitly scorning and rejecting the essentially optimistic forecasts of the "negrophilists" about the future of the Negro race within the Union. Lastly, through their vigorous objections to the bestowal of the franchise on a section of the American population felt to be patently unfit to exercise it, the Scottish Conservatives and Whigs opportunely intensified their standard attacks on the general Reconstruction policies of the Radical Republican politicians.

I Opposition to Negro enfranchisement in the context of opposition to universal suffrage on the American model

At a time when Britain itself was heavily caught up in debating the proposed

extension of the franchise to a greater proportion of the working class, the question of Negro enfranchisement in the United States did, however, assume a central, critical importance for men of all shades of political opinion within Scotland. We have already noted the avidity with which Scots both hostile and reverential towards American democratic institutions kept a sharp focus on the development of transatlantic democracy after the Civil War.[1] Conservatives and moderate Liberals, vehemently opposed as they were to the fundamental concept of democracy on the United States model, were in general naturally unrestrained in their severe condemnation of Republican proposals and measures to introduce full Negro suffrage in the early post-war years. As has been indicated, the bastion of their arguments against the move was that in the short term at least, the freedmen were hopelessly unprepared and ill-equipped to exercise responsibly the powers conferred by the electoral franchise. Allied to this was the frequent underlying implication that, given the natural order of things, adverse racial characteristics would probably for long preclude general Negro participation in the political life of the United States.

This last consideration apart, however, it is clear that the argument offered by Scottish Conservatives and moderate Liberals against the enfranchisement of the American Negroes was essentially the same as the argument employed by them in opposing undue extension of the suffrage to the working classes in Britain. The concept that the Negro freedmen should not immediately get the vote because they were economically, socially and intellectually unfit to receive it demonstrates the tendency to apply to the American democratic system British criteria for the granting of electoral power. This somewhat futile practice continued to be freely engaged in simply because criticism of Negro suffrage was so frequently linked - either tacitly or overtly - to a general criticism of universal suffrage

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1 See above, Chapter III, passim.

on the United States pattern.

Itself a cautious supporter of limited reform on the home front, the Glasgow Herald did show some appreciation of the fact that the peculiar political set-up obtaining in the United States might dictate a singularly radical approach to the question of Negro suffrage. But at the same time, it also remained one of the chief offenders in the game of scoring points against the American democratic system by stressing the unsuitability of the newly freed Negroes as a voting class. Thus, commenting on Sumner's advocacy of full political rights for the black population, the Herald admitted that his argument that all freemen were by right entitled to the franchise was much more applicable to the United States, with its universal suffrage, than to Britain; and it agreed that on the question of whether the unenfranchised Negro was fully free, "The Abolitionists have certainly the best of the argument".[1] But the Glasgow Herald was not in the least inclined to condone the principle which made a measure such as immediate Negro enfranchisement viable and - in a strict constitutional sense - almost necessary. "In this country", it declared, "we would, first of all, ask whether or not the Negro was morally and intellectually fitted to be entrusted with the franchise; but in America, where universal suffrage prevails, a consideration of this kind is of no account". By virtue of their opposition to the "extravagant claims" of abolitionists and politicians such as Sumner, President Johnson and his supporters were applauded for their readiness to sacrifice constitutional logicality for practical expediency on this particular issue.[2]

Through direct reference to the question of Negro enfranchisement, the paper had earlier implied that one dangerous weakness of the American political system was the scope it gave for the serious advocacy of the most extreme radical schemes. In the Herald's scale of reference, the insistence by "theoretical philanthropists

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1 Glasgow Herald, 5 Oct., 1865.

2 Ibid.

and advanced politicians" that "poor 'Cuffee'" should get the vote bordered on the fanatical, if not the hopelessly ludicrous:

> This proposal is surely the most extravagant notion of a rampant democracy that has as yet been ventilated, and if it is carried out there can be no good reason for withholding the suffrage from women and children.[1]

With the increase over the following eighteen months in the determination of Wendell Phillips and his abolitionist colleagues and the radicals in Congress to put the Negro on an equal political footing with the Southern whites, the paper adjusted its customary criticisms of democratic institutions to take a broad, cynical view of the direction in which the great American experiment was heading:

> He [the American Negro] is to rise up in his freedom, poverty and ignorance, and place himself on a level with competence, education, and intelligence. Such a revolution...was never attempted in the world before; and if it is carried out, and works for the general good of society, we may abandon all fears regarding the dangers of a suffrage where ignorance and numbers are combined.[2]

Similarly committed to the support of essentially guarded and gradual programmes of political and social reform in Britain, the Scotsman, like the Glasgow Herald, gave absolutely no quarter to radical American proposals for Negro suffrage. It has already been suggested that on the general issue of reform, the Scotsman's attitudes were probably fairly representative of mainstream Scottish Liberal opinion at that time.[3] And as we have repeatedly seen,[4] the paper's popular brand of moderate Liberalism projected and reflected a general political outlook in which full blown democracy of the American type was regarded with a repugnance almost as total as that displayed towards it by Scottish

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1 Glasgow Herald, 3 Aug., 1865.

2 Ibid., 14 March, 1867. Naturally, the Herald was not confident of such an outcome. It was not possible, it suggested, for political and social reformers to manufacture a situation in which the Negro would be in the same relation to other classes of Southern society as the middle classes were to the upper in Europe.

3 See above, Chapter III, p. 266.

4 See especially Chapter III, pp. 264-268.

Conservatives. Indeed, taking into consideration the dominance of its editor Alexander Russel's specific views in relation to British radicalism and reform,[1] the nature of the Scotsman's attitude to the transatlantic efforts to introduce special legislation endowing full political rights on an uneducated, unprepared black "working class" is totally predictable. Unlike the Glasgow Herald, the journal did not even give a passing acknowledgement to the theoretical validity - in the context of the established democratic system in the United States - of agitating for this issue. It is worth noting, however, that even in a paper so rigidly committed to condemnation of American democracy in general and to American Radicals' Reconstruction goals in particular, a comparatively more reasonable and objective voice could on occasion slip through Russel's tight net of editorial consistency. Certainly, there appeared in late October, 1865 a leader which, in the relatively enlightened nature of its arguments in regard to American policy on the social and political status of the freedmen, was severely at variance with most subsequent Scotsman comment on the question of the Negroes' future.

The editorial was built around a detailed, lengthy analysis of a recent speech made by Johnson to a coloured regiment in which he had advised the freedmen that it was primarily up to themselves to prove their fitness for freedom, and that they must take the future into their own hands.[2] These propositions, normally finding an exact parallel in the Scotsman's own line of thinking, were on this occasion unexpectedly challenged in no uncertain terms. Objecting to the great stress laid on the obligations of the freed Negroes to improve their general conditions, and to the relative restraint on the question of Federal aid for them, the writer centred his attack on an insistence that the Negro's past

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1 See details below, in Note on Newspaper Sources; and in the biographical note on Russel, Appendix I.

2 The speech, delivered to the First District of Columbia Coloured Regiment by Johnson at Washington on 10 Oct., 1865, was printed in full in the Scotsman, 23 Oct., 1865.

had not been the same as the white man's and that consequently the same rules for self-elevation could not apply. The most significant criticism of Johnson was on the political aspect of the Negro question. While conceding that the President was right in explaining that individual success in the social scale would only be achieved by personal effort, the editorial vigorously disputed as "cruelly unjust" his premise that the success of the entire black race in social careers would be the test of its fitness for higher duties and full citizenship:

> If the coloured American is to obtain equal political rights with the white American only on the terms that he proves himself equally 'meritorious' with his more favoured competitor in the labours of social life, then the logical result of the liberation - the enfranchisement - of the negro is still one or two generations distant.[1]

Coming from such an organ as the Scotsman, both the implication that Negro political rights should not be unduly delayed and the general concern to see justice done over the issue of enfranchisement are indeed remarkable. But the real bite of this pronouncement against Johnson, it might be suggested, lay in the blame assigned to him for losing sight of the part white Americans had to play in settling the Negro question. There are strong indications that in attacking the President on this score, the paper was seeking indirectly to draw attention to the colossal guilt and responsibility towards the Negro which it felt the North, no less than the South, should be forced to acknowledge:

> The Americans cannot escape from their responsibilities towards the race that they have held in bondage for many generations by merely turning them (sic) adrift, and telling them that if, against so many and so great disadvantages, they can in the race of social life beat or come abreast of their former masters and present contemners, they will be rewarded by the political rights already so long and so shamefully denied ...[C]onscience and humanity alike demand that some juster and kinder method of dealing with the negro difficulty should be devised than simply telling the negroes that they are free to work or starve, and warning them that, only according as they work, their rights shall be meted out to them.

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1 Scotsman, 24 Oct., 1865.

> The white community of the United States has maimed and disabled the negro community.[1]

Apparently designed in part, then, to illuminate the depth of the American responsibility in helping educate the Negro up to social and political sophistication, and simultaneously to suggest that the Americans seemed poised to fail in their duties in this connection, the editorial did in one sense remain consistent with Scotsman policy inasmuch as it levelled substantial criticism at the political machinery of the Republic. This may indeed have been the main purpose of this editorial exercise, and it was well enough accomplished. But at the same time, the high appreciation of the very unique situation in which the freed Negroes were placed, the recognition that American laissez-faire was hopelessly inapplicable and unjust, and the general slant of the sentiments voiced were so totally out of line with standard Scotsman judgements on the subject as to suggest that this was something of a "radical" deviation by a member of the paper's staff.

Apart from this uncharacteristic editorial, there was in the Scotsman little enough about governmental obligations towards securing social and political rights for the freedmen, plenty about the Negro's own personal responsibility in raising himself up to be a fully privileged citizen. And a central theme in this approach was that, for the good of the country and in

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1 Scotsman, 24 Oct., 1865. The leader may have been stimulated in part by reports from the New York Tribune which the Scotsman had quoted earlier in the year on how serious ill-will was against the Negroes in Washington no less than in Richmond, Virginia. Of course, it can validly be argued that Washington was in most essential respects a "Southern city" at this time, but it is important to recognise that for most Scots it meant, first and foremost, the capital of the United States. As such it was looked upon to reflect the best in American society, to set an example, perhaps: hence consider, for instance, the especial pleasure with which the ELES hailed the news that the Negroes had been enfranchised in the District of Columbia "where the national capital is situated" - see below p..60.

the best interests of the freedmen themselves, the suffrage must be deferred until the Negroes had proved that they were fit to receive it. However, since neither the best interests of the American Republic itself nor of the black population within it were ever very deep concerns of the Scotsman at this period, it seems clear that in framing these arguments, Russel's paper was principally seeking to demonstrate that putting the franchise into the hands of the lowest section of the community anywhere would have immeasurably bad effects. The tone of the journal's opinions on this subject had been set in an editorial long preceding the unrepresentative comment which appeared in the autumn of 1865.

Less than three months after the end of the Civil War, the Scotsman had deprecated the demands of certain elements in America for immediate Negro enfranchisement, insisting that they were simply adding to the perplexities of the post-war situation, and arguing that a much more pressing issue than the securing of the Negroes' right to vote was the training of the black population into habits of self-reliance. Allied to this was the fundamental concept - universally applicable to all men - of the franchise as a privilege, not a right. Negro suffrage could validly be postponed, it was maintained, because in almost all countries, men laboured, or enjoyed the fruits of the past labour of others, before being admitted to the franchise. It was therefore not "harsh or unreasonable" to keep the freedmen outside the electoral system until they had been further removed from "their low and lost estate, and till their vote can be held to represent something more than their mere will or ill-will...The gift of the franchise would do the negro no good in his present destitute and unfixed condition".[1]

American Radicals' attempts to secure extension of the franchise to the

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1 Scotsman, 1 July, 1865.

Negroes were likely, by example, to encourage the efforts of radicals in Britain to agitate for a vastly widened representation for the British working class. The bogey of potential social and political upheaval was associated with these radical strivings on both sides of the Atlantic. Accordingly, as the radical impulse was seen to be gaining strength in the United States, it was nothing more than the Scotsman's duty, as a bastion of British "moderate Liberalism", to pinpoint the evils and dangers contained in such extreme proposals as that for Negro suffrage. Bolstered by reports from the South which indicated that "if the negro ever comes to hold the reins of power in the South, he will rule over deserted cities and barren fields",[1] the paper duly emphasized that the over-hasty actions of the freedmen's "friends" in the political sphere would badly damage the race's general prospects for advancement in America.[2]

Coupled with this was the warning that radical claims of such a nature were almost certain, if successful, to produce serious dislocation within a country. In the United States, the additional factor of racial antagonism was used to give added impact to the gloomy prognostications. Thus, with the contest between Johnson and Congress daily becoming hotter, it was urged that the American Radicals "might surely be content with what they have accomplished for the negro in five years: the rest must come in course of time, if the black race have all the good qualities that their friends assign them". In reality, the most likely circumstance under which Negro enfranchisement might be indefinitely delayed was "if Northern fanatics provoke a war of races, by disfranchising the defeated slaveholders of the South, in order to enfranchise their emancipated slaves".[3] Essentially,

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1 "The South at Peace": letter to the editor from Mobile, Alabama, 24 July, 1865, in Scotsman, 25 Aug., 1865.

2 Ibid., 4 Nov., 1865.

3 Ibid., 12 March, 1866. See also ibid., 28 Feb., 1866.

the unwelcome radical agitation on behalf of the suffrage for the Negroes had raised "the very grave question - whether the immediate bestowal of political power upon persons in the moral and mental condition of slaves would not be a great evil both to themselves and the community".[1]

The ultimate passing by Congress of the Fifteenth Amendment in February, 1869 in no way blunted the Scotsman's misgivings about the wisdom of granting so important a privilege to those whom it still believed to be generally unprepared for it. Two years earlier a significant broadening of the franchise had taken place in Britain, but in spite of that - perhaps even to some extent because of it - there was still a compulsive tendency to attack the surfeit of popular participation in American politics. A major manifestation of burgeoning United States democracy in this period, the Fifteenth Amendment was naturally accorded a specific share of criticism as a measure calculated to intensify the perils associated with political democracy. The only grain of comfort lay, indeed, in the identification of a restraining, conservative facet to the measure. Writing from New York the day after the amendment had been accepted by both House and Senate, the Scotsman's American correspondent made it clear that while race as such could no longer be a basis for exclusion from the suffrage, the Fifteenth Amendment as it stood left the way open for the individual States to introduce stringent property and educational qualifications which would effectively preclude the vast majority of the Negro population from voting. While scorning the Fortieth Congress for having spent two years working on this problem only to arrive finally at so inadequate a conclusion, the United States correspondent was ready enough to recognize some virtue in the overall Conservatism of the Bill:

> The advantage of the new system will be that if indiscriminate extension of the suffrage be found to work evil, it may be restricted, not by excluding all men with woolly heads but by

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1 Scotsman, 4 Sept., 1866.

> requiring woolly and hairy heads alike to show that they have made some use of their brains by acquiring property, or intelligence, or both.[1]

Apparently by way of reassuring Scotsman readers of the basic ineffectiveness of this particular piece of Radical legislation, the correspondent continued after its ratification to depreciate the impact of the Fifteenth Amendment on the electoral life of the United States.[2] Yet, the underlying mixture of bitter condemnation and growing unease over the potential results of the measure could not be entirely suppressed. We have already observed the horror with which the correspondent viewed the entrance into city government of nine Negroes, following the 1869 municipal elections in Washington.[3] The evils of rampant democracy were implicitly blamed for producing a climate in which such a sorry state of affairs could spring up: "Universal suffrage prevails, and at this election the negroes, under the lead of certain unscrupulous white men, carried all before them...Universal suffrage has been 'run into the ground', and the argument of the equality of man has been reduced to an absurdity by what has been suffered to take place in Washington".[4] Such distrust, both of the role of the Negro in politics and of the principle of universal suffrage which had made such a role feasible

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1 U.S./c., New York, 27 Feb., 1869, in ibid., 13 March, 1869. The correspondent condemned as an "absurdity" the Senate's earlier proposal (defeated by the House of Representatives) that the Bill be extended to include no discrimination on account of race, colour, nativity, education, property, or creed.

2 U.S./c,, New York, 2 April, 1870, in ibid., 18 April, 1870. It was argued here that the Amendment really settled nothing because the Southern whites would soon find ways of excluding the black population from the suffrage, and that anyway the only Negroes directly affected by the new legislation were those outside the Southern states, the freedmen in the South having in effect been voters since the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment.

3 See above, Chapter V, pp. 620-621.

4 U.S./c., New York,12 June, 1869, in Scotsman, 24 June, 1869.

meant that the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment could not really be regarded without certain qualms, however inconsequential the legislation was understood to be in practice. Thus, President Grant, having been censured for making "rather ludicrous mis-statements and errors" about the effects of the move, was strongly criticized for rejoicing over "a measure which increases the number of ignorant and dangerous voters" and which, in its immediate prospects, constituted a danger rather than a blessing.[1]

So far as editorial comment was concerned, it was legislation consequent upon the Fifteenth Amendment which prompted the most vigorous reference at this time to the folly and irresponsibility of extending the franchise to a section of the community which was unfit to exercise it. The Bill so eagerly pounced upon by Russel's Scotsman - and significantly elevated by it into an act which "crown[ed]...the edifice of Reconstruction" - was one which provided for the execution of the Fifteenth Amendment by forbidding, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, all attempts to prevent coloured persons from freely exercising their rights as voters. By way of illustrating what the Bill really involved, and the dangerous lengths to which American radicalism was prepared to go, a crude analogy was drawn with a British situation. It was, the Scotsman explained, as if after the passage of the 1867 Reform Bill the Government had announced that the classes enfranchised were unable to take care of themselves and that a Bill would therefore have to be passed, inflicting a fine of £200 and imprisonment for a year on anyone who attempted directly or indirectly to prevent them from using their new powers or who failed to do everything possible to help them in that respect. The editor's own personal revulsion for such legislation was reflected in the paper's emphatic assertion that if such a Bill had been proposed in Britain, the response would simply have been

that men who required such watchful guardianship as this were

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1 U.S./c., New York, 2 April,1870, in ibid., 18 April, 1870.

> really not qualified for the franchise under any circumstances; having no independence of character, they would be swayed in their political action by those who assumed to protect them; and that the practical effect of the bill would be not so much to save them from intimidation as to secure their control by loving coercion.[1]

It becomes clear that the Scotsman's attack on the American Radicals was based not merely on the nature and content of their proposals but also on the motives which the paper assumed to lie behind the introduction of these measures. Hence, inasmuch as the Bill for safeguarding the principles of the Fifteenth Amendment apparently gave lavish protection to the Negro voter and none to the ignorant, poor white voter, it was branded a blatantly party measure, passed by the Republican majority in Congress from the fear that, if left to themselves, the Negro voters in the South would be intimidated into voting for the Southern Democrats. The legislation was seen to be aimed squarely at securing the Negro votes for the Republican party:

> [T]his new law, ostensibly framed for the purpose of preventing any interference with the negro voters for the purpose of keeping them from the polls, really furnishes means for shutting out the negroes from influence on one side but leaving them open to influence on the other side; and its purpose is to keep them in their present subjection to the Republican leaders, so that, if need be, they may be marshalled at the next election to vote en masse for Republican and Protectionist candidates...[2]

Before the Fifteenth Amendment itself had become a reality, the paper's United States correspondent had been indicating that only the old Abolitionist element in the Republican ranks desired to see the establishment of full political equality per se. The bulk of the party members, along with the great mass of the Northern people, were prepared to insist upon Negro suffrage only, he maintained, because they were afraid that the future success of the Republican party would be imperilled by the power of the

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1 Ibid., 9 June, 1870 (editorial).

2 Ibid.

Southern whites.[1] Such a cynical interpretation of Radical Republican motives accorded well with the Scotsman's general policy of heaping disparagement upon this sector in American politics, and it became standard practice to view Radical legislation for the extension of the Negroes' political rights in this light.

The paper's attitude was neatly epitomised in mid 1871 when, reviewing the recent political history of the two American parties, it concluded that the Republican leaders who had forced through Congress bills and constitutional amendments for Negro suffrage had been inspired exclusively by the belief that the freedmen would permanently be "ardent and unquestioning supporters" of the Republican party. "They deserve, for the enfranchisement of the negroes, just as much credit as is due to Mr. Disraeli and his Tory followers for the passage of the Reform Bill and no more". It was recalled that the same Republican politicians who had "thrust the ballot into the hands of the ignorant negroes of the South" had laboured for years to keep it from the potentially Democratic Irish and German immigrants; and the Republican party in general was charged with having a record of illiberal and narrow ideas, primarily the consequence of its having followed "the course of men tinged with 'New England' notions of political, economic, religious, and social duties; men who believed they were the saints, and that no one but themselves had any claim to share in the inheritance of the Earth".[2]

The pivot on which all these arguments and accusations ultimately turned was, of course, the basic conviction that the Negro population should not so rapidly have been enfranchised. The popular Northern desire immediately after the end of the Civil War to ensure that the South would not again easily disrupt or dominate the Union had, it was felt, been exploited by

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c., New Orleans), 4 June, 1867.

2 Ibid. (editorial) 26 June, 1871.

radical demagogues, chiefly concerned in gaining their own sordid political ends. The unhappy result had been an American people ready to believe that their national stability could best be secured "by suddenly converting the ignorant, degraded, and wholly irresponsible negro slaves of .... [the South] into freemen and giving to them the suffrage".[1] According to moderate Liberals like Russel, who perceived society in terms of horizontal planes moving very gradually and systematically upwards, the spectacular elevation of the lowly Negro race to a position of considerable power and prestige could only herald grave trials and confusions for the United States. Quite simply, Negro enfranchisement had upset the natural order of political hierarchy, causing unprecedented difficulties even in a country where safe, progressive advancement to the attainment of the franchise had always been sacrificed at the altar of universal suffrage. The "bottom rail has been placed on the top", and as a consequence, the new structure was seen to be dangerously unstable.[2] While the Scotsman realized that the Negroes could not actually lose the franchise or any of their new privileges, it was totally convinced that the restoration of equilibrium in the South could only be achieved by "giv[ing] back to property and intelligence that share in the management of local affairs which [has] been usurped by ignorance and poverty, and ... thus remov[ing] the sense of injustice and wrong under which the Southern whites [are] smarting".[3]

There was conspicuously no attempt on the Scotsman's part to suggest to its readers that Negro enfranchisement was necessary as an essential means of controlling the powers of Southern whites and of securing some degree of real freedom and justice for the black population. Yet, if the paper failed at this level to relate the legislation to the exceptional environment and

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1 Ibid., 19 Oct., 1872.

2 Ibid., 6 Sept., 1872.

3 Ibid.

circumstances which produced it, it was quick enough to condemn Negro suffrage in the wider context of condemning the general pattern of American universal suffrage. Deploring the municipal troubles which were racking New York and other large United States cities in the early 1870s, the Scotsman smugly identified as the origin of the difficulties a political system "which permits, and indeed incites, the men who possess no property, and who form the majority, to impose taxation upon the holders of property, who are in the minority". Negro enfranchisement could therefore be seen largely as a particularly invidious extension of a fundamentally irresponsible and dangerous system. Thus, while the small towns and rural districts of the East, Mid and Western states remained free from trouble because most of the voters were property holders, in the South, "where the franchise has lately been conferred upon nearly a million of negro men, who possess neither personal nor real estate, events have already occurred which are precisely similar in character to, although not so alarming in extent as, those which seem to make a revolution in New York probable".[1]

As the leading popular organ for disseminating the creed of moderate Liberalism in Scotland, it was only to be expected that Russel's Scotsman would positively reassert its faith in the wisdom of gradual, limited reform by adopting a clear-cut, hostile attitude towards Negro suffrage and to the political system which had spawned it. It has already become clear that in Scotland, as in Britain as a whole, the American Civil War itself helped to usher in a period of increasing pressures for substantial social, and, more especially, political change.[2] The Reconstruction era in the United States was therefore a time when Whigs and Conservatives on the other side of the Atlantic were obliged to keep up a constant offensive against the old enemy of American democracy; and in the maze of the American political

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1 Ibid., 14 Oct., 1871.

2 See above, Chapter III, pp. 289-305.

scene at this time, the straightforward issue of Negro enfranchisement provided an excellent focus for attacking the direction of the development of the American democratic ideal. With reference to this specific piece of American extremism, the Scotsman tended consistently to infer that radicalism, in attempting to strengthen its own hand, was steering the country into a course of disaster.

This thesis had early been foreshadowed in the letters of an emigrant Scot to the Aberdeen Free Press during the months immediately following the end of the Civil War. Writing from Milwaukee, "A Wisconsin Scot" stigmatized the more violent radicals as "some of the old Abolitionists [who] are again showing that fierce, unreasonable, and impracticable spirit which in days gone by has done so much to render the name 'Abolitionist' odious to every law-abiding American citizen". They were charged with seeking to introduce, through enfranchisement of the freedmen, a measure "full of disturbing elements...In the transition from a system of slavery to a system of voluntary labour, all disturbing elements should be avoided, and enfranchising the negro would have a most injurious effect".[1]

The message was later spelt out even more pertinently, when he indicated that a war of races could conceivably be the outcome of forcing the political equality of a "degraded" people on a recalcitrant South:

> It is all very well for you in Britain, where a negro is a kind of curiosity, to discuss this matter on abstract principles, but were the population of Aberdeen half-black and half-white, and a black and white candidate should run against each other (sic) for Parliament, and to the ordinarily intense excitement and feeling of the contest were added all the antipathies and prejudices of race, you can feebly conceive of the danger of a war of races and extinction of the weaker, arising from the extension of the franchise to those who were but yesterday in slavery.[2]

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1 Letter from "A Wisconsin Scot", Milwaukee, 27 June, 1865, in Aberdeen Free Press, 21 July, 1865.

2 Letter from "A Wisconsin Scot", Milwaukee, 6 Oct., 1865, in ibid., 27 Oct., 1865.

II The political impulse for Negro suffrage: Republican motivations under attack

While the Scotsman later voiced similar sentiments as part of its general plan to discredit the concept of universal suffrage, not all moderate Liberals who directed their attention towards the Republican proposals to enfranchise the Negroes were quite so preoccupied with the business of denouncing American radicalism for the purpose of strengthening the British style of politics. In the case of the Marquis of Lorne, for instance, the concern was less that an excess of American democracy might spill out and contaminate British political institutions than that the Radicals in Congress would push their demands too far and precipitate a disastrous intensification of racial hostility in the South. Visiting the United States when the country was in the throes of the conflict over the Civil Rights Bill, and himself adopting a highly ambivalent attitude towards that measure,[1] Lorne estimated that many thinking Southerners might just be prepared to accept Negro suffrage, so great was their desire to re-enter the Union. But at the same time, he stressed forcibly how dangerously unwise it would be for the Congressional Radicals to "push their demands too far".[2] Finding feelings in the South already exceedingly bitter, he warned that if the further extremes of radical policy were pushed through, the Radicals would defeat their own stated aims of protecting and helping the freedmen. The implementation of proposals such as those mooted by Thaddeus Stevens "would tell terribly against the negroes, by setting every white man's hand against them throughout the length and breadth of 'Dixie'".[3]

In his opposition to plans which would press too intolerably on the Southern whites and might result in a race war, there is evidence that Lorne

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1 See above, Chapter IV, pp. 382-385.

2 Marquis of Lorne, A Trip to the Tropics, p. 263.

3 Ibid., pp.263-264. See also ibid., p. 303

personally believed the demand for Negro suffrage to be excessive. We have already observed that Sumner's views on this subject helped to influence him substantially to agree with the British Ambassador, Sir Frederick Bruce's, assessment of the Massachusetts Senator as "the extreme of the extremes".[1] And he was confident that in Virginia at least, the passage of the Civil Rights Bill alone would ensure that the Negroes would not be intimidated and exploited, that they would get justice in the courts of the State, and that "no measures such as the immediate giving of the franchise...are necessary for their comfort".[2]

If Lorne's views on the Civil Rights Bill itself had been equivocal, his attitude towards the more precise issue of Negro enfranchisement carried all the positive certainty of one who had based his opinion on a first-hand experience of the post-war situation in America. Looking out, from the Scottish side of the Atlantic, on United States' proposals at roughly the same period, those who conducted the Edinburgh based Daily Review lamented the difficulties of attempting to form a clear judgement on the question from so great a distance. The paper was fully conversant with the Republican arguments that if the Negroes were not immediately granted the suffrage they would be kept in virtual slavery and would constitute a continuing embarassment while if they got the vote, the South, for its own sake, would be induced to educate and elevate them into responsible citizens. The Review, however, remained "not quite sure" that this reasoning would be borne out by the facts.[3]

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1 Marquis of Lorne to Duchess of Argyll, Washington, 22 April, 1866, Letters of the 9th Duke..., Argyll MSS. This letter is an account of a visit by Lorne to Sir Frederick Bruce. Bruce's official letters on the mood of the South immediately after the war had been eagerly studied by the Duke of Argyll - see Duke of Argyll to Duchess of Argyll, Balmoral, 26 May, 1865, AFL, Argyll MSS.; and he appears to have written personally to the Duke on this subject - see Duke of Argyll to Duchess of Argyll, Balmoral, n.d. (probably late May, 1865) in which Bruce is quoted as having said that the slaveholders alone among the Southern population had been responsible for keeping up the war.
For Lorne's reference to Sumner's extremism, see above, Chapter IV.p. 384.

2 Marquis of Lorne, A Trip to the Tropics, p. 334.

3 Daily Review, 22 Sept., 1866.

The uncertainty, strongly tinged with scepticism, about proposed legislation for Negro enfranchisement was paralleled, however, by a genuine attempt to define the relative positions and attitudes of both American political parties on the issue. It was judged that the Democrats, in dwelling upon the dangers of Negro suffrage, appealed strongly to the large section of the American people who cared little for the philanthropic doctrines of the Abolitionists or for the party theorists, and who "wished merely to get rid of the negro question". The effectiveness of the Democratic line of argument could be appreciated in Britain, the Review suggested, by recalling how the proposal to lower borough qualification from £10 to £7 had recently led to widespread agitation and the overthrow of Russel's ministry.[1]

But while the Review was prepared to conclude that the Democratic argument would influence the thinking of many Americans, it was readier than the capital's other organ of moderate Liberalism, the Scotsman, to acknowledge some thread of consistency in Radical Republican aims. In the Review's estimation, the Republican drive to secure immediate Negro enfranchisement, however rash and unconstitutional, was simply the logical extension of what had been the wartime fight by the party to establish a new Union on an altered basis, rather than to preserve the old Union: "They [the Republicans during the Civil War] aimed at the emancipation of the negroes not merely from actual servitude but from political, and, as far as possible, social inferiority. They wanted for the blacks not only liberty to choose their own masters and make their own bargains, but also to elect their own representatives".[2] The post-war Congressional Republicans were accordingly credited with at least some measure of sincerity in their zeal to see their policy prevail.

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

Yet, a journal which could not really approve of so radical a step as the enfranchisement of "a newly emancipated race" could not remain oblivious to the consideration that in offering their highly charged arguments in favour of Negro suffrage, the Radical Republicans were consciously putting forward a plausible case which "may serve to counteract the Democrats, and make the electoral scales hang pretty even".[1] Later, when the working of the Fourteenth Amendment appeared to have secured a fair degree of political power for the freedmen, the Review concluded that the Republicans, in seeking to strengthen their own position by disfranchising the Southern whites and making the Negro "master at the polls of the South", had "overrun their victory" and lost the confidence of the American public.[2]

Whatever the degree of scepticism or downright opposition shown towards American moves to immediately enfranchise the Negroes, there was an irresistable temptation on the part of most Scottish moderate Liberals and Conservatives sooner or later to impute to the Radical Republicans essentially mercenary motives for their insistence on this particular measure. Despite the lukewarm nature of its "Conservatism" (especially as it related to outlooks on the United States) and the fact that it had avidly supported the North during the Civil War, even William Forsyth's Aberdeen Journal clearly exhibited this tendency. Averse both to the concept of Negro suffrage, and to the implacable bitterness and intransigence of the Southern people which precluded the possibility of their co-operating with Northern politicians to fashion a mutually satisfactory Reconstruction policy, the

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., 9 Dec., 1867. See also ibid., 30 Aug., 1867 for the report of an American correspondent in New York who stressed that the Radicals' views on the Negro were not at all representative of general United States' views: "The sun shines upon the black man because he is wanted for a purpose".

Journal deeply regretted that the actions of the Southerners might "induce the [Federal] Government to fall back on the sable hosts of niggerdom" as a necessary means of reinforcing North against South.[1]

Such an unedifying prospect was naturally seen to present a highly undesirable method of settling the question of Negro enfranchisement, more especially since the majority of Northerners were recognized to be opposed to the idea of elevating the black freedmen to their own political level. It was the acceptance of this premise - the belief that most people in the North held the emancipation of the Negro race to be enough for one generation "without the gratuitous elevation of the slaves of yesterday into the position of citizens" - which chiefly influenced the Journal to argue that the contrasting "exuberant philanthropy" of the Radicals towards the Negro was largely stimulated by hostility to old Southern foes, and a related desire to safeguard their own political leadership. The crux of the matter was that for the Aberdeen Journal, no less than for the much more pro-Southern elements in the Scottish press (the Scotsman and the Daily Review are convenient enough examples here), there was something basically contemptible about the spectacle of a radical faction simultaneously attempting to spite its enemies and to hold on to power by wilfully seeking to place ignorance above centuries of accomplishment. The Radicals, it was considered, "prefer risking the peace and integrity of the Union to contemplating the possibility of the Southern people raising their heads into prosperity and power, and exercising the authority of the superior race over the ignorant African".[2]

Yet, although the Journal gravely acknowledged that a measure so revolutionary as the immediate enfranchisement of the American Negroes had

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1 Aberdeen Journal, 13 Sept., 1865.

2 Ibid.

seldom been deliberately adopted by any country, the paper, despite all its natural "Conservative" proclivities against it, was not slow to suggest to its readers that so far as British interests were concerned, there was much positive advantage in the American Radicals' proposals. Indeed, the singular result of the Aberdeen Journal's careful weighing up of priorities in relation to the question of Negro suffrage serves to remind us once again of the complexities which so frequently characterized Scottish responses to all aspects of Reconstruction and Reconstruction legislation.

If the Radical Republicans envisaged the Negro vote as a defence against the hostile politics of the South, the Aberdeen Journal envisaged it just as clearly as a defence against the hostile politics of the Fenians in America. For Britain, it was suggested, "the black cloud has a silver lining", inasmuch as Negro votes could be counted on totally to swamp the votes of American Fenians, thereby making peace with the United States easier to maintain. At a time when the growing impact of Fenianism on United States politics was beginning to cause real consternation in Britain,[1] the Journal felt justified in voicing serious qualms about the influence of the huge number of Irish in America: "Their vote is a multitudinous plumper, given for the loudest denunciation of England, and the heartiest approval of an English war". There was even a tentative suggestion that black suffrage was being engineered by certain elements in the United States for the specific purpose of neutralizing the Irish vote:

> [T]hose who wish to keep peace with this country see nothing for it but the swamp of the Irish vote by the vote of the negroes, whom the Irish, to their sore distress, have aided in emancipating [a reference to the Irish regular soldiers and mercenaries in the Northern armies]...A great body of Irishmen, in any American State, acting together on the blind impulse of hatred to England, is a disease which would almost justify the rough treatment of dosing the constitution with the whole negro population.[2]

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1 See Brian Jenkins, Fenians and Anglo-American Relations during Reconstruction (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1969), passim.

2 Aberdeen Journal, "The Fenians and the Black Vote", 27 Sept., 1865.

At the same time, the flirtation of both the Republican and Democratic parties with the Fenian vote[1] could not be ignored, and while the Journal was confident that the Brotherhood's power could be broken by the Negro vote, it deplored the American political machinations which had necessitated recourse to such drastic action: "[B]lack as that vote will be to America in more senses than one, the cowardice of American legislators has made it almost necessary, as a means of destroying the influence of the Irish party, which will otherwise bring them into new and endless troubles with Great Britain".[2]

Among the more ultra-Conservative elements in Scotland, however, nothing, not even the dreaded bogey of transatlantic Fenianism, could mitigate the horror with which they contemplated the establishment of early Negro enfranchisement. For its part, the Edinburgh Courant was strongly inclined to see the agitation for such legislation in terms of an intensification - albeit a somewhat spectacular one - of the desperate struggle between the forces of dangerous extremism and the forces of sane moderation in the United States.

In this model, the Radicals were broadly synonymous with the Abolitionists

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1 See Jenkins, Fenians and Anglo-American Relations, passim.
At the same time, there was, of course, a great deal of Anglophobia in Congress and among the Radicals, some of it arising from genuine chagrin at British hostility to the Union cause in the Civil War, some of it partly on vaguer and more chauvinistic grounds. Zachariah Chandler, for example, was seldom at a loss for an unfavourable epithet where Britain was concerned. What is interesting about Chandler and others like him is that while they undoubtedly annoyed many English observers, their contributions were largely ignored in Scotland, or dismissed as Fenian, which they certainly were not. It may have been that the Scots took relatively little notice of American Anglophobia because they recognised that it was Anglophobia and therefore regarded themselves as exempt from it, at least to the degree that they were insensitive to its expression. In this curiously negative way, Scottish commentators may thus have exhibited a certain national Scottish identity.

2 Aberdeen Journal, 27 Sept., 1865.

the latter group's "fanatical" activities during, and prior to, the Civil War having earned them special opprobrium as instigators of the peculiar brand of post-war "negrophilist" radicalism. It was stressed that "The triumph of the Abolitionists at the crisis of the American Civil War is another proof of the power of extreme parties, however small, in times of revolution". Following their success at that period, the Abolitionists during the early months of Reconstruction were "presuming on their triumph at the moment of national crisis" to push for Negro suffrage.[1] It was an article of the Courant's Conservative faith that all such "preposterous", extreme demands should be vigorously challenged and ultimately defeated by the combined weight of conservatism and moderatism. To have wavered in its strict acceptance of this belief would have been to entertain the unthinkable possibility that the forces of radicalism could triumph in the United States and, ipso facto, in Britain itself. Accordingly, taking encouragement from the opposition of Johnson, the Democrats, and the Conservative Republicans within Congress to all "extreme" measures of Reconstruction, the Courant identified the existence of a powerful unity of American Conservatives and Liberals working actively against the American Radicals and their odious aims of transferring the balance of political power to "the lowest of the population".[2]

So committed was the Courant to viewing Congressional Reconstruction policies in terms of a developing Radical offensive which must be strenuously combated that it was even prepared to differ with the London Times' interpretation of the American situation, and its attitude towards Johnson and the Fourteenth Amendment. The Times by the autumn of 1866 was showing

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 8 Sept., 1865

2 Ibid. It has already been indicated that the Courant saw Johnson as leading a fight for Conservatism against radicalism in the United States and in so doing, contributing to the confusion of radical forces on a more international scale - see above, Chapter IV, p. 394.

some signs of believing that things were beginning to move towards a peaceful termination of the turmoil which had characterized the earlier months of Reconstruction, and as a means of facilitating this process, it urged Johnson to accept the Fourteenth Amendment. The Edinburgh Courant, however, was prepared to declare that the London journal (on which so great a proportion of the Scottish press relied) was totally mistaken on this issue. Far from a prospect of satisfactory political development looming up on the horizon, the Radicals, it was stressed, had already gone beyond the confines of the Fourteenth Amendment to press for Negro suffrage. In these circumstances, for Johnson and the South to accept the Fourteenth Amendment would be "a retreat in the face of the foe rather than a signature of peace". Whatever the ultimate fate of the Amendment, "the battle remain[ed] to be fought" on whether or not the whites were to be subjugated to the blacks in the South - on whether, in other words, the "violent and tyrannical" policy of the Radicals was to succeed.[1] Much, it was implied, already required to be done to correct the evils perpetrated by the onward march of radicalism in the post-war United States. The deplorably corrupt state to which American politics had been reduced by the Radicals' activities was pointed to as a lesson to the "sincere (if there are any such) among advocates of manhood suffrage on our side of the Atlantic".[2]

The sincerity of the American Radicals in purportedly seeking to legislate for the welfare of the black population was predictably challenged and rejected by the Courant. As late as 1874, in the wake of the New Orleans riot and sporadic racial disturbances throughout the South, the Edinburgh journal showed itself to be still bitterly lucid in its condemnation

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 17 Oct., 1866.

2 Ibid.

of what it held to be Northern measures to keep the South paralysed. The Radical solution of Negro enfranchisement had been seized upon, it was argued, as a means of "keeping the South down, vexing its peace, and condemning it to poverty and industrial inaction". The wider ramifications of Negro suffrage, such as the introduction of "the scum of the Northern towns, their streets, their bars, their lager-beer saloons, and their hells" to protect the black voter from intimidation by Southern whites, had all been calculated to keep the South in a state of heinous political and social subjection. Radicalism, as the Courant was never slow to recognise, was in practice a tyrannical doctrine, and its persistent influence on the policies adopted during the formative post-war years did much to convince the Conservative journal that the United States would achieve neither a rapid nor a satisfactory reconstruction of the Union: "so long as the Federal Executive upholds this hideous system of governing a brave and intelligent people by a despotism of negroes and white scoundrels, there is no prospect of a permanent restoration of peace".[1]

Nowhere in the Scottish press, however, were the American Radicals more consistently denounced for having introduced Negro suffrage to serve their personal objectives than in Charles Mackay's articles for Blackwood's Magazine. Combining his deep personal dislikes of American Negroes and American Radicals, Mackay forcefully hammered out the message that only gross self-interest had caused the Radical Republicans to agitate for the enfranchisement of a section of the community which was seriously incapable, in every respect, of responsibly exercising electoral power.

A main feature of Mackay's argument was that the policy of the Radicals was in no way inspired by genuine affection and concern for the Negro race. Such sentiments, he implied, simply were not impelling forces in the United

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1 Ibid., 19 Sept., 1874. See also ibid., 13 Oct., 1876

States. Indeed, he took pains to indicate that the great bulk of the American people, in the North as well as in the South, treated the Negro with aversion. And so far as the question of political rights was concerned, he made much of the familiar, often cited point that the Negro was not a full citizen in any State of the Union and that his exclusion - whether it be from social or political rights and privileges - was frequently made purely on the grounds of colour.[1] Attending the Republican Convention at Baltimore in June, 1864, he had been bewildered by the Abolitionists' "cruel love for the black man's rights, unaccompanied by any love whatever for the black man himself",[2] and his utter contempt for such hypocrisy persisted and was significantly intensified in relation to the question of Negro suffrage. Strongly objecting to the attempt to impeach Johnson, and supporting the President's vetoes, he denounced the Radical Republicans'

> eternal babble about the negroes ... the continual hypocrisy of interest in the welfare of the freedman, the sole object of which was to obtain the negro vote for the Republican party in the election of 1868, after which the negro might starve or rot for all that the party cared, until his vote should be again required in the election of 1872.[3]

As a staunch Conservative who shared the Edinburgh Courant's great desire to see the United States rid of the spectre of extreme radicalism and made the home of more moderate counsels, Mackay's animus towards the Radicals was not directed solely at their "pretended love" for the Negro but also, in

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1 Mackay, "The Negro and the Negrophilists" in Blackwood's Magazine, May, 1866, Vol. 99, p. 592.
The London Times, for instance, was very strong in arguing that while the Republicans were attempting to force Negro suffrage on the South, the North did not have it and did not want it - see Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 161.

2 Mackay, Forty Years' Recollections, Vol. 2, p. 435.

3 Mackay, "The American Constitution and the Impeachment of the President" in Blackwood's Magazine, June, 1868, Vol. 103, p. 712. See also "The impending crisis in America" in ibid., Nov., 1867, Vol. 102, p. 636, where it was suggested that Negro political support was almost essential to secure a Republican victory in the Presidential election of 1868.

double measure, at the "real hatred" for the South which animated their chiefs and leaders and which so catastrophically alienated moderate elements within the Republican party and in the country at large. In what he saw as the Radicals' creation and appropriation of the Negro vote for their own selfish and spiteful purposes, Mackay discerned something of the essentially savage ethos of radicalism which, in the minds of British Conservatives and moderate Liberals, could be expected to surface wherever the monster of extremism came to predominate. Thus, he considered that Southern compliance, generous and admirable though it had been, had finally been unable to keep up with the harsh requirements of a Radical faction "thirst[ing] for power and pelf", and unscrupulous in its methods of getting them. For Mackay and those who thought as he did, it was of the essence of radicalism that its demands were completely unreasonable, incapable of being acceded to by those of a more moderate political faith because in the long run, they were demands which precluded even the natural course of debate and compromise. "To reason with the whirlwind", he declared, "is about as wise as to reason with fanaticism, when fanaticism sniffs either blood or plunder, or discovers any available method for the perpetuation of its supremacy".[1]

Mackay was enabled the better to charge the American Radicals with blatantly mercenary motives for introducing Negro suffrage by citing, out of context, severely truncated statements by Wendell Phillips and Thaddeus Stevens, in which they appeared simply to argue that the black vote was necessary merely in order to give the Republican party control of the elections in all the Southern states.[2] He was even prepared to identify the Freedmen's

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1 Mackay, "The American Constitution and the Impeachment of the President" in ibid., June, 1868, Vol. 103, p. 713.

2 Ibid., p. 712. Stevens and Phillips did maintain that Negro suffrage was essential to keep the Republican party in power, but behind this blunt admission was the sincere belief that only by ensuring that the Republicans held on to office could there be any prospect of the freedmen's rights and privileges being honoured, and his actual liberty guaranteed, in the early post-war years.

Bureau as the instrument for effecting these Radical aims. Attributing to the Bureau as much sinister political importance as he did to the Loyal Leagues, he castigated the Bureau offices as "agencies" established by Northern extremists, "the ostensible object being the protection of the freedmen against the anticipated oppression of their former masters; the real object being the organisation of the negroes into a political party for the support of the Radical candidate for the Presidency in 1868".[1] The charge was groundless, but as Mackay had shown during his period as the Times' correspondent on the Civil War, he was never hesitant about making unsubstantiated statements on American affairs if he felt that by so doing the morale of international Conservatism could be strengthened. And the move towards legislation for Negro enfranchisement could be counted a development on a par with the defeat of the Southern Confederacy in causing consternation in Conservative ranks.

III The franchise a privilege, not a right: the significance of a pervasive concept.

Mackay's spirited attacks on the self-seeking Reconstruction policy of the Radicals ultimately derived their stimulus, of course, from an uncompromising opposition to the concept of Negro enfranchisement. In common with his Conservative and Whig contemporaries in Scotland, he was appalled by the proposition that a large number of uneducated, propertyless, and generally dependent individuals should be legally invested with full electoral powers. With characteristically forthright language, he denounced the elevation of "two millions of ignorant and brutal negro paupers, totally unfitted for the exercise of any political duty",[2] and in linking the evil of Negro suffrage to the wider evil of universal suffrage as it existed in the United States, he vindicated Southern hostility to Radical measures by

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1 Mackay, "The impending crisis in America" in Blackwood's Magazine, Nov., 1867, Vol. 102, p. 644. See also ibid., p. 640

2 Ibid., p. 635.

asserting that Southerners, "like wise men elsewhere in Old and New England", were naturally unhappy about giving the vote to "the poorest of the poor" and the "utterly uneducated".[1]

This familiar line of criticism, as it related both to white manhood suffrage and to the more specific question of Negro suffrage, was solidly rooted in the equally familiar Conservative doctrine that the franchise was a privilege, not a right. Pessimistically recording misdemeanours by the Negro voters at the polls in the South, Mackay deplored their "stupid and dishonest tampering with the sacred right conferred upon them".[2] Almost two decades later, in depicting "the acknowledgement of the rights of millions of black men to the suffrage" as one of the main dangers to American stability, he was still totally convinced that the great, fundamental error of ultra-democracy in the United States was its insistence that the power of voting was a right, instead of a privilege to be acquired or conceded for the community's good:

> To teach the people - whether white or black - that the suffrage is a right which it is unjust and tyrannical to withhold from them, is to instil into the minds of the ignorant and needy among them that it is a right which they may turn to pecuniary and other personal advantage at the expense of men of a superior class in society who are so eager in asking for its exercise in their favour.[3]

Such standard views on the franchise were the natural currency of men of Mackay's political persuasion. At the same time, however, it was by no means only the ultra-Conservatives and the Whigs who on this issue were restricted by the straight-jacket of contemporary thinking on the nature of the franchise and the power of exercising it. The recognition of the suffrage as a privilege rather than a right also permeated into the ranks

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1 Mackay, "Manhood Suffrage and the Ballot in America" in ibid., April, 1867, Vol. 101, p.477.

2 Mackay, "The impending crisis in America" in ibid., Nov., 1867, Vol.102, p. 652.

3 Mackay, The Founders of the American Republic, pp. 419-420.

of those who were decidedly liberal in their general attitudes towards and concern for the future status of the freedmen. This meant in effect that certain elements which were highly sympathetic to Republican attempts to secure a real measure of freedom and justice for the Negroes by such devices as the Freedmen's Bureau and civil rights legislation were either uneasily sceptical about the wisdom of immediately granting the franchise to the unprepared ex-slaves, or distinctly opposed to the proposal.

One explicit example of the way in which an individual who had the American freedmen's cause sincerely at heart could be significantly blinkered in his attitude towards moves for immediate Negro suffrage by this ingrained view of the vote as a privilege is afforded by the Edinburgh Review's commentator on Reconstruction, Peter Clayden. We have already observed Clayden's continuing commitment, as editor of the Daily News, to the advocacy of measures designed to improve the quality of life for the freedmen,[1] and his positive recognition, voiced in the Edinburgh Review, of the need for early Federal legislation to guarantee essential civil rights for the Negro population.[2] It was also noted, however, that his enthusiasm for such legislation was paralleled by an anxious desire to see it implemented without undue extension of central power.[3]

The same concern that the Federal Government should not infringe the American Constitution by seriously overstepping the boundaries of states' rights and legislation naturally existed also in relation to Congressional moves to enfranchise the Negroes. Accordingly, although Clayden was ready to stress that Congressional power to protect the freedmen in the initial stages of their liberty was a necessary corollary of emancipation,[4] he was

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1 See above, Chapter III, p. 239.

2 See above, Chapter IV, p. 390-391.

3 See ibid.

4 Clayden, "The Reconstruction", p.553.

not prepared to sanction Federal intervention to extend the political franchise to them. He eagerly supported the Fourteenth Amendment, but considered further Constitutional Amendments undesirable, harbouring as he did very grave doubts about the wisdom of Congress becoming empowered with the right to decide who should and should not vote in the several states.[1] Sticking strictly to the Constitution as his guide-line, he carefully vindicated his position of defending Federal action on civil rights for Negroes and rejecting it on the issue of electoral representation. The question of Negro suffrage differed from that of Negro liberty, he suggested, as civil rights differed from "political privileges". His basic contention simply was that while the American Constitution guaranteed certain "inalienable rights" to all full citizens of the Republic, it did not demand the establishment of universal suffrage but provided, indeed, that each state should determine the numbers which would have electoral power within it.[2]

Clayden's strong dislike of the prospect of over-centralization in the United States and his respect for the letter of the Constitution were certainly genuine feelings, deeply held. But so far as these sentiments are reflected in his attitude to Negro suffrage, it might be suggested that they were governed by a yet deeper underlying conviction which had little to do with the argument for preserving intact the American Constitution - the conviction that in all places, and for all races, the electoral franchise was a privilege which had to be won by displaying certain evidence of an ability to exercise it. At the bottom of Clayden's concern for the sanctity of post-war state rights on this issue there was the standard acceptance of the vote as property, as a privilege to be conferred, rather

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1 Ibid., p. 552

2 Ibid., p. 554

than as a right due to all and therefore enforceable by Federal legislation.

He certainly believed that full justice to the Negro population included "political privileges" as well as civil rights, and he was buoyantly confident that the time for this would come without too much difficulty and frustration.[1] But, like less sanguine observers in Scotland, he recognized that that stage would only be reached when the freedmen had attained a standard of education and application to labour sufficient to entitle them to receive the suffrage. It was as clear for him as it was the hostile Mackay, or for Russel of the Scotsman, that the immediate practical difficulty which should decisively dissuade the American Radicals from their course was "the obvious unfitness for political responsibility of that vast mass of uneducated and half-civilised negroes, who have but just emerged from slavery".[2]

Clayden, indeed, envisaged the progress of the Negroes towards "political privileges", as he constantly called it, in terms of clearly definable steps forward. From the initial stage of elevation from "utter helplessness" to a "free and guarded minority", they would, by an essentially gradual process, ascend to a further transitional stage of wardship, and finally to the full powers and privileges of political manhood. He was highly optimistic that this total transition could be smoothly effected mainly because he foresaw a huge demand for free black labour in the Southern states. The natural concomitants of this - competition among employers, high wages and good treatment for the workers - must ultimately, he believed, guarantee the acquisition of civil rights and the franchise for the Negroes.

> When one State leads the way in this direction others will be obliged to follow, then the second great enfranchisement of the negro race will take place. By that time they will be fitted for it. They will have served an apprenticeship to freedom.[3]

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1 Ibid., p. 554.

2 Ibid., p. 555

3 Ibid., p. 550

Since he was opposed to the immediate adoption of any educational or property qualifications which would have the effect of exacerbating Southern unrest by disfranchising multitudes of poor whites in the South, Clayden was totally convinced that the safest and best, as well as the reasonable, course for the Negroes was to wait, content with civil rights, until they were genuinely capable of using political power responsibly. In failing seriously to consider the American Radicals' arguments as to why, in the exigencies of the Reconstruction situation, Negro enfranchisement was urgently necessary to secure real Negro freedom, his reasoning was a classic example of the narrow but extremely common practice of applying exclusively British criteria for voting to a unique American issue. Hence he argued that with the security afforded them as wards of the Federal Government, the freedmen, "may fit themselves for the political enfranchisement that industry and quiet plodding will be sure to win. It is justice and not favouritism they need - rights, not privileges - protection, not power - equality before the law, not equality in making the law".[1]

There is no reason to suppose that Clayden's attitude as expressed in the Edinburgh Review was not broadly representative of that held by a substantial proportion of Scots noted for their zealous concern for the freed Negroes and, incidentally, for their generally sympathetic outlook towards American democracy. Although he tended to make pretty-sounding but essentially non-committal statements about being "sorry if any rebel State is re-admitted into the Union where the right of suffrage is to depend on the colour of a man's skin",[2] W.E. Baxter, for instance, probably entertained private doubts about the wisdom of immediately entrusting the

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1 Ibid., p. 555

2 See speech by Baxter at a freedmen's aid meeting held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865. See also speech made at a similar meeting in Ward Chapel, 6 Jan., 1868, in ibid., 7 Jan., 1868.

black population with the franchise. It will be recalled that while Baxter was one of Scotland's most advanced radicals, in all his vigorous campaigning for electoral reform he at no time advocated the imminent establishment of universal manhood suffrage in Britain.[1] He was fully prepared to acknowledge that he did not base the franchise on "the doctrine of abstract right", but that he had long and consistently believed "that in a free country every man should possess a vote who can exercise his privilege intelligently and independently".[2] It is logical to suppose, then, that had he been pressed to make an explicit public statement on the issue (rather than conveniently vague comments designed to please audiences at freedmen's aid meetings), Baxter would have expressed the familiar reservations about granting the suffrage to a large, uneducated and propertyless section of the American community.

Descending from consideration of the divinely inspired abolition of slavery to consideration of the very human and fallible arrangement and manipulation of political power, even the Reformed Presbyterian church in Scotland was apprehensive over the prospect of the ex-slaves being too hastily invested with privileges which they were not ready competently to use. It was all very well to "unfeignedly rejoice that...the unhallowed traffic by man in the bones and sinews of his fellow-men has been terminated",[3] but it was somewhat less reassuring to contemplate that "the captives [who] have obtained their freedom" would forthwith be the objects of legislation to give them full social and political rights and privileges. Yet, the common tacit assumption that the issue of Negro enfranchisement could and should be resolved in Reconstruction America by reference to

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1 See above, Chapter III, pp. 300-301.

2 Speech by Baxter at a meeting of electors and non-electors, convened for the purpose of re-nominating him as M.P. for Montrose Burghs, in Montrose Assembly Hall, 5 July, 1865, in Dundee Courier, 7 July, 1865.

3 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, "Notes on Public Affairs", Aug., 1865, p. 310.

British standards and concepts regarding franchise extension was significantly modified in Reformed Presbyterian thinking. In making value judgements on moves for Negro enfranchisement, the contributor to the church's monthly magazine certainly displayed a greater perception than most Scottish commentators were prepared openly to show of the singular nature of the American problem, of the necessity to consider the requirements of the American Constitution and of popular American democracy, as well as the practical wisdom of the proposal:

> [T]he outcarrying even of what is right [i.e. freedom and equality for the American Negroes] will prove difficult, after disorder and wrong have so greatly prevailed. The blacks are ill prepared for using aright the privileges of citizenship. They have been studiously and systematically kept in ignorance and debasement. Passing suddenly from a condition downtrodden and oppressed to one of equality, they are in danger of using their power unwisely, and even injudicously. On the other hand, it will be a violation of the fundamental principles of the Constitution to deny them equal rights with the whites.[1]

Recognition of a possible unique American justification for the early establishment of Negro enfranchisement did not, of course, lessen the disturbing doubts and misgivings which so many Scots felt about the practical wisdom of the proposal. Acknowledging the difficulties and strained racial relations which existed as early as August, 1865 in the South, the Reformed Presbyterian church could only base its hopes on the future by trusting that those in power would be "guided aright", and that "the labours employed by Christians for the instruction and elevation of their long injured brethern will, through the blessing of God, be crowned with abundant success".[2] But for most sympathetic Scottish observers at this period, there could not really be so facile a recourse to pious hopes. In effect, the sensitive issue of Negro enfranchisement had, in some cases, thrown out

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1 Ibid., p. 310. Clayden, of course, had side-stepped this possible ground of justification for Radical action on the Negro franchise by denying that American democracy demanded for its vindication the introduction of such a measure.

2 Ibid., p. 310.

a challenge to Scots of a proven sympathetic bent towards the American Negro to maintain their "liberal" outlook in this regard. It was a troubling, awkward proposition for many of the friends of the Negro in Scotland.

Caught squarely on the horns of the dilemma were the Duke and Duchess of Argyll. With a formidable commitment to the cause of the American Negro stretching back to the 1840s and actively preserved beyond the Civil War period, the Argylls were concerned to see during Reconstruction the positive securing of freedom and the guarantee of a fair chance for the black population in the United States. At the same time, however, they were also aristocrats of the Victorian era, and as such, they shared the prejudice of their class - and, indeed, as we have seen, the prejudice of the bulk of Scots of much lower social rank - against the principle of admitting uneducated and dependent elements of the community to the electoral franchise. With the Argylls, too, the suffrage, in Britain at least, was something looked upon as a privilege, not a right.

Under these circumstances, the ultimate insistence by American Radicals (and by at least the Wendell Phillips' wing of the American Abolitionists) that the Negroes' continued freedom could only in practice be ensured by means of their immediate enfranchisement inevitably raised very considerable difficulties for both aristocratic champions of the freedmen. The problem of how best to respond to these fundamentally distasteful Radical assertions from across the Atlantic was compounded by the frequent personal exhortations of Charles Sumner, who appears to have bombarded his Scottish friends with arguments designed to convince them of the absolute necessity of immediately investing the American Negroes with political power. Because of the survival of their concern for the welfare of the black population in the United States, their admission that the precise nature of the American situation and its requirements were difficult to judge, and their reluctance

totally to reject the considered opinion of so old and trusted a friend as Sumner, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll were unable to share the easy, outright expression of opposition which their pro-Southern son, the Marquis of Lorne, directed towards Radical proposals to introduce Negro suffrage. Although their misgivings on the issue were probably only marginally less grave than were those of Lorne, both the Duke and the Duchess chose thinly to veil their hostility to the scheme by conveying rather a sense of scepticism about it, and by pleading a substantial degree of ignorance about how necessary it might be under the circumstances.

The essence of the Argylls' difficulty in being forced to attempt to reconcile their sympathetic interest in the freedmen with their strong dislike of the prospect of political power being wielded by the uneducated and propertyless was well illustrated in a letter from the Duke to Sumner in July, 1865:

> Of course here where the suffrage is not considered a right, I don't feel sure of the negro suffrage being good policy. But if there is any risk of re-enslavement it may be the only protection.[1]

This uncertainty of attitude was, however, most consistently demonstrated in the correspondence of Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll. With the Civil War barely two months over, the disagreeable question of black suffrage had already intruded, and given rise to consternation and indecision such as had never previously disturbed the Duchess' smooth, abolitionist outlooks towards the status of the American Negro. Regretfully noting the current reports of an intended massacre by Negroes at Fort Pillow, she anxiously wrote to her husband in early June, 1865, "Such things make one doubt about giving the franchise till they have had some training of freedom. But we cannot judge, probably".[2]

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1 Duke of Argyll to Charles Sumner, Privy Seal Office, 7 July, 1865, PMHA, pp. 89-90. Original emphasis.

2 Duchess of Argyll to Duke of Argyll, Cliveden, Maidenhead, 5 June, 1865, AFL, Argyll MSS.

It was in her letters to Sumner that she naturally displayed her greatest efforts both to appreciate the apparent exigencies of the American situation which had helped to mould the Senator's conviction, and to define and explain her own opinions on the question of enfranchisement. By the autumn of 1865, she was trying to reassure Sumner that she was beginning to understand what he felt about Negro suffrage - "that it is the necessary security for the freedom of [the] black race, and of course so thinking you cannot but strive for it with all your heart and strength".[1] She herself agreed heartily that it would be a "bitter thought" if the freedom of the race were not secured at that time. Simultaneously, however, the Duchess was more than ready to offer some cautionary advice for her abolitionist friend to ponder on: "Do not think too little of the great gains already won, even if political rights are delayed". And she was even prepared to imply that she personally felt deferment of black suffrage was desirable in order to help conciliate the South.[2]

It seems possible that a new slightly adverse and disappointing view of the Negro character, formed as a result of the influence of Lorne's letters from Jamaica and the West Indies,[3] and a distaste for the current struggle between Congress and President had, by the spring of 1866, combined with the usual frustration in contemplating Negro suffrage to produce a hardening of the Duchess' attitude. Certainly, while she commiserated with Sumner on the great loss sustained by the nation through the death of Lincoln, she was not prepared to throw her support solidly behind the Congressional Radicals by condemning Johnson, but rather to suggest that "this man [Johnson] does know the South, and his reputation is bound up with the

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1 Duchess of Argyll to Charles Sumner, Inveraray, 27 Oct., 1865, PMHA, p. 105.

2 Ibid. The Duchess suggested to Sumner that the Republicans might never win over the men of the South without something of William III's policy of acting as if he believed men were loyal in order to make them loyal.

3 See above, Chapter V, p. 561.

fair treatment of the black race". Indeed, although professing herself "very interested" but unable to judge "the state of things at Washington", a distinct note of irritation crept into her exchanges with Sumner:

> I do not understand the degree of Importance you attach to Negro Franchise (sic), when it seems to us from old experience that it may be worth very little to such an entirely dependent class as they must be, and the political awkwardness of forcing it on the South before the North gives it, seems very great.[1]

Along with the ingrained prejudice against granting so extremely important a privilege as the vote to so extremely unprepared a class of people as the American Negroes, the Duchess of Argyll clearly retained sincere apprehensions about the likely results of legislation which would impose black suffrage on the South while the North remained exempt. Keenly forseeing the intensification of Southern bitterness which would follow such a measure, and the increased suffering and difficulties which this in its turn would bring for the black race, the Duchess again made an implicit plea for caution in communicating her fears to Sumner: "[I]t seems to me that their [the Southern Negroes'] social position, which must depend on the whites, do what you will, is so important that I would not like to risk that for the sake of political advantages".[2]

Yet, the desire to respect Sumner's point of view remained as strong as ever; and the Duchess, caught hopelessly between her own feelings and deductions about immediate Negro enfranchisement and the unpleasant prospect of seeming, by adhering to them, to betray the best interests of the Negro race, continued to swivel between explaining her standpoint to Sumner and protesting that she really did not understand the situation well enough to judge it. Thus, even when seeking to stress her fears that the Radicals' proposals would produce an inimical Southern reaction, she swung back to

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1 Duchess of Argyll to Charles Sumner, Argyll Lodge, London, 20 March, 1866, PMHA, p. 106. Original emphasis.

2 Duchess of Argyll to Charles Sumner, Inveraray, 23 July, 1866, ibid., p. 106. Original emphasis.

conclude that perhaps Sumner did after all know best, that "it is all a matter of knowledge and experience, and I cannot judge. In Jamaica we failed, though political rights were given, but one cannot argue from that case of total failure".[1]

This abdication of the task of putting forward a firm, explicit attitude to immediate Negro enfranchisement reflects the extent to which a vital Reconstruction issue could cause, for those with an outside involvement in the Negro race such as the Argylls maintained, crippling problems of priorities of a kind which had never arisen in connection with the much more straightforward abolitionist crusade. It reflects also the attempt of the Duke and Duchess to understand and appreciate, if not fully to keep up with, the progressive development of the American radical commitment to the Negroes. It was doubtless painful and disturbing for both (and more especially for the Duchess) to discover that between themselves and their old, close Abolitionist friend, Charles Sumner, a significant difference of opinion existed on how best to serve the interests of the black freedmen. But despite obvious goodwill on both sides, this difference was not, and could not be, totally resolved, because by the Reconstruction years, American radicalism was not only running away from British radicalism but also from its old, Abolitionist links with British philanthropy.

Unwavering in their view of the franchise as a privilege, not a right, the Duke and Duchess of Argyll were prevented by ideology from becoming attuned to Sumner's way of thinking. What was for the American Senator a clear-cut issue of justice and necessity became for the Argylls a searching dilemma. To follow their natural predilections and strenuously oppose the extension of the suffrage to the Negroes might mean that they were declaring themselves for a course which would have the unhappy effect of virtually

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1 Ibid.

re-enslaving the freedmen - a prospect which they viewed with horror. On the other hand, to concede the necessity of immediately enfranchising the black population involved the enormously difficult task of swallowing their very real dislike of the concept of uneducated and generally "unfit" elements obtaining electoral privileges. The choice seemed to resolve itself into accepting one or other of two almost equally obnoxious propositions, and the result was a consciously indeterminate attitude, which nevertheless leaned heavily towards opposition.

It is abundantly clear that in the case of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, as in the case of other Scots who maintained some concern for the wellbeing of the freedmen during the post-war years, scepticism or fully fledged opposition to early Negro enfranchisement did not in any sense represent a diminution of commitment to the cause of the black race in America. Rather, these attitudes simply represented the inability of many Scottish observers, however sympathetic, to appreciate the validity, in the unique circumstances of the Reconstruction era, of the Radicals' demands: and more fundamentally, they represented also the failure of most Britons satisfactorily to subordinate the domestic prejudice against the admittance of the "unqualified" masses to the franchise and to judge the issue impartially, in the proper context of a nation which already countenanced the principle of universal suffrage. For all their shortsightedness, these attitudes, held in good faith by Scots concerned about the status of the freedmen, were naturally different in emphasis and intent from the virulent opposition launched against Negro suffrage by die-hard Scottish Whigs[1] and

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1 The dangers of categorizing attitudes not strictly related to British politics under arbitrary political labels are very real, and while evidence suggests that, for the purposes of this thesis, the standard Scottish Whig (or "moderate Liberal") attitude towards America can fairly safely be said to be represented by comment such as that found in the Scotsman (and on a slightly less consistent level, the Glasgow Herald), this naturally does not imply that all moderate Liberals in Scotland held such views on the United States and American Reconstruction. It must be noted, indeed, that the Duke of Argyll was himself a leading Scottish Whig, his life-long love for America (see for instance, Duke of Argyll to unidentified recipient, 7 Aug., 1845 in Box File labelled "19thc: All 8th Duke", Argyll MSS.) and his close associations with American Radicals notwithstanding.

Conservatives. But the attitudes of those who sympathised with the American Negroes while remaining apprehensive about proposals to enfranchise them need to be placed in yet broader perspective by considering the outlooks of others in Scotland who were prepared to argue for immediate Negro suffrage as a just and practical necessity.

IV. Support for Negro enfranchisement: the suffrage viewed as a necessary safeguard for freedom

That a more radical approach to the entire concept of manhood suffrage existed within Scotland at this time was evidenced by a reader's letter which appeared in the Caledonian Mercury in early July, 1865. In this, the writer sought to examine and dispute the whole familiar British doctrine of "the suffrage not a right but a trust". He was careful to clarify the substance of his arguments by making a pertinent distinction between the two separate ideas which were associated with the word "right" in this context. Insofar as it related simply to political right, he agreed that under the existent British political framework the concept of the suffrage as a trust rather than a right was "a disgraceful truth". The reality of this deplorable situation was in itself "an impeachment of the political slaveholding oligarchy, and an insult to the community of political slaves, indirectly charging them with cowardice, stupidity and imbecility for their present state of social and political degradation".[1]

In the much wider context of judging the suffrage in terms of a natural right, the correspondent went on vigorously to denounce the assumption that man possessed no such natural right: "Man has such a right, inborn, inherent, and arising out of the very nature of his being. Man's rights originate in the requirements of his nature, and have no other basis than his wants and desires". Most men desired to have a voice in the making of the laws

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1 "The Suffrage not a right but a trust": letter from "A Radical Conservative" in Caledonian Mercury, 11 July, 1865.

they obeyed, and it was only "old use and custom" which made possible the continued extraordinary questioning of so "innocent and reasonable" a desire. The object of the law, the writer contended, should be to protect the weak against the strong, "and not to crush out of political existence a fellow-being, because an erring brother has the daring arrogance and untamed presumption to sit in moral and intellectual judgement on his neighbour, and from interested and selfish motives pronounce him unfit to exercise his natural rights".[1]

While the writer's interesting terminology regarding "political slaveholding" suggests a keenly conscious transatlantic focus on his part at that time, he chose to present his advanced views about the exercise of the suffrage on broad, general terms, with no direct reference to the nascent struggle over Negro enfranchisement in the United States. His opinions are relevant here, however, not only because they shed some light on the more extreme (if perhaps fairly unique) shades of the contemporary Scottish political spectrum, but also because they provide a background for a subsequent letter in the Mercury, by a different correspondent, which dealt specifically with the necessity of immediately extending the franchise to the black freedmen in America.

It was with a stirring sense of urgency that an Edinburgh "Friend to Freedom" stressed that the various Emancipation Societies in Britain, and British friends of the United States generally, "should be aroused to the critical position of the coloured race at this hour in America, as on the right settlement of the claims of the coloured people depends not merely their prosperity but that of the whole American people". In a lengthy, forceful letter, the correspondent was totally unrestrained and unequivocal in communicating his conviction that immediate Negro suffrage was essential

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1 Ibid.

for the security and progress of the black population in the United States. The fundamental vein of his reasoning was easily enough stated:

> Some will say, What more would you have? Slavery is abolished in...[the Southern states] and they contain probably three out of the four millions of coloured people in the United States. Stop a little! It requires more than a proclamation to free the negro race. If care be not taken the name of slavery may be abolished, but the reality may be riveted securely about the necks of the coloured people. Unless the coloured people are admitted to vote in the Southern States they will derive little benefit from the nominal change in their condition.[1]

Hampered by none of the Argylls' frustration and indeterminancy, the "Friend to Freedom" was able to accept and endorse in full the American Radicals' arguments about taking Federal steps to safeguard the Negroes from the consequences of an unrestricted political resurgence of Southern whites. He was encouraged that the Thirty-ninth Congress, due to meet in December, 1865, had "a greater number of friends of the negro in it than any former one", but at the same time regretted that the death of Lincoln had probably robbed the Negroes of their great champion since Johnson, he feared, "is not so much in their favour as President Lincoln was". Under the President's plan of reconstruction, then being implemented, there was, he insisted, no likelihood of the re-forming State Legislatures of the South enfranchising the freedmen of their own accord:

> The majority of the whites in the South are rebels in their hearts, and are angry with the negroes for having fought for the Federal Government, and for having been so zealous in their cause ...If care be not taken, the condition of the negroes will be perhaps worse than before. The legislators and governors will be appointed by their former masters, and by the common or poor whites, who are violently prejudiced against the poor negroes.[2]

With the Johnsonian plan just getting off the ground, he already foresaw that the freedmen would be victimized in many spheres, that they would be accused of being lazy, and that proscriptive measures would in all probability

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1 "The Cause of the Negro": letter from "A Friend to Freedom", Edinburgh, 24 July, 1865, in ibid., 29 July, 1865.

2 Ibid.

be enforced to keep them effectively subjected to white comination.[1]

In the correspondent's view, therefore, it was imperative that Congress should lay down terms on which the Southern representatives would be readmitted to the Federal councils of the Union, and that these terms should include an insistence that no state was to be re-admitted until it had granted its Negro population the suffrage. There was no hesitancy on the Edinburgh "Friend to Freedom's" part in judging whether or not it was ethical to bestow voting powers on a section of the community but recently released from slavery; for him, the practical considerations were so clearcut, and of such vital importance, as to convince him that any course short of black suffrage would be disastrous for the Negro cause and for the America which had won a war to end slavery. Congressional failure to impose Negro enfranchisement as a condition for Southern re-entry would, he insisted, lead to the "friends of the negro" within Congress being "swamped" and this calamity would in turn produce debilitating strife in Congress, with "friends and foes of the negro" fighting for ascendancy:

> The pro-slavery party under some other name will rise up and cause a continual irritation in Congress, and, siding with the [D]emocratic minority in the North, which is unfriendly to the negro, will check the prosperity of the country; and the various State Legislatures in the South will become bolder, and gradually pass vagrancy laws, which will practically reduce the coloured people to slavery, although not in name, but in reality.[2]

Not only was this particular Scottish observer ready to argue with remarkable confidence and force of conviction for the necessity of securing Negro suffrage in the South, but he was also ready to infer that the granting of the franchise to the black population in the Northern states need not necessarily be an essential concomitant to this measure. Indeed, despite the qualms felt over this issue by such proven "friends of the Negro"

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1 Ibid. The writer in fact envisaged at this comparatively early stage (late July) a state of affairs which in every detail came to pass with the introduction of the Black Codes.

2 Ibid.

as the Argylls, for instance, he had the temerity to urge British "friends of the Americans" to "use all their moral influence with them to induce them to grant negro suffrage at least in the South, and to do all that they can to obtain it in the North".[1] In the event, his hopes that public enthusiasm could successfully enlist the aid of W.E. Baxter, John Bright, and W.E. Forster to voice the plea to the United States for Negro enfranchisement were sadly over-optimistic.[2]

Presumably the correspondent felt that prominent British radicals could be counted upon wholeheartedly to support a suffrage scheme which would substantially ease so great "a crisis in the history of the Americans", especially since they tended to possess a fairly thorough knowledge of the workings of United States democracy and could therefore be expected to appreciate more than most in Britain the legitimacy (if not the necessity) of introducing immediate Negro enfranchisement within the scope of the American system. It was certainly one of the writer's principal concerns to illustrate how the democratic and elective framework of the American Constitution rendered impossible any valid comparison between the case of the unenfranchised British working classes and the unenfranchised American Negroes.

In Britain, he argued, all working men did have a potential political influence since many could rise to be £10 householders, but in a country where universal suffrage was the rule, all real influence flowed from the exercise of a franchise democratically granted. In being excluded from the suffrage (and precluded by the American system from eventually achieving it by their own efforts and material progress), the freedmen were therefore simply the victims of a resolute colour discrimination, which gave rise to a situation which, in the nature of things, could never exist in Britain:

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1 Ibid.

2 We have already observed that Baxter was considerably less venturesome than the "Friend to Freedom" in his statements regarding Negro suffrage - see above, p. 37. Bright's attitude towards this issue is alluded to below, pp. 79-80.

"how oppressive would it be considered [in Britain] if all men with red hair, or hazel or grey eyes, were excluded from voting, however wealthy or educated they were! Now, the negroes in the Southern States cannot any of them vote until the law be altered". Conceding that many of the freedmen were ignorant, due largely to the prohibition of education for slaves in the ante-bellum South, he squarely met the standard objections to admitting the uneducated to the vote by indicating that the Negroes were rapidly giving proof of their desire for tuition, and by insisting that "it seems unjust to prevent them voting on account of ignorance, when every white man, however ignorant, is qualified, and in the Southern States many of the lower class of whites are very ignorant indeed".[1]

Certainly, this view, and to some extent the whole tone of the letter, was uncharacteristic of the more deliberative, critical, or uncertain attitude towards Negro enfranchisement which formed the stock response within Scotland at that time. In the comprehensiveness and confidence of his analyses, the advanced radical nature of his reasoning, the force of his arguments, and the intensity of his commitment to his belief, the Edinburgh "Friend to Freedom" showed himself to have not only a keener appreciation than most Scots of the general situation in America at the beginning of Reconstruction, but also a positive conception of the "extreme" measures immediately necessary to secure the Negroes' freedom which was far in advance of the vast bulk of Scottish opinion on the subject. His attitudes are the more remarkable, however, in that they so closely anticipate, in so many respects, the arguments expounded by John Elliot Cairnes in his influential and controversial essay, "The Negro Suffrage".[2]

It has been argued with regard to Cairnes' article that in the

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1 "A Friend to Freedom", Caledonian Mercury, 29 July, 1865.

2 It will be recalled that "The Negro Suffrage" was first published in Macmillan's Magazine in August, 1865.

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contemporary literature on Negro suffrage, his appeal to the moral responsibility of Americans towards the freedmen was "a singular monument of disinterested participation in the national problems of a foreign state".[1] On a more modest scale, the same claim could perhaps justly be made for the Scottish "Friend to Freedom's" obscure effort, for apparently in no significant respect did Cairnes' conclusions diverge from, or augment, those in the earlier, anonymous communication to the Caledonian Mercury. Thus Cairnes, too, recognized that a prime task of the North would be to prevent the "resuscitation of the forces of slavery", and that the only conceivable means of ensuring that the Negro would get some measure of justice and consideration was to give him the franchise immediately.[2] He did, it would seem, appreciate more fully than did the Edinburgh observer the strength of hostility and shock which most of the British public, and even the "liberal politicians", would register against the proposals of the American Radicals. But, exactly as the "Friend to Freedom" had done, he sought to divert popular thinking from concentration on the "unfitness" of prospective Negro voters by educating it into the realization that British criteria for granting the suffrage had little bearing on the question in the United States. From this, there followed a strikingly similar emphasis on the fact that colour was the only obstacle debarring the freed Negroes from immediately acquiring the suffrage, that the crux of the American question was not the expediency of admitting the poor or ignorant to the franchise but the "justice of making colour a test of poverty and ignorance".[3] Cairnes' allusions to the voting powers enjoyed by the desperately ignorant poor whites of the South had also been foreshadowed in the letter to the Mercury, but while Cairnes was willing enough to entertain the idea of an

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1 Weinberg, John Elliot Cairnes, p. 113.

2 Cairnes, "The Negro Suffrage" in Macmillan's Magazine, Aug., 1865 pp. 334, 337.

3 Ibid., p. 335.

educational qualification for the suffrage once the Negro population had learned enough to make such a measure fair and impartial,[1] it may be further illustrative of the strain of the "Friend to Freedom's" radicalism on this subject that he did not touch on the latter possibility.

In presaging the outlooks and conclusions of Cairnes, the Edinburgh correspondent was undoubtedly more or less unique. The commoner process was for Scots to follow the Galway professor rather than to lead him. Having earlier made a tremendous impact with "The Slave Power", Cairnes' stated attitudes on Negro suffrage did during the early stages of Reconstruction tend to influence certain sympathetic elements of the Scottish press to support the arguments for Negro enfranchisement. This aspect will be considered later. Not all Scots who were inclined to look optimistically on the extension of the suffrage to the freedmen based their reasoning on such elaborate, carefully constructed arguments, however.

The opinions of Sir George Campbell, for instance, were determined by first-hand information on the general state of the nation and on the prospects for the Negro race derived from his visit to America in 1878. At that late stage, Campbell identified the struggle for political power in the Southern states and the question of whether the coloured people were to be allowed to vote freely as the basic cause of the serious dissension which was continuing to plague post-war America. A remedy would only be found when the country tackled the problem of whether any real effect was to be given to the Fifteenth Amendment;[2] there could never, he believed, be peace and quiet, or safety, in the United States until the mode of settling disputed elections had been arranged and the question of the black vote finally settled.[3] In order to achieve a lasting, truly satisfactory

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1 Cairnes, "The Negro Suffrage" in Macmillan's Magazine, Aug., 1865, p.342.

2 Campbell, White and Black, p. x.

3 Ibid., p. 190.

solution to this problem, he was convinced that it was necessary not to disfranchise the Negroes but to secure their status as voters. Moreover, aside from such considerations of national expediency, Campbell was in favour of Negro suffrage because he sincerely felt it to be essential for the future wellbeing of the Negro race. His attitude on this aspect of American Reconstruction, as on most others, was conspicuously that of the liberal and enlightened British colonial administrator. Thus, he asserted that experience in British colonies conclusively furnished proof that the only security for every class was the possession of the suffrage: "Unrepresented blacks, and other unrepresented classes, are always liable to be treated unfairly under labour laws, vagrant laws,and revenue laws".[1]

Choosing at a freedmen's aid meeting in December, 1865 to tackle the thorny question of whether or not the Negroes were fit for the franchise, it was likewise to the simpler arena of personal contact that the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie turned for evidence to back up his convictions. Although his attitude to the issue of immediate enfranchisement was not abundantly clear from his speech, what he did seek emphatically to convey to his audience was that nothing in the innate intellectual make-up of the black race precluded its ability to exercise the suffrage as competently as any white. By way of proving this, he cited the high intellectual attainments and refinement of three American Negroes whom he had encountered in Scotland earlier in the century - an eloquent preacher called Mr. Gloucester, Sarah Remond, and a Dr. Johnson who had been a student at the college in

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1 Ibid. p. 191.

Edinburgh.[1]

It was also on the basis of personal experience that David Macrae, looking back from the vantage point of 1868, reflected upon the Congressional decision to give the freedmen the vote in the very early stages of Reconstruction. We have already observed how deeply impressed Macrae was during his trip to the United States by the intelligence and the ability to hold down responsible positions displayed by many members of the Negro race.[2] Although extremely sanguine about the intellectual potential of the black population once it came more fully to enjoy equality of opportunity with the white, Macrae nevertheless apparently retained some grains of doubt about the wisdom of having enfranchised the Negro "the moment he emerged from slavery".[3] In reality, however, his comment in this connection was

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1 See report of speech by Guthrie at a freedmen's aid meeting held in the Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in Scotsman, 6 Dec., 1865.

Guthrie's attitude to political reform in Britain at this time is not easily definable. He certainly did support Duncan McLaren against the Whig Adam Black in the Edinburgh election contest of 1865, but for reasons which were not strictly connected with politics (see below, Chapter VIII pp. 537-538. An interesting remark made in connection with this election suggests that he was disgusted by the city's Whig element without being positively attracted to radicalism: "the people of Edinburgh have been fretting for years under the yoke of the Scotsman party, and of the Parliament House Whigs..." - men who lacked the calibre of the old Whigs such as James Moncrieff, Henry Cockburn and Francis Jeffrey, who had once represented Edinburgh - see Guthrie to the Earl of Dalhousie, 4 July, 1865, The Dalhousie Papers, GD45/14/662, SRO. He was deeply interested in the agitation over the 1867 Reform Bill, but took the ambiguous line of championing the character of British working men while disparaging those who sought to rouse them for the purpose of gaining personal power for themselves: "I am, and always have been of Hugh Miller's opinion that what floats at the top of the lower is a much better material than what lies at the bottom of the middle classes - the one is cream, the other dregs. Take them, all in all, ... I have ever found the working classes sound on all great educational, moral, political and religious questions" - Guthrie to Duchess of Argyll, Edinburgh, 16 April, 1866, Guthrie MSS., fol. 116, NLS.

Donald McLeod in his Gloomy Memories, pp. 83-84, had succeeded in showing, however, that on occasion, Guthrie had scant enough compassion for the indigent though hard-working members of the working classes.

2 See above, Chapter V. p. 597.

3 Macrae, The Americans at Home, p. 266.

nothing more than a token acknowledgement of the general reservations felt at the time (and to some extent still felt in 1868) over Radical policy on Negro suffrage. It is clear that he himself was convinced that on the grounds of both simple justice and practical necessity, the early enfranchisement of the black freedmen had been a sound and desirable step.

Macrae fully realised that within the structure of the American political system, all free men were invested with equal electoral rights, and that the members of any section of the community who were systematically denied those rights must inevitably remain essentially second class citizens. Furthermore, he recognized that for the United States to withhold the franchise from any group of free men - such as the American Negroes were after the end of the Civil War - was to violate the principles on which the Republic was founded. By the early introduction of Negro suffrage, Republicanism had only been

> pushed...forwards to consistency. For, in a government which derives its right from consent of the governed, why should four millions of the governed be gagged? And, in a government which says that taxation without representation is tyranny, why should representation be refused to the coloured people, who are taxed as heavily as the whites are, and who were paying into the United States Treasury the year I was there, on their cotton alone, about $20,000,000?[1]

It was not, however, merely on considerations of political justice and American consistency that Macrae based his approval of the accomplishment of Negro enfranchisement. While never seeking to dwell on the subject of Southern bitterness and intransigent hostility towards the North and Northern measures, he was nevertheless acutely aware of the widespread existence of these sentiments.[2] Accordingly, in disputing the standard argument that the Negroes should first have been educated and fitted for the franchise before receiving it, he discreetly suggested that "it may be doubted if they would ever have been granted it, or even been allowed the

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1 Ibid., p. 266.

2 See ibid., pp. 320-321, fn.

education which would have fitted them for it, or had any fair field for self-development, unless they had been enabled by means of the suffrage to secure these for themselves".[1] Personal experience of the climate of opinion in the South in 1868 had clearly helped to persuade him that the essential requirements for the Negroes' progress and advancement could never have been ensured otherwise than by timely Federal legislation to guarantee the freedman a political voice of his own.

Beyond this, Macrae's own radical streak led him to accept the reality of Negro suffrage with the optimistic hope that "perhaps, after all, the speediest way of preparing a negro, or any other man, to exercise the suffrage, is to give it him".[2] He was basically in agreement with Henry Ward Beecher's contention that voters could best learn by their own initial mistakes at the polls how to exercise the franchise responsibly, and with the argument that enfranchising the Negroes was the quickest way to teach them about politics because white Southerners, anxious for black votes, would be ready to school them on various policies and principles.[3]

But perhaps most important of all in influencing Macrae's retrospective attitude towards immediate Negro suffrage was the fact that his sojourn in the United States had amply demonstrated to him that "the enfranchised negroes have, in general, exercised their new power quietly, considerately, and well - with far more regard for their old masters, and far less prejudice of race than could have been anticipated".[4] He was able in 1868 - and presumably in 1874, when the revised edition of his book was printed -

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1 Ibid., p. 266

2 Ibid., p. 266

3 Ibid., pp 266-267.

4 Ibid., p. 267.

to support the early post-war action of the Congressional Radicals on this issue because to his mind, nothing had taken place since to suggest that it had been utterly foolish or dangerous to enfranchise the Negroes before they were "prepared" for the suffrage.

The sympathetic interest shown by both Guthrie and, later, Macrae towards the question of the freedmen and the franchise indicates that there was at least a measure of concern for the political status of the Negroes among some of those more strictly concerned in a philanthropic sense with their material welfare and spiritual elevation.[1] As early as July, 1865, the "Friend to Freedom" in his letter to the Caledonian Mercury had exhorted British Emancipation Societies to recognise the urgent need for immediate Negro enfranchisement, and to put their weight behind a plea to the United States to pass legislation for this purpose. There was little enough that these Societies could actively do to expedite Negro suffrage. At the same time, however, so far as the venerable Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society was concerned, there was open support among its members for American moves to give the freedmen the vote. The Society's Annual Reports for both 1866 and 1867 concerned themselves at some length with the politics of Reconstruction as well as with the purely philanthropic side; and by mid February, 1866, Elizabeth Pease Nichol and Eliza Wigham, in their respective capacities of President and joint-secretary of the Society, were deploying some of their perennial energies on behalf of the Negro cause in committing their organisation to a spirited support of the Congressional policy to enfranchise the black population.

A principal factor determining the ELES' attitude on this issue was deep distrust of the Southern states. It was evident, the 1866 Report stated, that the ex-slaveholders were only conquered, not converted, and that they were simply waiting the opportunity to reassume their former

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1 It has been noted that Guthrie was a leading Scottish spokesman for the freedmen's aid cause and that he made his remarks on Negro fitness for the franchise during the course of a meeting on behalf of that cause. David Macrae on his return from the United States acted as an agent for the American Missionary Association in Scotland - see below, Chapter IX, , pp. 27-28.

domination over both the Negroes and the United States Government. Sumner was praised for his efforts to reveal to the American Congress and nation the spirit and aims of the "rebel States", and it was earnestly hoped that the United States Legislature would counteract the disturbingly rash clemency of Johnson by taking positive steps to protect the freedmen "who may become virtually enslaved by the iniquitous schemes of their late oppressors". In the Society's view, the only effective way in which the central government could do that was by according full political as well as civil rights to the Negroes.[1]

The recent passage by the House of Representatives of a Bill granting unqualified black suffrage in the District of Columbia was therefore naturally welcomed with enthusiasm as a move in the right direction. With a long tradition behind it of defending in every respect the character of the American Negro, the ELES clearly had no reservations about fully endorsing a measure which did not provide for so much as an educational qualification on the newly emancipated race. On the contrary, the Report loudly stressed that the freedman already possessed an intelligence equal to that of the poor white, that he was rising very rapidly in the general scale of intelligence and learning, and, most importantly, that "[he] will not disgrace his country when he is recognized as its citizen".[2] The events of the year from spring, 1866 to spring, 1867 in the United States intensified the Society's focus on the political aspect of Reconstruction, and at the same time, inevitably intensified also its opposition to Johnson's course. Along with denunciation of the President's action on the Civil Rights Bill went strong disapproval of his veto on the Bill enfranchising the Negroes of the District of Columbia, a sentiment offset, however, by

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1 Annual Report of the ELES...15 Feb., 1866, p.6.

2 Ibid., p.7.

jubilation at the subsequent overriding of the veto by Congress: "it is one of the most encouraging facts of the present state of the negro question in America that this justice has been granted in the District of Columbia, where the national capital is situated".[1]

V The responses of American abolitionists and Scottish freedmen's aid campaigners to the enfranchisement issue

The unequivocal support of the ELES for the principle of immediate Negro suffrage is significant not only inasmuch as it forms an important contribution to the small fund of similar "radical" Scottish opinions on that issue but also because it suggests that the ladies of this Society were perhaps more fully aware than some of their old American abolitionist colleagues of an urgent, critical need to implement such a measure. Why this should have been so is not immediately clear; but it might be suggested that the comparative radicalism of the ELES in this connection sprang to some extent from the combination of a stream of "radical" thought permeating the responses of Elizabeth Pease Nichol and Eliza Wigham to American Reconstruction, and the fact that the Society was able, from its remote location in Scotland, generously to advocate and applaud legislation for enfranchisement because it was precluded from falling victim to the doubts which the actual physical presence of a large, uneducated Negro population just up from slavery engendered among many American Abolitionists.[2]

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1 Annual Report of the ELES...4 April, 1867, p.9

2 With reference both to Eliza Wigham's views on the treatment of the freedmen during Reconstruction, and the insular nature which could be attributed to certain idealistic Scottish attitudes, it is interesting to note that in 1869, Eliza Wigham apparently wrote to Harriet Beecher Stowe querying her establishment of a school for freedmen at Mandarin, Florida which would make no attempt to integrate white and black children. Acknowledging Eliza Wigham's contribution of £25 for the school, Harriet Beecher Stowe firmly explained that in the existing climate of Southern society, it was totally impractical and futile to think in terms of integrated schools. White schools were established because otherwise the white children would go uneducated and black schools would be attacked. She stressed the necessity of softening white prejudices by a policy which would induce the Southern whites eventually to accept mixed schools, significantly pointing out: "You would yourself see the necessity of pursuing such a course, if you were on the ground" - Harriet Beecher Stowe to Eliza Wigham, 4 June, 1869, The Estlin Papers: 1840-1884, Microfilm M745/24.123.6, Edinburgh University Library.

Whatever the reasons, it is certain that the old-guard Scottish abolitionists who still formed the backbone of the ELES in the early years of American Reconstruction[1] were very considerably more concerned to see the triumph for the American Radicals' plans to enfranchise the Negroes than were certain of their prominent abolitionist counterparts in the United States. In comment contemporaneous with that in the ELES Reports, the Boston abolitionist, Maria Weston Chapman, for instance, revealed herself to be against the introduction of immediate Negro enfranchisement on the terms proposed by the Congressional Republicans. Although heartily approving of universal suffrage, she totally rejected the idea of its enforcement by military coercion, believing that such a course would serve to strengthen new military despotisms rather than republican institutions. "A subdued community", she asserted, "does not go on well, do what you will".[2]

Every bit as sceptical about the desirability of securing black suffrage by forcing it upon a hostile, recalcitrant South was Maria Weston Chapman's sister, Anne Warren Weston. Surveying the Reconstruction scene in the autumn of 1866, she was clearly very much less troubled than the members of the ELES over the existing temper of the South and the possibility of a Southern resurgence, and over the threat to the Negroes' freedom posed by Johnson's policy. The optimism which characterized her outlook at this time was communicated in a letter to the English abolitionist, Mary Estlin: "Though the President is making so scandalous an exhibition and though the

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1 Of the twenty office bearers and committee members of the ELES in 1867, six had been in office or on the committee as early as 1846 - see Annual Report of the ELES...1846, and ibid., 1867. Beyond this, the President, Elizabeth Pease Nichol, almost certainly joined the Society around 1860 when she moved to Edinburgh following the death of her husband. And committee member Mrs. Priscilla Bright McLaren had been active in Edinburgh abolitionist circles since her marriage to Duncan McLaren in 1848.

2 Maria Weston Chapman to Richard Davis Webb, 9 Oct., 1866, The Estlin Papers: 1840-1884, Microfilm M745/24.122.45. Original emphasis.

prospect may look dark to foreign observers, I assure you all is going on quite as well as any reasonable person could have expected".[1] This optimism was, understandably, grounded in a failure to share the Edinburgh Society's conviction that real freedom for the Negroes in America could be guaranteed only by their immediate enfranchisement, and in a somewhat complacent confidence that Negro suffrage would come sooner or later, "Here [on the issue of immediate enfranchisement] I differ with some good people. The question of negro suffrage is attended with some difficulties and perplexities, constitutional and otherwise, and I should not make its adoption a sine qua non by the Republican party ... I don't believe in any impeachment of the President or anything of that sort".[2]

In forming their views on Negro enfranchisement by Radical fiat, it is clear that both Anne Warren Weston and Maria Weston Chapman were strongly influenced by considerations which, in the nature of things, would not weigh so heavily with Scottish abolitionist observers such as Elizabeth Pease Nichol and Eliza Wigham - considerations, that is, of the direct effect which so unique a measure, forcibly implemented, would have on the social and political institutions of the United States.[3] Similar considerations

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1 Anne Warren Weston to Mary Estlin, 17 Oct., 1866, The Weston Papers, MS.B.1.7., Vol. 1, No. 30. Printed copies of Weston MSS. held in the offices of Edinburgh University Press.

I am grateful to Mr. Douglas C. Riach for supplying me with the text of this letter and with other relevant information contained in the Weston MSS.

2 Ibid.

3 In this connection, it is worth noting that during the Civil War, Eliza Wigham had vigorously censured the North for earlier acquiescing in and sustaining Southern slavery; had criticised the United States Constitution as "a compact to bind North and South in common cause to oppress a whole race of human beings on their soil"; had insisted that neither the Republican party as a whole nor President Lincoln were dedicated to abolition; and had even drawn attention to the great injustice perpetrated by the North in withholding the franchise from the Negroes. It is likely, therefore, that during Reconstruction she would have been much less concerned to ensure that the errant United States did not suffer any seriously inimical repercussions as a result of Negro suffrage than to ensure that the wrongs practised against the black population were finally redressed by tangible political measures. See Eliza Wigham, The Anti Slavery Cause in America and its Martyrs (London, 1863) pp.66-69, 101, 105, 118, 151, 154.

helped to shape the attitude towards this question of another leading American abolitionist who had close associations with British abolitionism, the Rev. Samuel J. May. Certainly, May did fully recognise that it was essential to enfranchise the Negroes as rapidly as possible; but his was a recognition based not in an enthusiastic championship of the measure, but in a dispassionate resignation to the inevitable facts and requirements of the Reconstruction situation and the American Constitution. Thus, he pointed out that since many thousands of ignorant individuals in America - and especially among the poor whites of the South - possessed an irrevocable right to vote, the freedmen must be granted the suffrage without delay in order to avoid a war of races.

At the same time, however, the prospect of entrusting a measure of political power to men who had so recently been slaves was not one which May welcomed. The Negroes, he told Mary Estlin, must be enfranchised, "and yet they are most of them undoubtedly very ignorant. For this you know they are not to blame. Still [,] their ignorance unfits them for the proper exercise of the franchise".[1] The essence of his unease was therefore nothing more nor less than the familiar prejudice against the vote being vested in the hands of the uneducated. As an abolitionist who still, amid the complexities of the Reconstruction era, had the cause of the Negro at heart, May's misgivings about the intellectual status of the prospective black voters tend to make his attitude akin in some respects to that of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll in Scotland. As an American, while he was careful to defend the principle of universal suffrage,these same misgivings significantly caused him to make important observations on the character of American political democracy. It was, he contended, undoubtedly the natural,

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1 Extract from a letter from the Rev. Samuel J. May to Mary Estlin, n.d. The Estlin Papers: 1840 - 1884, M744/24.127.9.

inalienable right of all men - and women - to vote, "But no right is unconditional. No one can have a right to do what he does not know how, or does not intend to do well. We have made a mistake in not prescribing these as the obvious conditions of admission to the suffrage".[1]

That May should have found the necessary, imminent advent of Negro enfranchisement unpalatable enough to prompt a critical reappraisal of unconditional suffrage in the United States reflects the disparity between the nature of his "advocacy" of black suffrage and the nature of the support for this measure shown by the ELES. At least the ELES' hero, William Lloyd Garrison had, after some initial equivocation, come to advance a fairly unrestrained doctrine of Negro suffrage.[2] But the alleged lack of a sufficiently zealous commitment to enfranchisement on the part of some leading American abolitionists during Reconstruction did prove to be a factor capable of arousing serious discord within the circles of those in the United States concerned about the general status and welfare of the freedmen. At a meeting held in June, 1868, for instance, James Miller McKim, having delivered a glowing report on the progress of the freedmen's schools and on the prospects for the black race in America, was attacked in a "violent and abusive" speech by the Negro campaigner for freedom, Robert Purvis,[3]

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1 Ibid. Original emphasis.

2 Wendell Phillips had, however, been far in advance of Garrison in insisting upon the necessity of enfranchising the black population. Garrison had supported Lincoln's course and adopted Phillips' demands only after Lincoln's assassination. The difference of opinion had caused bitter antagonism between the two American abolitionists - see Ralph Korngold, Two Friends of Man (Boston, 1950), pp. 323-338. For a more sympathetic attitude towards Garrison's stand, see Louis Ruchames, "William Lloyd Garrison and the Negro Franchise" in Journal of Negro History, Jan., 1965, Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 37-48.

3 Robert Purvis was a seasoned worker in the cause of advancing the interests of his race, having been active in the American Anti-Slavery Society from an early period. He visited Scotland in the 1830s and was well received by the Glasgow Emancipation Society and the Glasgow Ladies' Emancipation Society - see Dixon, The American Negro in Nineteenth Century Scotland, pp. 39-40.

for putting the importance of education above the importance of securing the franchise.[1]

So long as redoubtable champions of the Negro like Purvis and Wendell Phillips felt it necessary to accuse certain of their old abolitionist colleagues of a failure to live up to their principles on the question of Negro suffrage, there was always the possibility that in America, this issue would impinge upon the more apolitical side of the activities undertaken on behalf of the Negroes and cause dissension in the ranks of those involved primarily with the spiritual, educational, and material elevation of the freedmen. Partly because no equivalent element so deeply and immovably committed to agitating for Negro enfranchisement asserted itself in Britain at that time, and more especially because of a deliberate policy adopted by member Societies of the National Freedmen's Aid Union, the British freedmen's aid movement was not hampered in its philanthropic efforts by the threat of controversies arising from the question of black suffrage.

It has been shown that one of the major concerns of the movement in Britain was to eschew all connections with Reconstruction politics in America and to operate purely on the level of Christian philanthropy and goodwill to the United States.[2] Certainly, in a statement of the aims and policies of the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society drawn up at its inception in November, 1864, the fact was italicized that as a Society, it had no concern with the party politics of America. The scope of its action and consideration was to be strictly confined to alleviating the social and

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1 Mary Estlin to Rebecca Moore, Chester County, Massachusetts, 6 June, 1868, The Estlin Papers: 1840-1884, M744/24.121.3.

Mary Estlin made a trip to America in 1868 where she was in constant close contact with former abolitionists and took an active interest in the contemporary movements for freedmen's aid, women's suffrage, etc. She was present at the meeting where Purvis clashed with McKim - and where he also denounced Garrison - and recorded her opinion that Purvis was representative of "a class with whom it is sad to come in contact just now".

2 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, pp. 192, 215, 224.

economic plight of the freed slaves: "It finds an innocent and industrious people...in danger of starving through no fault of theirs. It believes in their right to form families, to obtain education, to dispose freely of their labour. It accordingly seeks contributions in this country to lighten their sufferings".[1] In practice, however, it often became impossible to remain constant to the ideal of concentrating exclusively on the Negro as a deserving object of charitable aid and separating him completely from the political forces which were contesting the right to mould his future. By late December, 1865, the London-based British and Foreign Freedmen's-Aid Society had already cast its support in favour of Congressional Reconstruction by advocating immediate Negro enfranchisement,[2] and we have seen that the issue of granting the suffrage to the black population was not entirely ignored at freedmen's aid meetings in Scotland.[3] Yet, references made to the subject tended, on such occasions, to be essentially low-key, framed in general terms of support for the principle of Negro enfranchisement, but avoiding the more contentious question of how urgently it should be introduced. Addressing a public meeting held in 1868 in the City Hall, Glasgow, to hear statements from representatives of the American Missionary Association regarding the progress of the freedmen, and to express sympathy and support for the objectives of the organization, the popular Sella Martin accordingly succeeded in putting forward his own positive viewpoint on the Negro franchise without resorting to an inappropriate tirade against Johnsonian Reconstruction or the hostile temper of the white South. The freedmen did not want the suffrage in order to hold office but as a

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1 Minute book of Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society: statement of policy, 9 Nov., 1864, Smeal Collection.

2 Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, pp. 235-238, 225-230.

3 See above, pp. 54-55.

weapon of defence, he bluntly asserted, and if their equality was to be ensured, they should certainly be granted the vote.[1]

Ironically, perhaps the strongest political expression voiced in relation to Negro enfranchisement at any Scottish meeting for freedmen's aid was made by that most hesitant of commentators on the subject, the Duke of Argyll. Chairing the 1868 City Hall meeting, Argyll in his long main speech had felt it apposite to allude briefly to the question of Negro suffrage in the United States, candidly admitting that he had been at first "inclined to think this experiment very rash". As a seasoned performer at major, national freedmen's aid meetings, the Duke had, however, absorbed well the British movement's principle that consideration of American politics should not be allowed to intrude upon the furtherance of what were purely philanthropic aims. Having provided a fleeting, vague indication of his early personal feelings on the franchise issue, Argyll therefore returned to stress an earlier theme of his address - that Scotsmen and Englishmen had no right to teach the American people their duty towards the black population. And by way of further neutralizing the reference to his initial doubts about Negro suffrage, he suggested that the American experiment in franchise extension would on the whole turn out to be wise, since a broadly analogous situation existing in Britain after the passing of the 1867 Reform Bill had resulted in a great increase in the zeal to provide for the moral and religious education of the British people.[2]

By referring in the course of one speech both to his earlier misgivings about Negro suffrage and to his current optimism regarding it, Argyll had succeeded not only in keeping the heat of political controversy on this issue down to a minimum, in accordance with the policy of the British

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1 Report of speech by Sella Martin at a freedmen's aid meeting in City Hall Glasgow, 27 Jan., 1868, in Glasgow Herald, 28 Jan., 1868.

2 Report of speech by the Duke of Argyll at a freedmen's aid meeting held in City Hall, Glasgow, 27 Jan., 1868, in ibid.

freedmen's aid societies, but also in leaving his own ultimate opinion strangely unrevealed. Under the circumstances, this was a permissable enough strategy. While this particular meeting does not appear to have been convened under the auspices of the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society,[1] the predominantly philanthropic nature of any such assembly probably tended to provide a platform where it was acceptable enough for a speaker, in his references to the politics of Reconstruction, to be vague, if not downright equivocal. Certainly, there was no real reason why the chairman should have felt obliged to elaborate upon his main statements regarding Negro suffrage; and that he did so - and at some length - on this occasion was perhaps largely due to the terse but telling statement subsequently delivered on the subject by Sella Martin.

It is just conceivable that Martin's succinct comment, conveying as it did a clear, unambiguous support for enfranchisement, prompted Argyll to a disturbing realization that by comparison, his own stated convictions might have appeared to the assembled audience to be peculiarly insipid and grossly equivocal. Perhaps, as a result, he felt it incumbent upon himself to redress the balance, to prove himself not to be wanting in positive enthusiasm for a political measure apparently so vitally relevant to the general welfare of the American freedmen. But whatever the mainspring of his action, the Duke considered it necessary at the end of the meeting to add an important clarifying statement on his previous remarks on Negro suffrage. In this, he was at pains to stress that in his opening speech from the chair, he had not meant to express any doubt whatever about the "experiment" of enfranchising the Negroes being anything other than wise and necessary. Sensing from the loud applause which greeted this pronouncement that at this particular freedmen's aid meeting he was unlikely to offend sensibilities

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1 See below, Chapter IX, p. 78-79.

by reference to a facet of American politics, his endorsement of Congressional Reconstruction became more emphatic:

> I think the American people are undoubtedly right in taking every possible precaution against reaction in the South - (hear, hear) in the direction of slavery, or in the direction of oppression of the black people by those who were their former masters...[1]

He judged it important also forcefully to emphasize that he had never contemplated that any arrangement should be made in relation to the franchise which would involve basing it on colour: the American people would have committed "a grievous crime", he declared, if they had drawn the line on colour alone. Even although he did venture to reflect that it might have been possible to devise an educational qualification on the franchise which would have worked fairly and impartially for blacks and whites, the Duke remained primarily concerned to make it clear that he had never meant to suggest that there should be a colour discrimination operative in the granting of the suffrage.[2]

Although the Duke of Argyll was undoubtedly perfectly sincere in insisting that he had never condoned the withholding of the vote from the American freedmen on the grounds of colour, nevertheless his eagerness in 1868 publicly to pronounce his attachment to the "radical" measure of black suffrage represents a significant departure from the reservations about immediate Negro enfranchisement which he had expressed three years earlier to Sumner, and which he was willing (though somewhat awkwardly, as it turned out) still to acknowledge as having once dominated his attitude. In his close association with the freedmen's aid movement at national level, Argyll himself had indeed early recognized that so far as American conflicts over proposed legislation pertaining to civil and legal rights for Negroes

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1 Report of speech by the Duke of Argyll at a freedmen's aid meeting held in City Hall, Glasgow, 27 Jan., 1868, in Glasgow Herald, 28 Jan., 1868.

2 Ibid.

was concerned, it would be difficult, if not wrong, for Britons interested in the welfare and progress of the freedmen to remain impartially aloof.[1] But, since it could be argued that immediate political enfranchisement was not in the same way an essential prerequisite for the practical abolition of Negro slavery in the post-war era, he had conveniently avoided including the controversy over the suffrage as an aspect of American Reconstruction politics which could not easily be ignored.

In some respects, Argyll showed a certain shrewdness (as well as reflecting his own attitude to the issue) in failing to cite Negro enfranchisement as a major objective which ought to engage the sympathies of the freedmen's friends on both sides of the Atlantic. As the Duke's own defensive sequel to his speech at Glasgow in 1868 amply demonstrated, the issue was a sticky one on which it was notoriously easy to make statements which could be distressingly misinterpreted. Furthermore, there was the very real possibility, already alluded to, that the systematic discussion of this inflammatory political problem within the arena of the freedmen's aid societies would produce fundamental divergences of opinion sufficient to arouse debilitating antagonisms within the movement.

Certainly, a continuing awareness of these hazards seems to have pervaded the policy of the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society (GFAS), for there is nothing in its records to suggest that the Society ever deviated from its original intention of keeping American politics out of its involvement with the freedmen. And perhaps in this, the Society did after all adopt the safest, wisest course. It might tentatively be suggested that an apolitical line helped in some small measure to ensure the perfect harmony which characterized a public meeting held by the GFAS in the City Hall in

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1 See reference to speech by the Duke of Argyll at inaugural meeting of the NFAU, May, 1866, in Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, pp. 229-230.

September, 1865.

In his speech from the chair, Bailie James Salmon obliquely defined the scope of the meeting's concern for the American freedmen by connecting the cause to the old anti-slavery one and, more importantly, by relating it to the "deep interest" which Britain had taken in "the moral progress" of her own freed slaves - an interest which, according to the chairman's statement, primarily involved being "anxious not only that they should be free, but that they should be elevated to a position like our own in education, and in all those moral sympathies and feelings which make man what he ought to be".[1] On this occasion, both Sella Martin and his sponsor, the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod, were speakers, and in accordance with the general slant of the proceedings set by Bailie Salmon's opening address, neither made any reference whatsoever to the current or prospective political status of the Negroes.[2] This may have been fortunate, since it was probably within the bounds of possibility that if the meeting had taken a more political line, a difference of opinion could have arisen between Martin and Macleod.

We have already observed Sella Martin's views on the suffrage: it is worth bearing in mind that he was a member of the black populatiom in the United States as well as simply a representative of the American Missionary

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1 Report of speech by Bailie James Salmon at a public freedmen's aid meeting held under the auspices of the GFAS in City Hall, Glasgow, 22 Sept., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865.
The Bailie, an irreverent magazine launched in Glasgow in the early 1870s and largely devoted to character sketches of the city's councillors and leading men, indicated that Bailie Salmon projected an image of great righteousness and exemplary character, and was generally very full of himself. The unflattering portrait was augmented by the charge that as a Bailie, he sat in judgement on cases he was personally interested in, listened to police testimony in preference to that of citizens, and used his position in the Council to further his own business interests as an architect - see The Bailie, 30 Oct., 1872.

2 Macleod devoted much of his speech to rejoicing over the abolition of slavery - see Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865.

Association, and as such, he was almost certainly bound to have a positive sympathy for moves calculated to secure some degree of political as well as social equality for his race. Macleod's opinion on the early enfranchisement of the freedmen cannot properly be gauged since at no time did he publicly refer to this vexed question. But if contemporary outlook towards the extension of the suffrage to the British working classes is anything to go by, then the attitude imputed to him on that issue by Glasgow councillor James Moir suggests that Macleod was probably opposed to the radical concept of Negro suffrage in the United States. On two separate occasions during huge reform rallies, Moir found it expedient to denounce the popular Glasgow minister's views. As chairman on one of the platforms at the Scottish National Reform League's great demonstration in the autumn of 1866, he vigorously challenged Macleod's opposition to reform.[1] And several days later, addressing the reform demonstration at Dumbarton, he again disparagingly referred to Macleod's declaration that if the suffrage were extended to every man, the "slaves of the whisky shop" would be put in charge of his little stake in the country.[2] The fact that James Moir, chairman of

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1 Report of speech by James Moir at the reform demonstration held on Glasgow Green, 16 Oct., 1866, in North British Daily Mail, 17 Oct., 1866

2 Report of speech by James Moir at the reform demonstration at Alexandria, Dumbarton, 20 Oct., 1866, in ibid., 22 Oct., 1866.

Macleod's biography (written by his son) gives insubstantial insight into the minister's political convictions, but the indications are that he was a fairly keen Conservative. As a student, for instance, he had been instrumental in getting Peel elected as rector of Glasgow University in 1837 after a succession of Whig rectors, and at the victory Banquet, had personally delivered a memorable speech which "marked the rallying of the Conservative party after their (sic) discomfiture by the Reform Bill of 1832"- Macleod, Memoir of Norman Macleod, Vol. 1, pp. 92-93. He had been strongly opposed to the policies and principles of the Chartists - see ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 118-119 - a fact which must naturally have caused ex-Chartist Moir to regard him with suspicion, if not actual disfavour. Yet he did, it would seem, have a real enough appreciation of the shortcomings in society, and of the gap between rich and poor which was making for unrest in the 1840s - see ibid., Vol. 1, p. 287. But he believed it was largely the Christian Church's responsibility to rectify these discontents by instilling a spirit of "love, unselfishness, kindness, forbearance" into all the more prosperous sections of society - ibid.,Vol. 1 pp. 282, 286-287. His approach to remedying working-class disadvantages was essentially philanthropic and paternalistic - see ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 11-14, where an account is given of his schemes for helping the Glasgow poor.

the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society, should have chosen to concentrate an attack on Norman Macleod in such a fashion itself illustrates somewhat spectacularly the latent potential for serious disagreements over political issues which could exist among men who shared a strong interest in the spiritual and material welfare of the American freedmen and who co-operated within the sphere of the GFAS in working for their cause.[1]

At the same time, however, it is clear that many of the most prominent members of the Society were active in their support of reformist politics on the home front. At least five of the 1866 committee members (excluding Moir himself) can be positively identified as having played leading roles in reform movements in the city. In the forefront at the Glasgow Reform Union's welcome to W.E. Gladstone in 1865, for instance, James Moir, that organization's chairman, was joined by GFAS colleagues in councillor Edward Alexander (who was also on the Reform Union's committee), councillor James Thomson, William Logan, William Smeal, and James Smith (treasurer of the Reform Union) and John Taylor, both of whom were ordinary rather than committee members of the GFAS.[2]

One of the most active individuals on the GFAS' committee, councillor John Burt, was acknowledged, along with James Moir, to be one of the two foremost radicals in Glasgow during the 1860s. Entering the Town Council in 1861 as the champion of the East End radicals, Burt had earned his reputation by fervently denouncing jobbery and corruption within the Council and by attacking aristocratic oppression of the rate payers. He was one of the six founder members of the Cobden Club, and by 1866 was President of

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1 Moir, as one of the most active GFAS members, had naturally been on the platform in City Hall when Macleod delivered his address on behalf of the freedmen - see Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865.

2 See report of the presentation of an address to Gladstone by the Glasgow Reform Union in ibid., 2 Nov., 1865; record of the composition of the GFAS committee in 1866 in letter from William Smeal to Aspinall Hampson, A-sl.P., C120/36.

the Scottish National Reform League.[1] In the latter organization, James Smith again served in the capacity of treasurer, and councillor Moir was chairman, while William Smeal and councillors Alexander and Thomson were prominent members.[2] Smeal, indeed, had for long taken a deep interest in domestic politics, and remained faithful throughout his life to the cause of advanced Liberalism, giving valuable support and aid to all meetings promoting Liberal principles and reforms.[3]

VI Scottish radicals' views on the prospect of imminent Negro enfranchisement

There was, of course, nothing surprising or exceptional about the distinct correlation between activities on behalf of the cause of the American freedmen and activities on behalf of the cause of British

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1 The Bailie, 22 Oct., 1873, pp. 1-2. The magazine castigated Burt for having largely forsaken his radical principles when he became a Bailie: "Among the loaves and fishes he forgot all the denunciations he had launched against a self-seeking and exclusive inner circle. Seated comfortably in high places, he looked down on the misguided creatures he had left squirming beneath, and pitied their ignorance". The East End voted him out in 1870.

2 See report of the address to William Lloyd Garrison from the Scottish National Reform League at a public meeting in Merchant's Hall, Glasgow, 19 July, 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 20 July, 1867. See also references to those participating in the 1866 reform demonstration in Glasgow in North British Daily Mail, 15 Oct., 1866. A striking number of personalities appearing on the six platforms (or more relevantly, four platforms since two were occupied by out of town deputations and trades' representatives) at the demonstration had connections with the GFAS or its sister body, the Glasgow Emancipation Society (GES), or were known, as individuals, to sympathize with the Negro race in America. In addition to those already cited, these included William Brown (GES), Rev. Dr. Edwards (GES), Alexander Graham (GES), John McGavin (GES), Professor John Nichol, Charles Robertson, A.F. Stoddard, and from Edinburgh, Duncan McLaren.

3 Obituary on William Smeal in Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug., 1877. In the early autumn of 1865, he was seconding a resolution that any new Reform Bill should at least 1) extend the franchise to every male householder or lodger in counties and burghs, 2) provide for the redistribution of seats, 3) introduce shorter Parliaments, and 4) establish voting by ballot - see report of public meeting of citizens of the Eastern District of Glasgow to consider parliamentary reform, in Mechanics' Hall, Calton, Glasgow, 20 Sept., 1865, in North British Daily Mail, 21 Sept., 1865.

political reform which characterized the leadership of the GFAS.[1] Strong and sustained involvement in this particular philanthropic venture largely presupposed - and to some extent positively required[2] - a very considerable measure of sympathy and admiration for the United States and consequently, but most significantly, for at least some aspects of the United States system of government. Accordingly, while GFAS policy excluded the internal discussion of the political issue of Negro suffrage, it is perhaps valid to assume that among the radical element within the organization, such an important extension of the processes of American democracy would have been assured of at least calm and reasoned consideration, if not a positively sympathetic reception.

Of these members of the GFAS whom we have clearly identified as being closely associated with British reform agitation, none had more impressive radical credentials than the Society's chairman, James Moir. A tea merchant in the city, Moir had been a leading figure in Glasgow Chartist circles and in 1865, he recorded his continuing attachment to the spirit and principles of the old cause by contributing to a fund for the benefit of the family of the recently deceased Bronterre O'Brien.[3] The strength of his commitment during the 1860s to the movement for political reform was

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1 In England, leading reformers such as John Bright, John Stuart Mill, Goldwin Smith, Edmond Beales and Thomas Hughes were actively concerned in supporting the freedmen's aid movement - see Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 190.

2 Bolt, ibid., p.191, has concluded that as well as being a campaign impelled by "benevolence and Christian zeal", the British freedmen's aid movement consciously sought also to "act as a vehicle of goodwill towards America and the American government". As will be seen in Chapter VIII, this secondary objective figured very strongly in the considerations of Scottish speakers at meetings for freedmen's aid.

3 See North British Daily Mail, 2 March 1865. The fund was established by the National Reform League.

For details of Moir's Chartist activities, see biographical note in Appendix I.

conveyed in his speeches at the 1866 reform demonstrations at Glasgow and Dumbarton, and again in 1867 when in his capacity as chairman of the Scottish National Reform League he delivered an emotional if somewhat controversial address to the visiting idol, William Lloyd Garrison.[1] Two years earlier, the visit of another celebrity, W.E. Gladstone, to Glasgow had been the occasion for Moir to voice the Glasgow Reform Union's extreme satisfaction over Gladstone's stated desire to extend the franchise to the working class: "we regard the exclusion of the working classes from political liberty to be a national injustice, and its continuance therefore unsafe for the nation; that this disfranchisement by those who are in power is a violation of the law of Christ, who said 'whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto then'".[2]

Since Moir was possessed of so vigorous an enthusiasm for a substantial widening of the franchise in Britain, and distinguished also by an interest in the cause of the American Negroes which stretched back at least to his days as a member of the Glasgow Union and Emancipation Society,[3] it was perhaps inevitable that these parallel involvements should have come together

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1 See above, Chapter III, pp. 159, 176, 305.

2 Report of an address presented on behalf of the Glasgow Reform Union by James Moir to William Gladstone, Glasgow, 1 Nov., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 2 Nov., 1865.
It is interesting as a reflection of the deep antagonisms existing within the spectrum of Liberal opinion in Glasgow at that time that the Glasgow Herald carried a venomous editorial scorning and ridiculing the Glasgow Reform Union's reception for Gladstone. Recalling that the "Union Manhood Suffrage Reformers" had been "practically snuffed out at the elections", the Herald dismissed the organization as a pitifully insignificant one which had sought to gain Gladstone's attention merely to win prestige, and which had no valid claim to represent the views of even a minority in Glasgow. Its members were stigmatized as "decent men of extreme opinions, who meet together and proudly fancy themselves to be in their corporate capacity an important public institution".

3 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, pp. 695, 791. See also the report of a public anti-slavery meeting to receive Henry Ward Beecher in City Hall, Glasgow, in Glasgow Emancipation Society's Minute Book No. 4 13 Oct., 1863, Smeal Collection.

during the Reconstruction era in an open statement of his views on the related questions of suffrage extension to the working men of Britain and to the coloured freedmen of the United States. We have already observed that at the Scottish National Reform League's demonstration in 1866, Moir drew some inspiration for his public insistence on the urgent need for political reform from the most recent triumph of transatlantic "radicalism", the emancipation of the American slaves.[1] And it was at the Glasgow reform rally that he also referred briefly, but significantly, to the coming enfranchisement of the black race.

Predictably, he expressed his delight in the signs from the United States that the men of the North who had suppressed the slaveocracy were "determined to have the black men free". Much more noteworthy, however, was his subsequent statement:

> The only thing I am afraid of is that these will be made free before the white men of England.[2]

The use of the adjective "white" rather than "working" in this context suggests that there may have been a feeling - perhaps largely subconscious - on Moir's part that there was something vaguely amiss about the prospect of a black labouring population, recently in the completely dependent state of slavery, succeeding to the franchise before a white labouring population which had been (and was) enslaved only in the sense that it was denied political representation. On the other hand, perhaps the terminology was without deep significance, employed simply because Moir chose to use a reference to "black men" and to set off a reference to "white men" against it.

But certainly, there is some evidence that in broader terms, he and his reformist colleagues felt a measure of chagrin over the fact that the working force of certain other countries in Europe and beyond should have been

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1 See above, Chapter III, p. 310.

2 Speech by James Moir at reform demonstration on Glasgow Green, 16 Oct., 1866, in North British Daily Mail, 17 Oct., 1866.

granted the suffrage before the workers of Britain. For instance, in the Reform Union's address to Gladstone, Moir had stressed that "We regret that it should be necessary for British workmen to emigrate before they can obtain the status of citizens".[1] And in his speech at the Glasgow reform demonstration, he renewed the emphasis on this theme, maintaining that it was strange that universal suffrage prevailed in France, Prussia, Italy, Scandinavia, the United States and the British colonies but not in Britain. Yet, when this point had been made, he returned to the question of the possible imminence of Negro suffrage in America, the issue which, by virtue of the fact that it too, like the question of franchise extension in Britain, was still undecided and the subject of great governmental concern, was after all of the most direct and immediate relevance to the British domestic situation. Thus, he ended the day's proceedings on his particular platform at the rally by stating that in addition to those nationalities which had already achieved working class suffrage in advance of Britain, he sincerely believed that before the British working men could get their enfranchisement and political liberty, "the blacks in America" would be enfranchised. He therefore called on his audience, and on political reformers in general, to "look alive".[2]

While there is no real basis for calling into question Moir's approval of the concept of early Negro suffrage, the tone of his brief statements on the subject does suggest that he looked somewhat remorsefully and enviously, if not grudgingly, on the spectacle of a newly emancipated black population on the other side of the Atlantic enjoying the right to vote while British working men were still denied it. Perhaps largely because

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1 Report of the Glasgow Reform Union's address to Gladstone in Glasgow Herald, 2 Nov., 1865

2 Report of speech by James Moir at reform demonstration on Glasgow Green, 16 Oct., 1866, in North British Daily Mail, 17 Oct., 1866.

of his own position as a veteran agitator in the cause of a wider franchise in Britain,[1] then, Moir tended, when faced in late 1866 with a simultaneous acceleration of the drive for Negro enfranchisement in America and for workers' enfranchisement in Britain, involuntarily to give the impression that he viewed the twin developments not so much in terms of a gain for international radicalism but more in terms of a race for the suffrage between American blacks and British whites.

The deliberations on this issue by a Scottish radical such as James Moir are significant in their own right, but they are the more important in that beyond such sentiments, much more tangible, clearly defined reservations about the whole question of immediate Negro enfranchisement were voiced by some elements of Scottish radicalism. Most notable in this respect were the radical Caledonian Mercury and the journal which sought to champion the cause of international labour, the Glasgow Sentinel. It was, indeed, by no means a foregone conclusion that zealous British radicals who admired United States political institutions, and who were deeply concerned about the fate of the freed Negroes, automatically became supporters of the moves by American radicals to introduce Negro suffrage. On the national level, a useful example of the cautiously unenthusiastic attitude adopted by some advanced Liberals towards the measure was provided by John Bright himself. As well as sharing (with many of his prominent followers) Moir's discomfiture over the possibility of Negro suffrage preceding the enfranchisement of the British working class,[2] Bright had a more basic reason for failing to

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1 Moir's tireless radicalism earned him the opprobrium of The Bailie, which mercilessly hammered his activities as a Town Councillor: "He stormed and roared on numberless platforms; he jingled the cap and bells of a reforming clown ... He was the father of the people and the protector of the poor, and his children and dependents were, and have remained, uncommonly ill governed". It was suggested that after he became a Bailie, he lost his radical fervour: "[He] sees a weaver at a distance with half-shut eye ...[and] ... carries a silk umbrella" - see The Bailie, 13 Nov., 1872, p.1.

2 See Bolt, Victorian Attitudes to Race, p. 62

endorse transatlantic radicalism on this issue. Writing to Sumner in October, 1865, he predicted that if the latter attempted to give the freedmen the vote at that time, he would face serious difficulties, since in order for such a proposal to have a chance of success, the law would have to be the same for white and black in all States. This situation clearly not obtaining, he doubted that an Amendment for black suffrage would get through.[1]

Within the columns of that great bastion of Brightian radicalism in Scotland, the Caledonian Mercury, the existence of a somewhat ambivalent line on this critical aspect of American Reconstruction could not ultimately veil the fact that the journal set very much less store by supporting the immediate enfranchisement of the American Negroes than by agitating for the immediate extension of voting powers in Britain. Certainly, when Professor Cairnes' influential article appeared in Macmillan's Magazine, the Mercury was ready with a hearty endorsement of his argument favouring black suffrage on the grounds of the Negroes' equality with the whites.[2] Less than four months later, however, and despite the implementation of the nefarious Black Codes under Johnson's ultra-conciliatory policy, the paper showed no tendency to insist that the quicker Cairnes' recommendation be put into practice, the better. On the contrary, every allowance was made for the deliberations which were, understandably in the Mercury's view, delaying American moves in the direction of Negro enfranchisement. That this should have been so was

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1 John Bright to Charles Sumner, 20 Oct., 1865 in PMHA, Oct. 1912 - June 1913, Vol. 46, pp. 145-146. Bright, writing to Sumner at the same period, thus approximates closely to the Duchess of Argyll's standard argument regarding prospective Negro suffrage North and South. Bright seems to have been among those who were personally acquainted with the Argylls' attitudes to the Negro question during Reconstruction both through the medium of the freedmen's aid movement and as a result of private associations with the Duke and Duchess. Thus Professor John Stuart Blackie recorded that at a dinner given in 1866 by Argyll at Kensington, where he and Bright had been among the guests, "There was excellent conversation after dinner about the prospects of the negroes, the female vote, Gladstone...and what not" - Stoddart, John Stuart Blackie, Vol. 2, p.35.

2 Caledonian Mercury, 5 Aug., 1865.

paradoxically due in some measure to the inevitable association of the cause of Negro enfranchisement with the parallel cause of British political reform. Although there naturally remained a real appreciation of the need to ensure the freedman of "citizen's rights", a jaded eye cast at the same time on the parliamentary convolutions which had to be endured before franchise extension could be achieved in Britain did not increase the will to urge American politicians into a hastier settlement of their particular suffrage problem:

> We in this country, having an easier problem to solve, and puzzling over it as stupidly as any cynic could desire, need not be over-impatient in our judgement of the American people while they are debating their great question. If a Royal Commission, presided over by politicians of the grand calibre of Lord Elcho and Sir Morton Peto, must carefully examine the working classes in order to find out whether they are fit to exercise the electoral franchise, surely we ought in all charity to give the Americans plenty of time to work out their larger and more difficult problem.[1]

By early 1866, however, the Radical Reconstruction machine had begun to gather some steam over the suffrage issue, and was grinding towards the production of clearly formulated measures for extending the franchise to the Negro freedmen. The Caledonian Mercury consequently displayed an early readiness to endorse the Congressional proposals, once mooted. Influencing the paper to take this tack was the passing by a large majority in the House of Representatives during mid-January of a Bill designed to enfranchise the Negroes of the District of Columbia. The Radicals' achievement on this occasion was regarded as "a straw indicating a current of popular feeling in favour of negro suffrage",[2] and the identification of such a popular feeling within the United States in turn helped the Mercury to look benevolently on the proposed Civil Rights Bill.

We have already observed the initial enthusiasm with which the Mercury

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1 Ibid., 22 Nov., 1865.

2 Ibid., 6 Feb., 1866.

greeted this measure, and the way in which the paper cited it as an example of legislation which in its spirit and essence might profitably be copied by the British government.[1] Clearly, the tendency to look at the question of immediate Negro suffrage in strict conjunction with the question of British working class suffrage remained as strong as ever. And while in a radical journal such as the Mercury the continuance of this tendency involved continuing support for Negro enfranchisement, at the same time, it involved also the persistence of the familiar view which saw black suffrage as a desirable goal in principle, but not necessarily one which should, in all fairness, be achieved before that of the British reformers. The sense of challenge for British reform, which underlay the Mercury's initial sense of satisfaction over the progress of transatlantic radicalism on the suffrage issue, was demonstrated by its hope that the Civil Rights Bill would prompt British workers to ask themselves why, when the American coloured population was being granted rights and privileges, "they themselves should be as pariahs, without a vote or without power either to make or alter the laws they are called upon to obey".[2]

It was only when the Caledonian Mercury chose to back Johnson's course on the Civil Rights Bill as against the line ultimately adopted by the Congressional Radicals that the shallowness of the paper's support for the principle of Negro enfranchisement per se was fully revealed. We have earlier seen that the main considerations governing the Mercury's ultimate opposition to the passing of the Bill were fears that it would lead to over-centralization within the United States, to an upset in the internal balance of power by unduly strengthening Congress, and to a general interference with the sacred tenets of the American Constitution.[3] It was

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1 See above, Chapter IV pp. 368-369.

2 Caledonian Mercury, 6 Feb., 1866

3 See above, Chapter IV pp. 373-377.

also noted, however, that the paper disapproved of the measure on the grounds that it proposed to employ Federal legislation to secure the interests of the Negroes to an extent to which it had never previously been used in securing the interests of whites. Furthermore, having once taken its stand in objecting to the Bill, the Mercury gained for the first time the confidence openly to question whether the freedmen were really ready to receive the suffrage.[1]

In the space of less than one (admittedly critical) year, the radical journal had strayed a long way from its early enthusiastic endorsement of Cairnes. At the bottom of the Mercury's apparent volte face was the conviction that under the policy envisaged by the Radical Republicans, Negro enfranchisement could only be achieved at the expense of the American Constitution. Under these circumstances, the political interests of the freedmen were accordingly sacrificed. The very belief that the Civil Rights Bill went too far in its attempts to secure civil and political equality for the black population suggests, however, that the Mercury never really had any true appreciation of the special importance of the vote for the freedmen in the Southern states, nor any strong, positive attachment to the radical cause of Negro enfranchisement.

Both these failings on the paper's part are illustrated to some extent in the restrictive nature of the analogies which it constantly chose to make between American and British franchise problems - restrictive both in the sense that they paid little or no heed to the divergent needs and circumstances existing within the unenfranchised communities of the two countries, and in the sense that they implicitly strove to fasten the pace of the movement for Negro suffrage to the pace of the contemporary British reform movement. When the triumph of the Civil Rights Bill made it clear that the former had

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 21 April, 1866.

finally overtaken the latter, it was the cue for the Mercury not to rejoice over a victory for transatlantic radicalism but to depreciate the importance of the measure (and, indeed, of the eventual outcome of the whole Congressional/Presidential conflict) for British people, and, most significantly to sever its link between the causes of Negro and British working class suffrage by hinting that enfranchisement of the freedmen would prove an unwise step:

> Unlike the rebellion, with slavery to be triumphant or to be put down, or a great united nation to be divided and estranged as the result, the worst or best that can happen [once the contest between the President and Congress is resolved] is the greater or lesser power to be exercised in State and national affairs by the enfranchisement of the coloured people.[1]

If the quality of the Caledonian Mercury's radicalism did not quite fit in for graciously accepting the virtual accomplishment of American Negro suffrage in advance of the desired extension of the franchise to the British working classes, the same held true in double measure with regard to the radicalism of the Glasgow Sentinel. The manner in which the Sentinel during Reconstruction tended to smother memories of its wartime sympathy for the Confederacy by hailing the Northern victory as a victory for free labour has already been considered.[2] There were even desultory attempts on its part to infer that with regard to the question of basic human rights and liberties, the cause of the British working man could be broadly related to the cause of the free black labourer in the United States.[3] It was, accordingly, a professed desire to see all lingering remnants of slavery effectively swept away which was largely responsible for producing in the Glasgow Sentinel at an early stage a remarkably advanced attitude towards Negro enfranchisement.

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1 Ibid.

2 See above, Chapter III, pp. 157-158.

3 See Glasgow Sentinel, 4 Feb., 1 July, 1865.

By mid May, 1865, when the uncertainty of the captured Jefferson Davis' fate was seriously exacerbating the sectional bitterness and hatred of the immediate post-war months, no Scottish voice was more ready than that of the Sentinel to urge a policy of conciliation for the sake of a speedy reunion of North and South. Yet, although in practice such a policy pursued by the President was to lead to disastrous proscription of the freedmen's new liberties, in the Glasgow Sentinel's view at that time, conciliation of the South certainly did not rule out the desirable proposition of early Negro enfranchisement. On the contrary, an editorial devoted to considering American Reconstruction maintained that the influence of Southern planters should certainly be diminished by giving the freedmen a voice in politics and government, and concluded that it would be a "suicidal policy" by the North to exclude the Negroes from the franchise.[1] The paper's radical line of reasoning on the issue was demonstrated by its apparent concern not only for the advantages which could accrue to Northern democracy from a sensible handling of the question, but also for the rightful political status of the black race:

> It is to be hoped that the work [of providing for and settling the Negroes] will not be done in halves, but that the negro will be admitted to the same rights as the white man, as any attempt at a social or political inequality will be fraught with future evil. To emancipate the negro from domestic slavery, and leave him still without the pale of the constituency, would be tacitly admitting his inferiority, while at the same time it would leave his former masters in the full possession of political power in the Southern States, which would not be desirable on many accounts.[2]

A significant point relating to this remarkably unequivocal advocacy of Negro enfranchisement was that it preceded the publication of J.E. Cairnes' influential essay on the subject. But much more significant than that was the fact that almost immediately after the Cairnes article appeared

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1 Ibid., "American Reconstruction", 20 May, 1865.

2 Ibid.

in print, the Glasgow Sentinel reversed completely its original stance and declared itself strongly opposed to an early extension of the suffrage to the black population in the United States. If both the early editorial enthusiastically recommending the North to introduce Negro suffrage and the editorial which appeared on 5 August are accepted as sincere statements reflecting the Sentinel's considered judgements on the developing course of Reconstruction, then the reason for the startling change of heart on the suffrage issue is virtually inexplicable, since in the interim the paper had given no indication of being seriously disillusioned by the general conduct of the freed Negroes or by their specific attempts to adapt to freedom.[1]

It might reasonably be suggested, however, that the Glasgow Sentinel never had any real intention of wholeheartedly pledging itself to the cause of Negro suffrage to an extent which involved accepting the proposition that the American freedmen might be enfranchised before the British working class. In effect, the paper's initial observations on the need to extend the franchise to the black race represented merely a suspended support for the principle of Negro suffrage. The timing of the editorial rejecting the idea that the ex-slaves should immediately be invested with political power suggests that it was intended as a conscious attempt to dissociate the Sentinel from Cairnes' views. With the appearance of his definitive exposition, it became necessary for the Sentinel to re-define - or at least to clarify - its own basic position on the issue. Quite simply, this involved strongly re-emphasizing the paper's satisfaction over the abolition of slavery, its belief that the black and white races could exist harmoniously in the United States, and its general optimism regarding the Negroes' future, but at the same time also stressing its opposition to the early enfranchisement of the freedmen.

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1 The paper did, however, come to recognize that not only would the former masters take a long time to accommodate themselves to the new order, but that it would also be a long time before the Negroes learnt properly to value their freedom and to realise their responsibilities - see ibid., 22 July, 1865.

It was the Sentinel itself which perceived and frankly admitted a fundamental difference between the character of British and American radicalism at that period,[1] and in no way was this difference more clearly exemplified than in the nature of the reasoning which determined the Glasgow journal's opposition to this proposed measure. For, despite all its professed radicalism, the Sentinel did not hesitate to base its objection largely on the standard Whig and Conservative argument that the freed Negroes were not yet ready responsibly to exercise the suffrage, and that it should not be granted them until they had proved themselves fit to receive it. There was every confidence that the revered processes of American democracy would admit the Negro to a share in government once he had shown himself capable of winning it; but in his present condition, he was

> totally incapacitated by long years of slavery from exercising political power...[But] if he conducts himself with propriety, he will enjoy the same rights and privileges which all enjoy in a country which is not without qualification a land of freedom for black and white.[2]

The implication here clearly was that emancipation had been the most gigantic step forward in securing freedom and justice for the Negroes in the future, and that this having been achieved, they should not expect every subsidiary privilege to follow immediately. Undoubtedly, this attitude was vitally influenced by the Sentinel's simultaneous, bitter consideration of the experience of the British working class in its struggle for political power:

> [In Britain,] the labouring class has passed through a probation of nearly three centuries since their (sic) emancipation from personal slavery, and although they belong to the same race as the governing classes, are still denied a share in the Government.[3]

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1 See above, Chapter IV pp. 378-379. It was, significantly, in relation to Negro suffrage that this observation was made.

2 Glasgow Sentinel, "The Future of the Negro Race", 5 Aug., 1865.

3 Ibid.

The inference behind this statement was essentially the same as that which lay at the back of the Caledonian Mercury's slightly more discreet observations on the parallel movements for suffrage extension on both sides of the Atlantic, namely, that there was no need for undue haste by the American Congress to pass legislation for immediate Negro suffrage when in Britain, the governing powers still saw fit to withhold the franchise from the totally independent, white working population. While in this respect the underlying vein of thought was similar in both Scottish radical weeklies, the Sentinel showed itself considerably more willing to be bluntly outspoken on the topic than did the Caledonian Mercury. In the same way, the Sentinel, unencumbered by the Mercury's great reputation as a leading friend of the Negro cause and supporter of the Republican North, was much readier openly to condemn the advance guard of radicalism in the United States for threatening to bring untold dangers on the nation by seeking to enfranchise a section of the population which it candidly judged to be unready for the vote.

The vigour of the Sentinel's attack on the American Radicals and its firm opposition to the idea of immediate Negro enfranchisement did in fact constitute a qualitative difference between its attitude and that of the Caledonian Mercury. At least throughout 1865 the Mercury was prepared to respect what it took to be genuine, responsible efforts on the part of the American Congress to work out a safe and sensible solution to a highly complex problem.[1] But by late August of that year the Sentinel was already proclaiming with alarm that "as far as the position of Sambo is concerned, the Northern Republicans are doing all they can to force the Government into an extreme abolitionist course".[2] And favouring a compromise between

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1 Despite its subsequent opposition to the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills, the Mercury never did stigmatize the Radical Republicans as dangerously fanatical, but saw them more as a misguided wing of the party who still had basically the right ideas - see Chapter IV, pp. 371-372, 373.

2 Glasgow Sentinel, "American Reconstruction", 26 Aug., 1865.

this extreme and the conflicting extremism of the old Southern slaveocracy, the Sentinel pertinently offered a definitive statement of its attitude to Negro enfranchisement:

> Nor do we think, advocates though we are for a democratic suffrage, that it would be either wise or safe to place a servile and grossly ignorant population like the late slaves of the United States at once in full possession of all political rights. Some probationary time should be arranged, during which the negro race might settle down to their (sic) new industrial position, and comprehend the relationship they hold towards their white fellow men...[T]he extreme doctrines of the Ultra-Republicans should be resisted as untimely and out of place...[1]

It is clear that the Glasgow Sentinel felt its own brand of radicalism to be out of step with contemporary American radicalism in a way that the Caledonian Mercury never did. One result of the recognition and acceptance of this ideological alienation was that the inevitable association of the twin causes of Negro and British working class suffrage tended to be of a consistently less sympathetic nature in the Sentinel than in the Mercury. While the Mercury was disposed for some time to give a measure of support to Radical Republican policy for Negro enfranchisement in the hope that British politicians might take a timely lesson from transatlantic developments, the Sentinel was inclined from an early stage to view the prospect of immediate votes for the freedmen as a potential victory for American extremism, and the corresponding lack of progress in enfranchising the British workers as a continuing defeat for the respectable forces of British reformism. Linked to this attitude was an ominous emphasis on race. "We in this country", the Sentinel briefly observed, "can hardly criticise the American people for refusing the suffrage to negroes, when it is denied here to white men".[2] Apprehensive about the racial antagonism which would be stirred up by Negro enfranchisement, the paper clearly charged the United States Radicals with

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., 28 Oct., 1865.

reckless extremism not merely because they proposed to give the vote to a section of the community plainly unfitted for it, but because they proposed to give the vote to a black population unfitted for it. The Sentinel accordingly made no bones about stating its belief that from every conceivable point of view, the British working man deserved more immediate success in his long struggle for the franchise than did the newly emancipated American Negro:

> In this country, where domestic slavery has been abolished... for centuries, there is still a reluctance to trust the working classes with political power, even although these classes have proved themselves everyway as fit to exercise it as those to whom it is entrusted. If the lower classes in this country, who belong to the same race as those who count themselves their superiors, have waited so long for their just rights, it is surely no hardship to ask the negroes in America to wait a few years before they are entrusted with the suffrage.[1]

John Elliot Cairnes had found it possible to give absolutely unreserved support for immediate enfranchisement of the freedmen because, unlike the Scottish commentators we have considered (and also unlike a leading British radical such as John Bright), in his writings on the Negro problem in the United States he treated his subject in isolation and totally avoided associating it with contemporary British political questions.[2] For those who had long been closely involved with the protracted struggle to secure the franchise for the British working classes, however, it was not really conceivable that the cause of Negro enfranchisement could be divorced from the corresponding cause of British working class enfranchisement, then reaching its climax in the agitation for the 1867 Reform Bill. And as we have seen, in terms of Scottish radical support for Negro suffrage the results of this automatic association were not always salutary. The attitude of the self-appointed champion of Scottish working class interests, the Glasgow Sentinel, admirably demonstrates how the British worker's continuing

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1 Ibid., "The Franchise in America", 14 April, 1866.

2 See Weinberg, John Elliot Cairnes, p. 123.

lack of political rights and privileges could serve in radical circles as a factor militating against advocacy of immediate Negro enfranchisement.

Nor can it be argued that in the specific case of the Glasgow Sentinel the calculated failure to forge a sympathetic link between the parallel causes of franchise extension was simply a continuation of the paper's calculated failure to forge a sympathetic link between the cause of the American slave and the cause of the British worker during the Civil War. The conscious post-war efforts of the Sentinel to redress the balance of its fervently pro-Southern stance clearly rule out the acceptance of such a conclusion, despite the fact that the journal did for the most part remain highly sceptical and critical of the policies pursued by the Radical Republicans of the North. Nevertheless, it is just possible that the nature of the Sentinel's wartime sympathies did leave it relatively freer during Reconstruction to speak out frankly and vigorously against the prospect which also perturbed and perhaps embarassed those radicals who had zealously supported the North - the prospect of the Negro ex-slaves of America gaining the franchise before the working men of Britain.

We have already observed that among leading spirits of Scottish radicalism (such as Duncan McLaren, W.E. Baxter, John Burt, James Moir, and Robie's Caledonian Mercury) who had actively championed the Federal cause, there was after the war a natural tendency to recognise the Northern victory as a triumph for the forces of world freedom, progress, and radicalism.[1] For this element, the importance of the outcome of the Civil War was not only the fact that slavery had been abolished, but also the concomitant that radicalism in America had been saved, and would continue to flourish and to provide an impetus for the development of its transatlantic counterpart. This knowledge could be reassuring enough apparently to subordinate any

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1 See above, Chapter III, pp. 172-179, 282-291. The Glasgow Sentinel retrospectively saw the Federal win in these terms too, of course - see ibid., p.

temporary misgivings which might arise over the nature of the Reconstruction policies favoured by certain sections of the victorious party in the North. Thus, although having already supported Johnson's veto on the Freedmen's Bureau Bill and soon to take a similar line regarding his rejection of the Civil Rights Bill, by early 1866 the Caledonian Mercury - in marked contrast to the Glasgow Sentinel - did not consider contemporary American radicalism to be basically estranged from the British species. On the contrary, helped by an over-simplification of the party set-up in the United States, the Mercury was prepared to acknowledge a positive identification of interests and affiliations between political parties in America and in Britain:

> The Republicans are the Radicals, who have, like Radicals on this side of the Atlantic, very decided views regarding the rights of manhood, political and social. The Democrats, who are their political opponents, must, of course, be like the Whigs and their allies, the moderate Tories, in this country, and they must also be opposed to the 'extreme' measures of progress advocated by the Republicans.[1]

Yet, for all the desire to prove it otherwise, there are distinct signs that the radicalism to which these Scots adhered tended to remain essentially insular. Thus, from the slant of the statements by James Moir and the comment in the Caledonian Mercury, for example, it would appear that while both continued vigorously to espouse the cause of international radicalism, both ultimately found it impossible totally to avoid the inference that something was basically wrong (and perhaps even unjust) about the prospect of the black American freedmen gaining the franchise before British working men. Perhaps one of the main ways, then, in which the Federal victory could be said to have provided a stimulus for the development of Scottish radicalism was by its having started a snowballing effect whereby radicalism in the United States, as it gathered momentum, stirred Scottish radicals into heightened activity through their realization that without an intensification

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 10 March, 1866.

of action, Britain was going to be left behind in the race for popular suffrage.

So long as the problem of the Negro in America could be seen purely and simply in terms of slave versus free labour, it was easy enough for leading Scottish radicals and elements of the Scottish working class enthusiastically to support the North and even to identify the cause of the Negro with their own.[1] While the British worker remained unenfranchised, however, the subsequent post-war question of immediate Negro suffrage presented a much less fruitful base for the formation of straightforward sympathetic value judgements, since the practical solution of this issue according to American Radical aims could be seen to offer the disagreeable prospects of placing the black worker in the United States above the white worker in Britain.

The dearth of source material illustrative of Scottish working class opinion at this time and of literature geared to cater principally for a working class readership renders it extremely difficult to gauge working class views on this as on other aspects of American Reconstruction. While it is known, for instance, that the Scottish workers hardest hit by the Federal successes during the war - the cotton operatives in Glasgow and in the West of Scotland - had remained as steadfast supporters of the North as had their Lancashire counterparts,[2] it would seem to be impossible to

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1 For evidence of British working class identification with the Negro slave during the Civil War period itself see J.R. Pole, Abraham Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain (Pamphlet for the Commonwealth-American Current Affairs Unit of the English Speaking Union, London, 1959),p.16 and passim.

2 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, pp. 420-425.
The strength of the Lancashire cotton operatives' support for the Federal cause has been depreciated in Mary Ellison, Support for Secession: Lancashire and the American Civil War (University of Chicago Press, 1972). But while adding valuable new dimensions to the subject, this scholarly reappraisal does not, it might be suggested, provide sufficient grounds for totally discarding the traditional view of the workers' Northern sympathies.

determine the attitudes of even this group to the general course of Reconstruction or to specific Reconstruction issues such as Negro suffrage. It might tentatively be suggested, however, that so far as the question of enfranchisement was concerned, the views of the dwindling body of cotton workers would have been substantially represented by those contained in the Glasgow Sentinel - notwithstanding the fact that the Sentinel clearly had not shared the operatives' attitude towards the Civil War itself.

The body blow which the Scottish cotton industry had sustained as a result of the war was one from which it never fully recovered.[1] Despite fairly successful wartime attempts to establish alternative sources of supply,[2] the continued crippling dependence on American cotton was reflected in Glasgow's deep concern during the immediate post-war period to see the early resumption of sizeable United States consignments to Britain.[3] And the uncertainty and lack of confidence in the future felt by mill owners at that time was demonstrated by the numerous cotton factories which were advertised for sale in the Glasgow press. A typical example was the notice of the sale by public roup of the Milngavie Cotton Works which boasted a

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1 See Marwick, Scotland in Modern Times, p.91
A recent re-examination of the condition of the Scottish cotton industry from 1860 to 1914 has, however, produced the conclusion that while the lack of United States cotton had a disastrous effect on Scottish cotton mills during the Civil War, the collapse of the Scottish cotton industry as a result of the famine was purely temporary, and conditions improved markedly with the end of hostilities. It is argued that by 1867, cotton manufacture had almost returned to normal, and that exports of cloth were exceedingly satisfactory. But at the same time, it is conceded that the cotton famine did contribute in some part to the eventual decline of the industry, which began in earnest in the early 1870s - see A.J. Robertson, "The Decline of the Scottish Cotton Industry 1860-1914" in Business History, Vol. 12, No. 2, 1970, pp. 119-121.

2 The city's wartime sources of supply for raw cotton included Brazil, Smyrna, Greece, Egypt, West Indies, India, China and Japan - see Glasgow Herald, 27 Dec., 1865.

3 See, for instance, ibid., 24 March, 7 Sept., 27 Dec., 1865; North British Daily Mail, 7, 19 April, 24 June, 22 Aug., 31 Oct., 1865; 21 Feb., 1866; 10 June, 1867.

"Mansion House and Workers' Houses attached" and a mill and machinery, including 19,848 Mule spindles, all in good working order and ready for immediate operation. The property was under a long lease of which twenty-six years had then still to run, but "In order to ensure a sale, the upset price has been fixed at the low sum of £7,000".[1]

The result of this continuing post-war malaise was naturally an increase in the economic hardship and distress of the cotton operatives; and although all remained in badly straitened circumstances, no section of the workers connected with the industry continued to be so adversely hit as the handloom weavers, whose craft had already been declining rapidly before the Civil War dealt it a mortal blow.[2] Chronic deterioration in their economic condition caused many young men to leave the trade altogether and to join the army;[3] but clearly, a very considerable proportion of the weavers saw emigration to America itself as offering the best escape from their difficulties during the Reconstruction years. Inspired by successful schemes launched by city gentlemen to gather money for financing the passage of families to the United States,[4] the Glasgow handloom weavers resolved in late 1865 to form

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1 General notice in Glasgow Herald, 24 July, 1865. See also, for example, ibid., 26 Jan., 12 March, 1866. The Herald carried very many such advertisements during the months immediately following the end of the Civil War.

2 See W.O. Henderson, "The Cotton Famine in Scotland" p. 156; Marwick, Scotland in Modern Times, p. 91.

3 See Glasgow Herald, 30 Nov., 1865. The raw cotton from the East was frequently considered to be inferior to that which had been received from the Southern states of America, and some handloom weavers maintained that the quality was generally so bad that they could not make a living from working with it. The Herald quoted part of a rhyme by a Glasgow weaver who opted to join the army at this time:

> Ere I'd handle a 'lay' I would handle a gun,
> For sodgering to weaving is naething but fun;
> Since death sooner or later comes to every man's lot,
> Ere I'd weave a bad web I would rather be shot!

4 See ibid., 30 Nov., 1865. A group of prominent Glaswegians headed by one Dr. McTaggart had already by this time raised enough to send about one hundred weavers and their dependents to the United States, where, according to accounts sent back to Glasgow, they had quickly settled down and begun to prosper.

emigration societies among themselves. Subscriptions of twopence per week were levied, and through the societies, it was intended to publicize throughout the British colonies the needs of the weavers, and to apply for aid to the American Government and to employers of labour in the United States.[1]

From their position as members of a severely economically depressed section of the community who insisted that they were the subjects of tyranny and oppression,[2] but who yet were deprived of a political voice through which to register their grievances and their hopes for redress, it seems likely, then, that the Scottish handloom weavers would have been less enthusiastically disposed to favour the American Radicals' agitation for immediate Negro enfranchisement than they had earlier been to support the Northern struggle to end Negro slavery. And perhaps the same may have been true of the mill workers - the cotton operatives of Glasgow and the West of Scotland who also continued to suffer as the industry languished, their small savings dwindled away, and they found themselves unable readily to adapt to rough, unskilled work.

> They were destitute of energy and enterprise to prompt them to move from the districts in which there was no longer work for them. A special class had been bred to live by working up cotton, and fit for little or nothing else...The evils of the evil system [slavery in the Southern states] are best seen by looking at its two extremes - the negro there, the operative here.[3]

From the comparative economic insulation of Edinburgh, the Daily Review in late 1868 thus depicted the wartime and post-war plight of the British operatives; and the paper bluntly let it be known that there appeared to

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1 See ibid., 30 Nov., 1865. The decision to form emigration societies was taken at a meeting of handloom weavers in Calton Mechanics' Hall, Glasgow, on 27 Nov., 1865.

The Glasgow Herald thoroughly endorsed any scheme to help the emigration of this group, but warned that it was futile for the weavers to apply to the harassed American Government for help.

2 See ibid., 30 Nov., 1865.

3 Daily Review, 28 Dec., 1868.

be no forseeable change for the better in conditions as they then stood. The buoyant initial optimism that the South would revive as a great cotton producing region and even surpass former achievements, following the introduction of free labour, had not been borne out by events: "What dreams! It is eight years since the war began. It is four years since it terminated. And last week we heard that all Lancashire had been put on three days work a week because cotton was bad, dear, and scanty". Significantly, the Review's deep pessimism regarding the duration of the transition period needed to restore normal supplies of American cotton was largely based in the belief that the intervention of political problems was keeping the Southern states from settling down to work again. The policies of the Radical Republicans, it was implied, had been directly responsible for the waste lands, the ruined planters, the "discontent, poverty and violence" which were everywhere in the South, and which were transmitting their inimical effects back to the long-suffering cotton factory workers in Britain. With angry concern, the paper declared that "Whites and blacks, instead of taking to growing cotton, have taken to contending for political power".[1]

It can be no more than speculated upon that under the prevailing economic circumstances, the cotton operatives of Scotland might have shared something of the Daily Review's sentiments on the apparent excess of concentration on political issues and political power in relation to the Negro race during Reconstruction. On the other hand, what is certain (and cautions us against supposing that their continuing economic distress had any significant effect in producing a more discernably hostile or critical attitude towards post-war America) is that the workers in the Scottish cotton industry at least preserved an active faith in the principles and ideals of United States democracy after the Civil War was over.

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1 Ibid.

This was popularly demonstrated at a soiree held in Glasgow in early 1867 by the "Female Branch of Operative Cotton Spinners" and their friends. Several members of the male Operative Spinners Association were present, and to the right of the chairman on the platform was a Union Jack while at the left was the Stars and Stripes, and in front of it, the banner which the cotton spinners had carried at the Glasgow reform demonstration.[1]

And although the incident in question lies outside the span of the Reconstruction era, it is nevertheless equally worth noting a broadly similar association of British reform agitation with the symbolic spirit of United States democracy which was forged by weavers in Ayrshire almost two decades later. At Newmilns in Ayrshire, the serious hardship caused during the Civil War by the blockade of the Southern ports had not stopped the local weavers, led by an ex-Chartist, John Donald, from spearheading a remarkably vigorous Anti-Slavery Society.[2] The nature of the Society's resolutions of sympathy and support for Lincoln and the Federal Government

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1 See report of soiree, concert and ball held by the Female Branch of Operative Cotton Spinners in Bell Hotel, Glasgow, 2 April, 1867, in Glasgow Sentinel, 6 April, 1867.

2 R.M. Paterson, "Newmilns Weavers and the American Civil War" in Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Collections 1947-1949, 2nd Series, Vol. 1, p. 98.
The handloom weavers of Newmilns would appear to have had a reputation for ultra radicalism. Appointed in 1837-38 minister to the parish of Loudoun in Ayrshire, which included the village of Newmilns, the Rev. Norman Macleod had found the weavers "keen politicians, and, as a rule, advanced radicals". With their trade already being gradually extinguished by the factories, they were poor, and extremely interested in public questions. Groups engaging in excited discussion of politics gathered in the street or on the "Green". "Most of them were keen Chartists, some violent infidels, who, with Tom Paine as their text-book, were ready for argument on any question of Church or State". The cautiously Conservative Macleod almost certainly made little or no headway in weaning them from their radical faith. On telling a Chartist weaver that his principles would "drive the country into revolution, and create in the long-run national bankcruptcy", the minister had been met with the reply "Nay-tional bankcruptcy! Div ye think sae?" Then after a long pinch of snuff, "Dod, I'll risk it! " - see Macleod, Memoir of Norman Macleod, Vol. 1, pp. 115 - 119.

eventually led to its being recognized by a presentation from the American Consul in Glasgow, but prior to that, an American flag had been sent to Newmilns, delivered by a Negro, John Brooks. Testifying to the continuation of the strong admiration for American democracy which had clearly helped to inspire the Anti-Slavery Society's fulsome praise for Lincoln and the Republican party,[1] this same flag was carried by the Newmilns contingent at a great franchise demonstration in Kilmarnock as late as 1884.[2]

VII. Some suggestions regarding the influence of regional factors on attitudes to Negro suffrage

The total absence of any positive indication of the attitudes of even the workers in the Scottish cotton industry towards the specific issue of Negro suffrage (as opposed to the broader issue of United States democracy) renders it the more difficult to try to assess the role of economic and regional factors in determining views on this aspect of Reconstruction. Clearly, any such attempt must be seriously handicapped by the general lack of first-hand working class attitudes. Yet, it has already been suggested that economic considerations were almost certainly of some considerable importance in relation to the varying regional amounts of Scottish contributions to freedmen's aid;[3] and it seems logical to suppose that on the question of Negro enfranchisement (more directly of interest as it was than most other political issues of Reconstruction to the British people at this time), popular responses both favourable and unfavourable were to some extent

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1 Rejoicing in the re-election of Lincoln to the Presidency, the Society's chairman had noted "How mortifying must it be to the aristocracy of this country to see a man from the working class raised to such a position!" - see Paterson, "Newmilns Weavers", p. 102

2 Ibid., p. 99

3 See above, Chapter I, p. 50.

conditioned by the particular nature of the economic impact - or, indeed, by the very lack of economic impact - which the American Civil War had had on the area concerned.

With regard to Glasgow itself, for instance, it is important to bear in mind that whether or nor the depressed cotton operatives and handloom weavers came into line with Glasgow Sentinel reasoning on Negro suffrage during Reconstruction, they were essentially a small and progressively dwindling group, whose attitudes to the Civil War itself had been highly atypical of those of the vast majority of their fellow citizens. With a booming wartime prosperity based solidly in shipbuilding for the Confederacy the city had been a virtual stronghold of pro-Southern sentiment, and even John Nichol, the popular professor of English literature at the University, had brought considerable resentment down upon himself when during the war "he threw himself, in the press and on the platform alike, into the cause of the North, with an energy and ardour which ran strongly counter to the prevailing sentiment of his Glasgow townsmen".[1]

As the constant demand for blockade-runners stimulated the expansion of existing shipyards on the Clyde and the establishment of new firms,[2] it was impossible that the men fitting out the ships for the South would altruistically support the Federal cause after the fashion of the unfortunate cotton operatives.[3] Nor, by extension, was it perhaps to be expected that

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1 Knight, John Nichol, p. 109.

2 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, pp.133-326.

3 Harrison, "British Labour and American Slavery", p. 313 argues that ideological factors rather than economic considerations governed British opinion on the Civil War, but he significantly concedes that men employed in building ships for the Confederacy were an exception to this general rule.

these same men would be over-enthusiastic about a radical agitation in the United States which threatened to culminate in the American Negroes receiving the suffrage before they themselves had won the struggle for the right to vote. It might be suggested that so far as this influential section of Glasgow's working class population was concerned, the Glasgow Sentinel did indeed validly serve as a spokesman for the city's basic working class attitude towards immediate Negro suffrage.

In this connection, it is worth noting that the other Glasgow newspaper which claimed to represent the interests and views of the working class, the North British Daily Mail, also took its stance on a firm opposition to the early enfranchisement of the freedmen. Taking the line that the Federal victory should not involve an interference with state rights, and that every state should accordingly continue to preserve the right to decide its own electorate, the Mail lost no time in criticizing the "impolicy and injustices" of the Radicals' "sweeping demand" for Negro suffrage.[1] The conviction grew that at the bottom of the enfranchisement issue was the more basic issue of the powers of separate states against the powers of the central government at Washington, and the current struggle over black suffrage was to some extent seen as a symptom of a coming general pattern of political behaviour in which West and South would unite in fighting "the despotic and arbitrary policy of the New England party".[2]

Aside from the desire to see the states which it had supported during the war preserve intact their allegedly legitimate rights, however, the Mail also implicitly sought to damage the character of the Congressional

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1 North British Daily Mail, 25 July, 1865. The Mail continued to insist that Negro suffrage should not be forcibly imposed upon the South, and that it could only be satisfactorily achieved when the South granted it voluntarily - see ibid., 25 Oct., 1866; 11 April, 2 Aug., 1867.

2 Ibid., 9 Sept., 1865.

bid to secure votes for the freedmen by contrasting the British enfranchisement question with the American one. Never slow to envisage the eruption of a revolutionary situation in post-war America, the paper suggested that Britain's contemporary political controversies were "a storm in a teacup" compared to "the formidable tempest of conflicting passions, principles, and interests which threaten to burst forth in the political atmosphere of the United States". In Britain, it was simply a question of whether a "small concession" should be made to the electoral claims of a "large and important" section of the people, many of whom were obviously capable of exercising the franchise. In the United States, on the other hand, the Republican party had mooted the concept of enfranchising "not a few hundred thousand skilled and free artisans, a proposal which, with us, our sapient Tory rhetoricians and statesmen boggle at, but four millions of recently emancipated bondsmen".[1]

Catering for a readership which had largely sympathised with the Confederacy, and itself having supported the Southern cause, it was on occasion necessary for the North British Daily Mail to vindicate to some extent the adoption of these earlier views; and in furthering this aim, the Mail,no less than the Glasgow Sentinel, seems therefore to have been cynically aware of the opportunity afforded by the agitation for Negro suffrage to illustrate the "dangerous" nature of Republican Radicalism as it had shown itself in the early post-war era. At the same time, the cause of immediate Negro enfranchisement itself was implicitly shown to be unreasonable, if not unjust, by comparison with the hallowed cause of British electoral reform.

More directly than in any other Scottish city, a large proportion of the working population in Glasgow had stood to lose economically as a consequence of the ending of the Civil War. It may have been more than mere coincidence or internal editorial policy, then, that caused both of the

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1 Ibid., 17 April, 1866.

city's "working class" journals to keep a sharply critical eye on the political machinations of the victorious Radical Republicans during Reconstruction, as well as simultaneously maintaining a vigorous respect and admiration for American democracy in the abstract. A comparison of the views put forward in the Dundee press at this time further suggests that the nature of a community's economic involvement with America during the war might conceivably have had some influence in shaping the attitudes it later adopted towards such controversial aspects of Reconstruction as the proposed enfranchisement of the Negroes.

We have already observed that in stark contrast to Glasgow, the phenomenal prosperity enjoyed by Dundee during the Civil War was firmly grounded in commercial links with the Northern states.[1] Highly conscious of the basis of their wealth, Dundonians were to remain keenly anxious throughout the Reconstruction era to preserve trade relations with the United States; and in the early post-war period, optimism about the future was running strong. Looking back in early January, 1866 at the year which had just gone, the Dundee Advertiser was able to conclude with satisfaction that no other town in Britain had had its spinning and weaving industries doing so much work, and that the wealth accumulated by Dundee in 1865 had put it into "the forefront of world prosperity".

> Our merchants and manufacturers have been netting ample and unlooked-for profits; their employees have had steady and healthful employment at wages exceptionally high; all the other interests in the town have materially shared in the same prosperity...[2]

With the steady improvement in staple manufactures having remained throughout 1865 "more remarkable than ever", Dundee could afford to dismiss as patently false the predictions that its prosperity would fall off at the end of the Civil War. By early 1866, the docks were still crowded, the

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1 See above, Chapter I, pp. 49-50.

2 Dundee Advertiser, 2 Jan., 1866.

railways were unable to deal with the volume of goods'traffic from the city, and there was every sign that the prosperity was going to continue.[1] In this climate, increased trade with America was vigorously urged, and the Advertiser opportunely suggested that the only alarmists in Britain on the question of American solvency were those who "wrote up the cotton loan as an excellent investment during the war".[2] The ninetieth anniversary of American independence provided the occasion for Leng's journal to make a strong plea for consolidation of British friendship with the United States on the grounds that "We are too much alone in Europe; let us see that we are not left alone in the world". Not the least of the Advertiser's reasons for wishing to see the speedy establishment of closer Anglo-American relations, however, was the much less grandiose consideration that Dundee did more work for the United States than for any other people - and was paid with greater promptitude and regularity than by other nations.[3]

It was not until the end of 1867 that the city began to experience a falling off in the upward trend of prosperity. Even then, however, this was minimized by the conviction that it was only temporary and not confined to Dundee. The setback was seen as merely symptomatic of a natural post-Civil War recession which was being felt throughout Britain and America, and it was confidently expected that there would soon be "a renewal of the healthy interchange of products, to the benefit of both sides".[4] This optimism had been persevered in despite the fact that the depression in

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., "Our Trade with the United States", 19 Jan., 1866. See also ibid. "Resources of the United States", 12 June, 1866.

3 Ibid., 6 July, 1866.

4 Ibid., 3 Jan, 1868

Dundee itself had, ironically, been directly precipitated by the United States Government's action in putting on the open market its vast surplus war stocks of jute and linen goods, and increasing the duty on corresponding imports.[1] In the event, there was little real basis for confidence in an early recovery of the great trade boom with America; and following cutbacks in production, reduction in wages, and a general deepening of distress throughout 1868, even the Advertiser was forced to concede that the immediate prospect for workers in 1869 was "more than usually gloomy",[2]

Yet, confidence and faith in the United States as a major trading partner probably was not seriously eroded as a result of Dundee's economic hardships in the late 1860s to early 1870s. In May, 1871 for instance, the Dundee Courier, never so close an admirer of the American Republic for its own sake as the Advertiser, was arguing that it would be in Britain's interest to have the 'Alabama' claims speedily settled since it should be borne in mind that the Americans were not only kinsmen but also customers.[3] Several months later, the Courier urged Dundonians to contribute to the fund for aiding the sufferers in the recent Chicago fire by reminding them that Dundee's trade brought the city into close intercourse with America.[4]

More significant, however, was the Advertiser's desire to see in the early 1870s the establishment of a direct trading link between Dundee and the United States, and a related widening of commercial interests within the city itself. Liverpool and Glasgow, it was asserted, had absorbed all

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1 See Carrie, "Dundee and the American Civil War" p. 22; B. Lenman, C. Lythe and E. Gauldie, "Dundee and its Textile Industry 1850-1914" in Abertay Historical Society Publication, No. 14, 1969 p. 30.

2 Dundee Advertiser, 1 Jan., 1869. Several letters which appeared in the paper on the same day reflected the concern felt by some citizens over the downward trend in Dundee's fortunes. One, from "One Deeply Interested" warned that the working classes were failing to realise how very serious the depression was, and indicated that the situation was likely to get much worse.

3 Dundee Courier, 15 May, 1871.

4 Ibid., 16 Oct., 1871.

Dundee's exports to America in the absence of a regular trading vessel from the city to the United States. Deploring this situation, and refusing to take the pessimistic view that direct trade could not be renewed, the Dundee Advertiser called for enterprising local shippers and shipowners to establish a line of their own:

> Our shipowners have only forgotten the direct road from Dundee to America because the shipowners of the other towns have been more enterprising...There seems to be no conclusive reason why all the sugar, tobacco, rice and rum...[the] populations [of the North-East counties of Scotland] require should not be landed here as well as at Glasgow.[1]

Linked with this was a plea to Dundee merchants and manufacturers to start attempting to diversify and expand the range of the town's industries: "King jute is a mighty monarch...But are we quite sure the Monarch will reign for ever?" Identifying a great growth for local industries in North-East England through the recent formation of the Tyne-America line of steamers, the Advertiser suggested that it only needed faith in the Tay for the same revitalizing process to take place in Dundee.[2]

It was against this background of continuing close commercial relations with the United States and of consistent efforts to try to ensure that the association would remain as firm and as lucrative as possible that Dundee formed its attitudes towards the general development of American policies during the Reconstruction era, and towards that specific development of American democracy contained in the proposal to extend the vote to the Negro freedmen. As a gauge of these attitudes on the latter issue, reliance must once again be placed on the city's newspaper press, and more particularly, on the two leading daily journals, the ultra-liberal Dundee Advertiser

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1 Dundee Advertiser, 7 June, 1872.

2 Ibid.

and the "independent" but more Conservatively inclined Dundee Courier.

Much has already been said of the somewhat unique consistency of John Leng's Dundee Advertiser in backing the successive moves by the Radical Republicans to secure by Government enactment the substance of real freedom and security for the Negroes. Consolidating its tradition of advanced views on Reconstruction policies, the unwavering support which the journal showed for American efforts to guarantee Negro civil rights was matched by its unquestioning belief that it was necessary both for the good of the freedmen and of the victorious Republican party that Negro suffrage should be promptly granted. As early as 6 June, 1865, the Advertiser was recognizing that before slavery could be totally abolished in the United States, Negro suffrage would have to be conceded.[1] Accordingly, the eventual passing in the House of Representatives of the Bill for Negro suffrage in the District of Columbia was hailed as a "much bolder stroke than abolition" and welcome proof of the great change which had come over the American mind regarding the black race.[2]

At the same time, the paper freely admitted that its advocacy of Negro enfranchisement was tied up with a concern to see the Republican party secure in power during Reconstruction: the North, it argued, would "stultify itself" by accepting a return of Southern representatives to Congress before granting the suffrage to the freedmen.[3] But the Advertiser's concern for the perpetuation of Republican control was of the same kind as that which stimulated Thaddeus Stevens to emphasize the absolute necessity of keeping the Northern Republican party in power. It was a concern based, that is, on a total and unremitting belief that a Democratic victory at the polls

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1 Ibid., 6 June, 1865.

2 Ibid., 2 Feb., 1866

3 Ibid., 30 Oct., 1866

in the immediate post-war era would mean the triumph of the slave power in the South, and a blow to freedom all over the American continent which would be felt for generations.[1] As against this, the virtues of the Republican party in Congress, and of the Northern people as a whole, were clear: "the spirit which animates them [the Northern people] is that which brought about the downfall of the Rebellion, and broke the chains of millions of bondsmen".[2]

It is evident that at the bottom of the Dundee Advertiser's attitudes towards the thorny question of black suffrage there was a genuinely disinterested concern for the wider question of the quality of the Negroes' future as freedmen. With more certainty than most Scottish commentators, the Advertiser recognized that the real issue of contention between Congress and President was whether the freedmen were to be enfranchised or not.[3] The support which the journal recorded for Congress in its struggle against the President was therefore in effect support for the principle of immediate Negro suffrage as much as for the principle of Federal legislation for civil rights. Predictably, then, the reasoning which had led Johnson to pronounce that while intelligent foreigners did not immediately get the vote the Negroes should not either was dismissed as fallacious, the paper arguing that there was no resemblance in the positions and that under the circumstances it was necessary, unless the coloured people were to remain a subservient race, that the Negroes' rights as free citizens be established.[4] Endorsement of the Radical Republicans and their policy of Negro enfranchisement came to be represented as endorsement of the sector in United States politics which, it

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 See ibid., 10 April, 1866.

4 Ibid.

was claimed, was most steadfast in its concern for and associations with Britain:

> Our interests - and, if we sincerely desire the extension of freedom, our sympathies - ought to range themselves on the side of those who have shown themselves to be the truest friends of this country, and to whom, under Providence, the freedmen owe the amount of liberty they already possess.[1]

Certainly, the Dundee Advertiser's championship of the Congressional Radicals was the most unequivocal to emerge from any Scottish newspaper. There had, to be sure, been an initial silence on the contest between Executive and Legislature, and on the working out of Johnsonian Reconstruction: but following the President's vetoes on the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills, the position became clearly fixed in the estimation of the paper as one where guaranteed Negro freedom and the consolidation of war gains depended upon the triumph of Congressional policy. The positiveness which characterized its convictions, and the unambivalent line of its reasoning were as we have seen features often lacking in other sections of the Scottish press disposed to be liberal in their general attitudes to the process of Reconstruction. Even allowing for the Advertiser's consistent radicalism, there would therefore seem to be some basis for concluding that both its impressive understanding and interpretation of the post-war American political situation, and its advanced stance on all aspects of the Negro question, including suffrage, were to some extent the direct products of Dundee's heavy involvement with Civil War America, and - perhaps even more importantly - the nature of that involvement.

The attitudes towards Negro enfranchisement of the city's other leading newspaper, the Dundee Courier, help to reinforce the suggestion that an environment materially enriched by contact with wartime America tended - for a time, at least - to keep a benevolently open mind on political experiments

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1 Ibid., 4 Sept., 1866.

in the United States after the war. Although it boasted of "maintain[ing] an independent tone in discussing public questions", the politics of the Courier were actually Whiggish-Conservative, with obvious pride being taken in the knowledge that it "enjoys the patronage of the influential and wealthy residents of the district".[1] Perhaps with an eye to the fact that the wealth of many of these "wealthy residents" derived from a past trade with the United States which had left them sympathetic to that country and anxious to see it prosper and carry out its great destiny, the Courier did not, however, match contemporaries with similar political affiliations (such as the Scotsman and the Glasgow Herald) in immediately leaping to attack the Republican forces in America which were advocating extension of political rights to the freedmen. This was perhaps all the more surprising in that the Courier, in line here with other journals of its political persuasion, had tended to view with sympathy what it chose to recognize as the South's bid for independence.[2] Admiration for Southern society was, indeed, strong enough to form the basis of an editorial which early deplored the signs that a harsh Reconstruction policy would be meted out by the North:

> [T]he spirit of men like Lee and Davis and Breckenridge shines forth all the brighter in our eyes because of their sad misfortunes. The vulgar demagogues who have now got possession of America may do their worst on these dauntless men; but they will not alienate from them that deep respect which the British nation feels for men of heroism in adversity.[3]

Yet despite such sentiments, in the early phases of Reconstruction, when Johnson was evolving a conciliatory plan towards the South which it seemed logical to suppose the paper would applaud, the Courier, pleading for a "common sense view" of the situation, in fact settled for a position not far removed from that subsequently adopted by the Dundee Advertiser. As early as July, 1865, it saw the greatest problem facing the United States

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1 See Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory, 1865, p.93.

2 See Carrie, "Dundee and the American Civil War", p. 9.

3 Dundee Courier, 10 June, 1865.

to be contained in the question "How shall political justice be done to the African?" The Courier, displaying a notable practicality and economy of thought, made its own views on this issue quite clear:

> Whether we accept or reject the theory of political equality, America has chosen to base her institutions upon that theory, The sooner, therefore, her people get quit of the prejudices which the bondage of the negro created, the less difficulty will her statesmen experience in settling the country.[1]

The crux of the paper's argument was that unless the United States was prepared to sink old prejudices, the process of Reconstruction would be long and unrewarding. But the most significant feature about its general approach to the issue of immediate Negro suffrage was its failure to apply British criteria for voting to the American situation. The Courier fully recognized that the one incontrovertible factor governing the extension of the franchise to the Negroes was the peculiar political system of the United States. Under stipulated conditions of political equality such as existed in America, the Negro would inevitably get political rights eventually, and the Courier was prepared to accept that there was reason for accomplishing this step as soon as possible: "Such a concession is the natural close of the 'irrepressible conflict', and it is almost necessary now to remove the reproach so often flung at America, of caring nothing for the negro".[2]

This view was soon reinforced by the appearance of a synopsis of Professor Cairnes' enlightened article, accompanied by a recommendation that the essay be attentively read by all interested in "the great social revolution in the Southern States".[3] An editorial in mid September, 1865 stated the attitude most clearly of all, however. Again, the basic theme was the American Republic's obligation to carry into practice its Constitutional recognition of human rights and the principle that all men were

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1 Ibid., "The Situation in America", 10 July, 1865.

2 Ibid. The Courier did, however, express a hope that the Negroes might first be educated.

3 Ibid., 3 Aug., 1865.

born free and equal. The latter principle meant nothing, the Courier argued, if any class of men were denied the use of those means of securing their rights which society had sanctioned. And to avoid that happening in Reconstruction America, there must be some temporary curb on the extent of power wielded by the Southern whites over the freed Negro:

> State rights are valuable; but human rights are of still more importance...[I]t would be robbing freedom of half its worth if the political rights of the negro were placed under the guardianship of his former master...Either the negro must possess the franchise, or he must be treated as those below the ten pound line are treated in Britain.[1]

Part of a generally sympathetic outlook towards the plight of the freedmen in the immediate post-war period, the Courier's favourable attitude towards Negro suffrage was nevertheless remarkable in that it represented the successful attempt of a Whiggish journal to condone the extension of political power to a newly emancipated people on the basis of an objective consideration of the nature of the United States political system. In the event, however, these early sentiments proved to be the high water-mark of the Courier's attachment to the policy of early enfranchisement. By the end of 1865 circumstances had changed, and had led to a definite, irrevocable swing away from the initial liberal stand. There was the strengthening of Radical Republican opposition to Johnson, which forced the paper to take a more searching look at the conflicting modes of Reconstruction, and having done so, to conclude that after all, the President's policy did offer the best hope for a just, speedy, and total settlement as against the "fanatical" ideas of men like Wendell Phillips[2] and the group of Congressmen if came to brand the "Black Republicans".[3]

But more influential than this - and, indeed, contributing to the formation of the attitude towards the Presidential/Congressional conflict -

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1 Ibid., 18 Sept., 1865. See also ibid., 30 Sept., 1865.

2 See ibid., 23 Dec., 1865

3 Ibid., 8,14 March, 1866.

was the impact of the Jamaican insurrection. It has already been seen how deeply the rebellion affected thinking on the Negro question on the racial level,[1] and how new, adverse conclusions on the Negro character influenced the Dundee Courier in particular to switch from its original conception of the legislative needs and priorities of Reconstruction to a harsher, less radical line of reasoning.[2] Given this general change in attitude, it was virtually inevitable that there should have developed within the Courier a permanent breakdown of confidence in the belief that the Negro race - anywhere in the world - had by the mid 1860s pulled itself far enough away from its African origins to be trusted with a substantial degree of political representation.

The common objection that it would put black over white and was "just tantamount to putting aside the white element in the representation of the Southern States" was thus levelled against the Civil Rights Bill. With his background, it was argued, "the African is bound to spell ruin and destruction for all" if he got the franchise. Deserting its earlier policy of assessing proposals for Negro suffrage strictly in the context of United States political principles, the Courier came to find absurd the very idea of enfranchising such a group as the Southern Negroes. The standard notion that the ex-slaves were still unprepared for the responsibilities which accompanied the suffrage was promptly adopted. There was ample reason to advocate the British Reform Bill, it was suggested, because the British working classes were "worthy" to receive the franchise, whereas it was extremely questionable if the new American freedmen were:

> None can be more hearty in the cause of reasonable and just reform than we are, but we would certainly demur to any measure which would tend to invest with the governing power men who are notoriously unfit to exercise the franchise... We have as much real sympathy as any with the cause of the despised African, but we will not permit our feelings to ride rough-shod over reason.[3]

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 527-574.

2 See above, Chapter IV, pp. 347-349, 367.

3 Dundee Courier, "Congress and the South" 14 April, 1866.

The reliance on "reasonable", "common-sense" sentiments of such a nature became sufficiently entrenched eventually to produce the familiar Conservative argument that the "dominant Northern party" was simply anxious to secure Negro enfranchisement in order to keep the South in subjugation, "The political elevation of the negro is...only another term for the political degradation of his late master, and it is not at all surprising that the South should take that view of the position".[1] Republican "Extremism" came increasingly to be deplored: and where once the Courier had warned against the dangers of leaving the old Southern slaveocracy to determine the political future of the freedmen and had urged the American people to prove they cared about the Negro by granting him the vote, by early 1867 it was desperately putting trust in the "good sense" and popular conscience of America not to tolerate the swamping of the Southern states by men recently slaves and "who are only removed from African savagery by that one step of civilization which was incident to their state as slaves".[2]

The Dundee Courier's startling change of attitude towards the whole course of American Reconstruction in the aftermath of the Jamaican rebellion does not detract from the importance of the fact that during the critical first six months after the end of the Civil War, the paper had taken an advanced stand on Negro suffrage unsurpassed in the Scottish radical press and strongly at variance with the views expressed in other sections of the Whig and Conservative press. And even after its change of heart regarding support for the policy of the Radical Republicans it preserved a basic sympathy for Reconstruction America of a kind not displayed by a "moderate-Liberal" journal such as the Scotsman, and which can only be attributed to the city's continuing commercial links with the United States.

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1 Ibid., 15 Oct., 1866.

2 Ibid., 16 April, 1867.

It can be tentatively suggested, then, that the cities of Glasgow and Dundee had their attitudes to Negro suffrage determined to some extent by the diverse nature of the impact of the Civil War on their respective material conditions. But at the same time, there are strict limitations on the general extent to which it is possible to detect positive effects of the war on regional economy as a determining factor in moulding Scottish attitudes to post-war America. Such considerations clearly had no relevance, for example, in the case of Edinburgh. There, the city's relative lack of important commercial transactions with the United States during the war years precluded the possibility of a large, influential section of the population being sympathetically connected by economic ties to either North or South. Yet, as we have repeatedly seen, a tremendous interest in American affairs was sustained both during the war itself and throughout the Reconstruction era, a general, objective interest, characterized by sharply conflicting strands of opinion from which no clearly definable pattern of attitudes, based on a common outlook to the United States, can be discerned.

In a negative sense, indeed, it might even be argued that regional factors did have a specific influence on Edinburgh's responses to the United States at this period: the want of direct commercial contact with wartime America may have had as much bearing on the nature of the city's outlooks towards the war and towards Reconstruction as the close connections formed by Glasgow and Dundee had on the corresponding outlooks of these two cities. Perhaps the very lack of such definite economic links[1] created a wider scope within the capital city for a consistently greater polarisation of opinion on the basic questions of Reconstruction, no less

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1 Financial links on an impressive scale between Edinburgh and the United States were only formed with the advent of the Scottish Investment trusts in the early 1870s - see above, Chapter I, pp. 52-55.

than on the issues which had been raised by the Civil War itself. Certainly, the lack of consensus displayed by its population on even so straightforward and essentially domestic a question as providing aid for the Glasgow and Lancashire cotton operatives is a telling indication of Edinburgh's insulation from the direct effects of the American conflict: and in this connection, it is worth looking briefly at two episodes which illustrate the detachment and split sympathies of the city towards issues related to the United States at this period.

With its solid phalanx of prosperous, socially conscious middle class citizens, Edinburgh was probably in the forefront of British cities of the time in the strength of its general philanthropic zeal.[1] Remarkably little of this enthusiastic charitable spirit was displayed, however, in relation to those suffering as a result of the cotton famine. It has been shown that while several of the larger Scottish towns opened public subscriptions during the critical summer of 1862 for the relief of distress in West Scotland and in Lancashire, Edinburgh was conspicuously slow in organizing such an appeal.[2] A committee was finally formed in the autumn, but its approach apparently remained fairly lackadaisical since at the first meeting in November, it was voted to send all the money collected to Lancashire and none to Glasgow, despite the fact that conditions in the latter city were then at their worst.[3] Edinburgh's failure to respond more vigorously to this particular cause has been attributed to the apathy of many of the wealthier citizens, totally unaffected as they were by the economic repercussions of the cotton scarcity, and to the importance of certain "religious, political and personal tensions"

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1 Including "medical charities". there were seventy-one benevolent and charitable institutions in Edinburgh in 1865, as against forty-one functioning in Glasgow during the same year - see details in Oliver and Boyd's New Edinburgh Almanac, 1865, pp. 810-831; 69-77.

2 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, pp. 400-401.

3 Ibid., pp. 403-406.

within the city itself.[1]

At a narrower level, this general lukewarm public attitude was closely matched by the temper of the views held by Edinburgh Trades Council towards the relief of the distressed regions. Inasmuch as the members of the Trades Council could be seen as representative of the working class of Edinburgh, the character and composition of the body reflected the striking disparity between that section of the community in the capital city and its counterpart in the other cities of Scotland.

Curiously enough, Edinburgh remained largely untouched by the massive economic and industrial changes which were characteristic especially of Central and Southern Scotland at that time. The chief contributory factor in this was the lack of development of the new heavy, labour-intensive industries on anything like the scale experienced in Glasgow and other towns of West Scotland and in Fife and Dundee. From roughly the early 1860s until the mid 1870s, those employed in engineering in the Edinburgh area, for instance, numbered only about one quarter of the Glasgow total. The corresponding proportion of miners was even more diverse, and although the combined population of Edinburgh and Leith was half that of Glasgow, less than one third as many people there were engaged in manufacturing. By the sixties, also, the city's shipbuilding industry was in decline, and textile production was on a far less important scale than in Glasgow, Dundee, or even Aberdeen.[2]

It has already been indicated that Edinburgh's prosperity was firmly grounded in its large, influential contingent of middle and professional classes,[3] the professions themselves being dominated by a proliferation of ministers of religion, physicians and surgeons, and members of the legal

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1 Ibid., pp. 401, 407

2 See Ian Macdougall (ed.), The Minutes of Edinburgh Trades Council 1859-1873 (Edinburgh, 1968), pp. xvi-xvii.

3 See above, Chapter III, pp. 266-267.

profession.[1] This factor was largely responsible for the creation - or perhaps more precisely, the perpetuation - of a uniquely elitist class of skilled workmen and tradesmen occupied in trades manifestly designed to meet the requirements of the city's affluent gentility. Accordingly, the building and furnishing trades commanded the largest work force while printing and its allied trades remained the city's staple industry, and smaller trades and industries such as cabinet-making, french polishing, leather and glass-making, brewing and distilling, and coach-making flourished satisfactorily.[2] Like the class for whom they catered, the workers employed in these stable occupations were peculiarly shielded from the economic fluctuations, both national and international, which could imperil the livelihood of all classes of society in the more heavily industrialized centres of Scotland.

It was, then, from this somewhat exceptional "labour force" that the membership of the Edinburgh Trades Council was drawn in the 1860s. Under the circumstances, it was perhaps inevitable that as a body, the Council would be little inclined to radicalism in its transactions. And while it has been suggested that the parallel organizations of certain sections of the middle class within the city restrained the Council from agitating as a pressure group, it has also been shown that some Council members probably sought to demonstrate their "respectability" to the middle classes, and that middle class figures frequently chaired or addressed its public meetings.[3]

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1 Macdougall, Edinburgh Trades Council,p. xvii, estimates that there were two and a half times as many legal minds in Edinburgh as in Glasgow throughout the 1860s and early 1870s.

2 Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii. For a succint comment on the traditional urban set-up in the capital, see Hanham, Scottish Nationalism, p. 20, quoted above, Chapter III, pp. 266-267.

3 Macdougall, Edinburgh Trades Council,p. xviii.

The American Civil War was one of the momentous international occurrences which caused the Council to forsake its traditional avoidance of political questions,[1] and instrumental in keeping it in the forefront of the group's attention were the communications from those in charge of relief measures for the unemployed British cotton operatives. The first such appeal was considered in early November, 1862, and reactions to it clearly reflect at worst, the indifference and at best, the prevarication which could characterize the attitudes of a prosperous working class totally isolated from economic connections with the United States. Following "a great and varied discussion", principally of a political nature, on the Civil War, a mason called Hart moved that the Council should not entertain the appeal since it did not properly form part of the duties of that board. Perhaps as significant as the fact that only two delegates supported the motion was the fact that it had been proposed in the first place. Nor did the mild character of the amendment which was subsequently carried suggest the existence of any really enthusiastic sympathy for the plight of the cotton workers. As a result of it, the Trades Council simply postponed taking further steps on the matter until the public meeting due to be held by "the Richer Classes" had duly taken place.[2]

By mid November the issue was again a source of controversy within the Council, however. A letter from Padiham, East Lancashire, explaining the position of the local relief fund prompted one member, Fraser (who was a blacksmith), to stress the extreme necessity and urgency of calling a public meeting of the Edinburgh working classes to acquaint them with the situation. This call was simply the signal for the delegates to engage in a discussion

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1 See ibid., p.xxviii. The other events which occupied the attention of the Council were the Italian risorgimento and the Polish revolt of 1863.

2 Minutes of the Edinburgh Trades Council (hereafter cited as Min. E.T.C.), 4 Nov., 1862, in ibid., p.108

which ended in a decisive split between those who favoured an initiative by the Trades Council and those who opposed all specific connections with relief schemes. Hart and his fellow-mason, Collins, succeeded in securing a total of six votes for their motion that as a body, Council delegates should have nothing to do with the question, but leave it to the public. As against this, eight members supported the proposal that the Council should call a public meeting in aid of the distressed Lancashire cotton workers, and this motion was accordingly carried.[1] The closeness of the vote, however, and the fact that the six in opposition completely washed their hands of the idea, betrays the critical lack of a definite endorsement for specific working class involvement in a cause which, in view of the pro-Northern sympathies of the cotton operatives, could by implication be seen to commit those subscribing to it to a similarly strong pro-Federal bias.

It is possible, indeed, that personal attitudes towards the conflicting sides in the Civil War were fully as important in stimulating the opposition of certain delegates to active Council participation in relief schemes as was their apparent concern to ensure that the Council did not overstep the boundary of its proper functions on the issue. That antagonistic sympathies towards the war itself may have underlain the controversies over relief is suggested by the proceedings at a meeting held on 10 February, 1863. On this occasion, the secretary informed the delegates of a public meeting soon to be held in Edinburgh to express sympathy with Lincoln and the North, and indicated that the co-operation of the Council was requested "to make it a thorough working man's meeting". Again, however, a proposal of this nature sparked off disagreement within the group. The President of the Council, William Troup, tailor, stated that he would decline all overtures for him to take the chair at such a meeting, and

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1 Min. E.T.C., 18 Nov., 1862, in ibid., pp. 109-110.

Collins once more took a leading role in opposing participation by speaking "against the objects of the meeting" and reading out an article by Lord Russell supporting his views. After "a heavy discussion", the majority did, however, reject Collins' arguments.[1] Something of the general divergence of opinion which existed within Edinburgh towards the Civil War and eventually towards Reconstruction can therefore be seen in microcosm in the Trades Council at that time.

The debates within the Trades Council, considered along with the slowness of Edinburgh's public subscriptions for the distressed cotton workers, are also a reflection of the manner in which lack of direct economic involvement in Civil War America could lead to a situation where personal antagonisms came to assume more importance than the worthiness and urgency of the cause under consideration. However, while this important factor must be recognised, at the same time, Edinburgh could boast of zealous abolitionist crusaders like the Wighams, Elizabeth Pease Nichol, and Priscilla Bright McLaren, Free Churchmen such as Guthrie, Arnot, Candlish and Alexander, philanthropists like the Nelsons (publishers) and the Blyths (civil engineers), and city radicals such as Duncan McLaren, whose pro-Federal sympathies and concern for the Negro population during and after the Civil War were on a scale at least equal to that of any other city in Britain. These elements were faced by a large, influential Whig-Conservative element - the elite of a city rich in traditions of social and cultural eminence and secure as leader and showpiece of contemporary Scotland, the upper middle classes, who were largely saved from the peculiar business worries which beset their counterparts in those urban centres where continued wealth and prestige was dependent almost exclusively on industrial growth.

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1 Min. E.T.C., 10 Feb., 1863, in ibid., p. 116.

For most of this latter section of the community the Scotsman, the Edinburgh Courant, and Blackwood's Magazine did sterling service as organs catering for a spectrum of opinion ranging from comfortable Whiggish Liberalism through to die-hard Conservatism, and offering pro-Southern sentiments of varying intensity. The pattern (such as it is) of Edinburgh's attitudes towards American Reconstruction - including its attitude towards "the Negro question" - was, indeed, largely characterized by the conflict of sympathies between these two groups. Yet, even this broad, general conclusion tends to impose too simple a structure upon the complex nature of the city's reaction to all aspects of Reconstruction.

For instance, although the opposition to United States democracy and to all post-war increases in American radicalism continued to be vigorous in Whig and Conservative circles, and although domestic political antagonisms between that element and the city's own vociferous radicals remained as bitterly intense as ever during the 1860s, the strongly pro-American radical press of Edinburgh did not automatically adopt a stance on Federal legislation for Negro civil and political rights diametrically opposed to that adopted by its more conservative journalistic adversaries. Certainly, as we have seen, the Caledonian Mercury was careful to explain that its attitude in upholding Johnson's veto on the Civil Rights Bill and in supporting his general policy was not in line with that of the Scotsman (and of the Times) but was based on a totally antithetical premise about the advancement of international radicalism.[1] Nevertheless, its decision to reject the policies offered by the American Radicals for securing the social and political equality of the freedmen brought the Mercury, despite its protestations, into closer proximity to the views of the much detested Whig Scotsman.

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1 See above, Chapter IV, pp. 370-371.

Similarly, on the specific issue of Negro enfranchisement, the Caledonian Mercury's ambivalence and ultimate withdrawal of support was directly and inextricably linked to frustration over the long and continuing failure of the British workers to win the vote, while the Scotsman's resolute opposition to Negro suffrage was conversely based on a tradition of the cautious, moderate-Liberal approach towards franchise extension of any sort. But again, the widely diverse ideological routes by which the two Edinburgh journals had arrived at their respective attitudes could not overshadow the harsh fact that in the last resort, both converged in voicing a basic opposition to Federal moves for the immediate enfranchisement of the freedmen.

It was not, then, the political radicals of Edinburgh who openly espoused American attempts to introduce immediate Negro suffrage: Duncan McLaren, for instance, appears to have maintained complete public silence on the question. This task fell to those agitating more exclusively within philanthropic circles. We have already noted Guthrie's personal decision to refer in the course of a speech at a freedmen's aid meeting to the capabilities of the Negro race for exercising the franchise.[1] And still more significant was the firm support voiced by the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society for the accomplishment of immediate Negro suffrage within the United States. In a sense, it was eminently fitting that, in Edinburgh, the only real impetus for advocacy of the early enfranchisement of the freedmen should have come from these sources. For the city boasted an acknowledged strong anti-slavery tradition, and this call for the granting of political rights was in the true radical spirit which had characterized the mainstream of the vigorous abolitionist movement, thereby suggesting that within this anti-slavery tradition there still continued

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1 See above, pp. 54-55.

to exist a healthy radical strain.

Edinburgh's responses towards legislation for immediate Negro enfranchisement and towards the wider issues of Reconstruction were the products, then, of an environment largely unaffected economically by the recent American conflict and an environment which, as a result, tended perhaps to offer more room for distinct clashes of opinion among the city's population, and press. Furthermore, the absence of the dominating influence of a recent economic link meant that peculiar regional factors of a different nature (such as the extremely strong anti-slavery tradition, for instance) came to assume a relatively more important role in fashioning the mosaic of Edinburgh's attitudes to Negro suffrage.

Similarly independent of wartime commercial connections with the United States was the city of Aberdeen; yet there too, as had already become evident, a deep interest was maintained in the problems of Reconstruction and most especially, in the central problem of the Negroes' future position within the South and within the United States as a whole. The city had become actively involved in the cause of the American Negro during the hey-day of the Scottish abolitionist movement, when Anthony Wigham (a member of the Edinburgh Wigham family and one of the founders of the Glasgow Emancipation Society) established there an anti-slavery society committed to the principle of universal emancipation.[1] Addressing a meeting in Aberdeen during her visit to Scotland in 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe had been greatly pleased by her reception: "We had some very animated speaking, in which the speakers contrived to blend enthusiastic admiration and love for America with detestation of slavery...They seemed to me to be a plain, genial, strong, warm-hearted people, like those of Maine".[2]

By the mid 1860s, Aberdeen had achieved a position of stable prosperity

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1 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, p. 46.

2 Stowe, Sunny Memories, Vol. 1, pp. 99-100.

based primarily on its flourishing shipbuilding and engineering industries,[1] its activity as a port,[2] and to some extent on the consolidation of the wealth built up in the preceding two decades by a new, dynamic middle class, an "urban-based bourgeoisie" which had emerged in mid-century to replace the old "Dynastic elite" of men who had until then successfully dominated the city by a skilful combination of landed and mercantile interests.[3] In attempting to appreciate the general character of the city which continued during the 1860s to pay much attention to the working out of democracy and to the problem of the freed Negroes in Reconstruction America, it is necessary to glance at the critical impact which the emergence of this new aggressive, competitive and ambitious middle class had had not only on the economic and social power-structures but also on the related religious power-structure within Aberdeen.

Quite simply, it would appear that this element was instrumental in making the Disruption of 1843 into "a disaster of the first magnitude for the Established Church in Aberdeen".[4] At the time of the secession, all of the city's fifteen ministers had left the Established Church, and it has been indicated that not the least of the several considerations which had influenced them to do so was the fact that they were being spurred

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1 See Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present, p. 298.

2 See Laurance J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy 1815-1840 (Edinburgh and London, 1950), p. 131.

3 See A. Allan MacLaren, Religious and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Aberdeen (PhD. thesis, Aberdeen, 1971), pp. 20-23. One of the major factors cited by MacLaren (p. 22) as responsible for the eclipse of Aberdeen's old merchant-landed oligarchy was the collapse of the city's textile industry in the 1840s. This early demise of the linen and cotton industry also meant, of course, that the city was spared the economic blast felt by the West of Scotland's cotton industry as a result of the American Civil War.

4 Ibid., p. 62

on by members of their congregations, and that the secessionist elders and parishioners were financially able to guarantee them a stipend after the schism.[1] By 1851, the Free Church had gained a formidable dominance within the city in terms of denominational affiliation, commanding over 41% of the total attendances at all churches, and claiming to hold the allegiance of over 60% of all Presbyterians in Aberdeen.[2]

A detailed analysis of the social positions and general characteristics of the elders who seceded at the Disruption and of their counterparts who remained within the Established Church has revealed that the spearhead of the Free Church membership was composed overwhelmingly of young, dynamic, prosperous members of a new middle class, a fair proportion of whom had probably raised themselves up from modest beginnings, and who as a group were remarkably clearly distinguished by their social mobility, their readiness to change their homes, their business premises, and their occupations, and their tendency to live in the same locality in newer parts of the city.[3] As against this, the remaining stalwarts in the ranks of the Established Church were drawn from old prestigious middle class city families whose wealth derived from stolid business interests and professional careers, and who were immovably entrenched in groups in the older residential areas.[4]

If a correlation can be held frequently to have existed between membership of the Free Church and the adherence to a certain measure of political liberalism, then the nucleus for such a connection would certainly appear to have existed within the situation obtaining in Aberdeen in mid-century. For along with the material prosperity of the seceder middle class element, there went a simultaneous sense of insecurity, engendered

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1 Ibid., pp 30, 52-53.

2 Ibid., pp 44-45.

3 Ibid., pp 67-104.

4 Ibid., pp. 67 - 100.

by the contempt and social ostracism dealt out by the old-established middle classes towards what they judged upstart parvenu.[1] Within the Free Church itself as established in Aberdeen, it does seem clear that there was in fact never any real desire to make it anything other than a religious institution catering for a wealthy middle class, nor any attempt to implement its basically democratic constitution in such a way as to attract and integrate a strong working class membership.[2] But to acknowledge this is not necessarily to accept also that the nouveau riche embraced a political creed identical to that of the staid contingent who had stayed in the Established Church. Certainly, it was possible to define the sentiment of Aberdeen during the late 1850s as "strongly Liberal",[3] and it is perhaps valid to conclude that this reputation was largely founded on the general political affiliations and activities of that same huge group which provided the dynamic leadership and influential middle class membership of the city's Free Church.

Tending to substantiate this hypothesis was the nature of the combined advocacy of a specific brand of politics and a specific mode of religion reflected in the Aberdeen press of the period. Established in 1853, William McCombie's Aberdeen Free Press, for instance, was from the outset pledged not only to principles of "advanced Liberalism in politics" but also to "the advocacy of the liberation of religion from State patronage

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1 See ibid., pp.100,204.

2 Ibid., pp. 117-118, 141. MacLaren states that as early as 1851, both the initial evangelical fervour of the Free Church and the original animosity to the Established Church had largely faded in Aberdeen, and that in social composition, the membership of the two bodies was becoming increasingly similar.

3 Nicoll, James Macdonell,p. 33. It is perhaps significant that having stated this, Nicoll immediately indicated that the Free Church was the most powerful body in Aberdeen at that time.

and control".[1] And although McCombie's fervent religiosity[2] was chiefly employed in public support for voluntaryism[3] (i.e. the principles of the United Presbyterian Church), the Free Press was initially identified for several years with the cause of the Free Church as part of the general cause of advanced evangelical religion.[4]

As against this, the Aberdeen Herald, avowedly Whig in politics, became renowned for the virulence of its attacks on the evangelical body within the city. If we recall the model in which the pillars of the Established Church in Aberdeen after the Disruption were identified as the remnants of the old families who had had commercial interests in both county and city, then it is of especial interest that the paper was generally recognised as having been founded on principles of cautious moderate-Liberalism by the "more respectable Liberals of the town and county".[5] From pre-Disruption days, the editor, John Adam, had made the Herald notorious (and famous) by his consistent, vitriolic denunciations of non-intrusionist clergy.[6] By

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1 Alexander, Twenty-Five Years, p.2.
During McCombie's editorship, Dr. William Alexander was closely associated with the Free Press, assuming (as well as other diverse duties) the position of reporter and, ultimately, sub-editor. On McCombie's death in 1870, he became editor of the paper - see ibid., p.8; William Lindsay, Some Notes: Personal and Public (Aberdeen, 1898), p. 305; William Carnie, Reporting Reminiscences (Aberdeen University Press, 1904) Vol. 2, p. 398.

2 See Alexander, Twenty-Five Years, p. 17, where it is indicated that his "intense religious earnestness" led to a "puritanical severity in matters of social morality" which resulted, for example, in the exclusion of all theatre advertisements from the columns of the Free Press. See also tribute by McCombie's friend and associate, James Macdonell in Spectator, printed in Nicoll, James Macdonell, p.72.

3 See Alexander, Twenty-Five Years, p. 3. Although McCombie had joined the John Street Baptist Church in Aberdeen in the 1850s (see Nicoll, James Macdonell, p. 48), he never turned away completely from the U.P. Church in which he had been reared, and was one of its best local supporters - see obituary notice in United Presbyterian Magazine, Nov., 1870, pp. 509-510.

4 Grant, The Newspaper Press, Vol. 3, pp. 530-532.

5 Ibid., pp. 527-530.

6 See MacLaren, Religion and Social Class, pp. 53-55, where it is suggested that Adam's attacks helped to cause the complete secession of ministers in Aberdeen. See also Grant, The Newspaper Press, Vol. 3, pp. 527-530.

the 1860s, nothing remained of the old fervent antagonism, but the traditional attachment to moderate-Liberalism was preserved,[1] and it was perhaps not without some significance that on Adam's death in 1862, his successor as editor was Archibald Gillies, a journalist who had served his apprenticeship under Adam, having been sub-editor of the Herald in the late 1840s to early 1850s.[2]

The city's other leading newspaper, the old-established Aberdeen Journal, offers the least satisfactory basis for categorization in terms of distinctive, related political and religious affiliations. It could still be said of it in 1872 that "there never has been a paper in Scotland which has been more successful in its efforts to please all parties".[3] Yet, the Journal was prepared to proclaim that its politics were straightforwardly Conservative, and that it was pledged to supporting the Established Church of Scotland.[4]

By the mid 1860s, however, these arbitrary demarcations, both as they related to the press and to the city's population at large, had probably come to have a relatively diminished significance, the religious ferment of the forties and early fifties having by then receded into the background. While the earlier antagonism might have disappeared, however, it would nevertheless seem clear that the upheaval caused by the emergence of a new, forceful middle class and its achievement in building up a tremendously powerful Free Church had infused a Liberal ethos into the city which left its mark on a succeeding decade. Certainly, so far as outlooks towards the United States during Reconstruction are concerned, each of Aberdeen's principal newspapers displayed a distinct tendency to adopt basically sympathetic attitudes towards the victorious democratic North in its attempts to find workable and honourable solutions to the massive problems facing the nation

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1 See Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory, 1865, p. 90.

2 See Carnie, Reporting Reminiscences, Vol. 2, p. 100. Gillies had left for Dundee in 1853.

3 Grant, The Newspaper Press, Vol. 3, pp. 520-526.

4 Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory, 1865, p.90.

in the immediate post-war years. We have seen how all three papers at one time or another showed their appreciation of the North's anxiety to safeguard the fruits of victory, their realization that the South, while conquered, might not be totally subdued, and their concern for the future wellbeing of the Negro freedmen. It has also been noted that even the "Conservative" Aberdeen Journal, in line with its support of the Federal cause during the war, continued to maintain that the South had fought a war solely for the perpetuation of slavery.

In the case of the Aberdeen Journal and the Aberdeen Herald, these sentiments strongly implied a tacit, if not always too clearly voiced, concern that the freedman, having won his liberty in a war fought for slavery by his ex-masters, should be given some measure of solid guarantee that there would be no reversion to a situation where slavery might exist in form if not in name. Of the three journals, the Aberdeen Free Press, however, naturally afforded the most likely source of constant, wholehearted support for United States democracy generally, and for the specific policies of the American Radicals during Reconstruction. The paper displayed a particularly strong conviction that no quarter should be given to reactionary Southern forces, and vigorously endorsed the successive moves by the Republicans in Congress to secure Federal legislation which would guarantee essential civil rights to the Negro population.[1] It remains to consider how the thread of liberalism which in varying degrees ran through the attitudes of all sections of the Aberdeen press towards "the Negro question" at this time stood up to the test presented by the thorny issue of immediate Negro enfranchisement.

For the Free Press at least, the common obstacles which so frequently checked Scottish liberals from giving their full approval to this measure

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1 See above, Chapter IV, p. 380.

were no deterrent, and the paper pursued its radical course through to an enthusiastic support for the principle of immediate Negro suffrage. It came to grips with the problem early. In an editorial directly inspired by Cairnes' article, it made its position abundantly clear in mid August, 1865 when it argued forcibly that "when America has cast off slavery, her duty to the negro is but half accomplished", and that until the demand for the concession of political rights to the coloured freedmen had been met, reconstruction could not satisfactorily be proceeded with. The great fear was that unless "some strong and direct measure, embodying the will of the better portion of the people of the North" were adopted, slavery would be revived in another form. The securities which the Federal government had taken against Southern resurgence - the oath of allegiance, the exceptions to the amnesty - were judged insufficient; and the Aberdeen Free Press foresaw a deliberate widespread misinterpretation of the Thirteenth Amendment by the planter class of the South.[1]

It is clear that in forming and publicizing these views the radical Aberdeen weekly had been deeply influenced by the conclusions of Professor Cairnes. Having quoted an extract from his "very able" article, the editorial in effect simply adopted his central contention that the old slaveholding element would try to recover by devious policies its powers over the Negroes, and that political rights for the freedmen were therefore essential in order to safeguard their liberty. Similarly accepted and regurgitated were Cairnes' views on the possible introduction of standard education qualifications for voters in the United States. All that the American advocates of Negro suffrage were asking, the Free Press asserted, was an impartial education test and time to prepare for it, "Already", it declared, "the negroes have proved themselves - unexpectedly - courageous, and valuable soldiers; and in time, they will prove equally valuable citizens,

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, "Slavery and Negro Suffrage, 18 Aug., 1865.

if admitted to the rights of citizenship". If not admitted, they would become a bone of discord in America which would rankle until freedom to vote was won:

> In short, what is required in the Amended Constitution of the States - what is essential to make emancipation a reality - is that the suffrage should be open on equal terms to the white and the black.[1]

This basic belief was repeated throughout the remainder of 1865; and with an intensification of the belief that "unless the suffrage be conceded to the negro, the result may be a return to slavery",[2] not a little apprehension was felt over the fact that the North was apparently unprepared promptly to exact the necessary guarantees for the Negroes' freedom. At the back of these fears were anxious hopes that the democratic process in America was not going to falter over the question of granting the suffrage to the freedmen:

> In view of so extended a determination to keep the negro a social helot, true American patriots must, we should think, become convinced that there is no way of saving him from the grossest oppression, if not virtual re-enslavement, save by conferring on him the franchise.[3]

The Free Press was even prepared to argue that the failure to enfranchise the freedmen, especially if the vote were withheld on the basis of colour, was tantamount to consigning the Negroes to the position of an inferior caste. Significantly, in the threatening American tendency to use colour as a basis for disqualification from political rights and functions, the paper perceived an analogy with an earlier British situation. The question of colour in relation to political and social equality, it was suggested, presented the Americans with the same problem as Britain had had to face and solve forty years before regarding religious belief and profession. And in

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., "Reconstruction and Negro Suffrage", 8 Sept., 1865.

3 Ibid., "Negro Suffrage", 27 Oct., 1865.

the United States, the main difficulty would be substantially the same as it had been in Britain, namely "the antipathy of the dominant to the proscribed section of the people".[1] The ability to see the American situation in these specific terms was perhaps largely the result of radical thinking forged within a city where sectional and sectarian conflicts had recently had a tremendous impact in altering the internal power structure by destroying the traditional dominance of a closed oligarchy.

An attachment to a broad ideal of international freedom and justice, as well as a related desire to see United States democracy strengthen its roots in the post-war era seems, indeed, to have impelled the Aberdeen Free Press in its spirited advocacy of Negro suffrage. Thus, looking back in December, 1865 on events in the United States during the year, McCombie attributed to the Federal cause a universal aim which transcended the more mundane aim of restoring the Union: "the spirit of freedom, of liberty to the black man as well as to the white, was that which animated and sustained them [the backbone of the Northern armies] through those dreary years of disaster and hope deferred".[2] From the cessation of hostilities, the reality of this liberty for the black man in America was increasingly seen to depend on his enfranchisement; and in striking contrast to the process which characterized the changing attitude of the Dundee Courier on this question, the call for Negro suffrage in the United States was actually reinforced in the Aberdeen Free Press by the experience of the Jamaican insurrection. To the paper's central argument that emancipation alone was not enough to guarantee the Negroes' freedom, the Jamaican outbreak was added as a warning to America of the consequences of disregarding the establishment of justice and a spirit of generous consideration towards the

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., "The Political Situation in America", 22 Dec., 1865.

Negro race.[1] Johnson, though still felt to be conducting the Reconstruction process tolerably well,[2] was accordingly censured for his decision that Negro suffrage should be each State's individual concern: "Of course, the franchise is the logical and proper sequel of freedom. A disqualification of colour would, under a democratic constitution, be a practical denial of domicile".[3]

The Aberdeen Free Press' attitude towards Negro suffrage was radical by any British standards. But perhaps more surprising than this particular degree of radicalism was the stance adopted on this question by the moderate-Liberals' organ, the Aberdeen Herald. From the standpoint of both its Whiggish principles and its old rivalry with the Free Press, the Herald might well have opted for a direct rejection of early Negro enfranchisement. In fact, nothing of the kind happened. The little which the paper had to say on the subject showed that the concern which it continued to feel throughout the early years of Reconstruction for the establishment of guarantees for the Negroes' liberty was extended to include acceptance of Negro suffrage. There was impatience with the increasingly strong "caste feeling of repugnance to the negro" in America which precluded the possibility of rapid legislation for a coloured franchise. In the Herald's judgement, such sentiments were merely delaying the inevitable: "the question [of Negro suffrage] can only be answered in the negative to ensure its rising again and again till political slavery, as well as the slavery of domestic servitude, be swept off, even if it must be in a new deluge of blood".[3]

Like the Aberdeen Free Press, the Herald was concerned that if all the

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., 29 Dec., 1865.

3 Ibid., 22 Dec., 1865

4 Aberdeen Herald, 9 Sept., 1865.

privileges that were due it under the Constitution were granted to the South at that time, the probable immediate result would be "a compact Copperhead majority in both Houses, able, so far as legislation goes, to do just what it pleases". Accordingly, while regretting what it judged to be both an unconstitutional and fairly arbitrary manner of rule by North over South, considerations such as these encouraged the paper to hope that in the autumn 1866 elections, the North would return a Radical majority strong enough to make Southern domination in the Legislature impossible and to "secure such a revision of the Constitution as shall henceforth keep the overbearing oligarchy of the South in its own place".[1]

It was left to the Aberdeen Journal to assert on the Negro suffrage issue the conservatism which had not characterized its attitudes either to the Civil War itself or - logically enough - to the plight of the post-war South and its ex-leaders.[2] As we have seen, the objection to immediately extending the franchise to the freedmen was simply the stock one - that the "slaves of yesterday" were not ready for it, and that the whole drive to introduce Negro suffrage at that stage was motivated by the desire of the Radical Republicans to humiliate the Southern leaders.[3] Here at last, then, was an aspect of Reconstruction which provided a point of divergence between the Radical-Whig press of the city and the established Conservative organ. Yet even on so crucial an issue as this, the paper's conservatism was a far cry from the relentlessly condemnatory brand of more strict and ruthless

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1 Ibid., 6 Oct., 1866.

2 In expressing misgivings about Johnson's early policy of proscription towards the South, for instance, the Aberdeen Journal had made its plea for mercy and conciliation purely on the grounds of common sense and humanity while clearly recognizing that the President's harsh policy was a logical enough follow through from the Northern position in the war - see, for example, Aberdeen Journal, 14 June, 1865.

3 See above, p. 24.

Conservative contemporaries such as the Edinburgh Courant and Blackwood's Magazine. It was a conservatism liable - even in this particular case - to be strictly modified by a pragmatic attitude where Britain's interests were directly involved. Thus, it has been observed how the realization that the black vote might serve as a welcome counterbalance to the electoral might of the American Fenians caused the Journal to restrain its outright opposition to immediate Negro suffrage.[1] The view illustrated the readiness of the paper to relax its prejudices against such a radical step when it seemed possible that Britain might benefit from it.

There can be no simple, straightforward explanation of the relatively open-minded attitude of all sections of the Aberdeen press towards the question of early Negro enfranchisement in America. Most readily understandable is certainly the position of the Aberdeen Free Press, sympathetic as it was to the general concept of American democracy, and pursuing a vigorously radical line towards all facets of the Reconstruction process in the United States as well as towards political and religious issues in Britain. Unquestionably, the policy of the Free Press was shaped by the advanced Liberalism of its scholarly editor, William McCombie, who remained in the editor's chair from the paper's inception on 6 May, 1853 until the day of his death, exactly seventeen years later.[2] Originally a farmer in Aberdeenshire, McCombie retained a farm in the county after he had turned to newspaper work, and he retained also his virulent antipathy to the local landowning class: "He detested the petty tyranny of the Scottish lairds as heartily as he despised their Toryism, which is perhaps the most bigoted, the most stupid, and the most contemptible creed that ever found its way into a substitute for a human mind".[3] His great influence in

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1 See above, pp. 25-26.

2 Alexander, Twenty-Five Years, p. 6.

3 Obituary notice by James Macdonell in Spectator, May, 1870, printed in Nicoll, James MacDonell, p. 77.

freeing the county from their political stranglehold has already been noted.[1] And the tangible results of his efforts were seen in the election of 1866 when for the first time in its political existence, Aberdeenshire returned a Liberal M.P. - and by the resounding majority of two to one.[2]

Direct positive influences of such a nature are not immediately discernible in the moulding of the attitude of the Aberdeen Herald and the Aberdeen Journal during the Reconstruction era, and it is consequently the more difficult to determine the possible mainsprings of that basic understanding of Northern Republican policies and of the continuing concern for the interests of the Negro freedmen which persistently characterized both newspapers at this time, extending, in the case of the Herald, to a support for Negro suffrage. So far as the Journal was concerned, clearly some substantial degree of influence was wielded over comment and opinion by the editor, William Forsyth. A native of Turriff in Aberdeenshire, Forsyth had in 1842 become sub-editor under Robert Carruthers of the conservative Inverness Courier. More importantly, however, he moved the following year to the sub-editorship of Adam's Aberdeen Herald and he remained in this post until 1848, thus occupying a place in which he experienced at first hand the bitter cut and thrust of the city's religious controversy, then raging at its hottest. From the Herald he directly joined the Aberdeen Journal,[3] a move which clearly indicates that as early as the late 1840s, the politics of these two Aberdeen newspapers were far from being totally incompatible. And it is feasible that during his incredibly long term as editor (spanning as it did almost three decades), Forsyth increasingly guided the Journal into Liberal-Conservative waters

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1 See above, Chapter III, p. 285,fn 1. See also Aberdeen Free Press, 15 May 1870, in which the Rev. J.P. Bell of the U.P. Church, Midmar, Aberdeenshire is quoted as paying a tribute to McCombie which included a reference to his instrumental role in aiding "the growth of independent thinking in the country".

2 See Scotsman, 21 May, 1866. The Scotsman hailed the Liberal victory as a defeat for "feudal and arrogant" lairds by tenant-farmers who had risen against their would-be masters.

3 See biographical note on Forsyth in DNB, Vol. 7, pp. 475-476; and see also Appendix I.

akin to those occupied by the Herald. Perhaps the most significant fact about the Journal under Forsyth's editorship, however, was that its key characteristic was apparently "independence of action".[1] It was the assertion of such a spirit which had been responsible for the paper's unabashed support of the Northern cause during the Civil War, and which perhaps similarly helped to determine the subsequent peculiar attitude towards American Reconstruction.

For such an independent, unfettered strain of journalism to arise and to be accepted required an open, reasonably sympathetic environment, and it might be suggested that the independent line of reasoning adopted by the Aberdeen Journal towards the American Civil War and towards the process of Reconstruction was largely a reflection of a wider independence of thought which existed within the city as a whole. If William McCombie of the Free Press exerted a major influence in freeing the county from entrenched Toryism and in creating a climate for independent thinking, then within the city itself, the virtual displacement of the old oligarchic power structure which occurred during the 1840s probably had an equally important effect in helping to loosen the city for liberalism and the tolerant reception of Liberal influences. Whatever the basic reasons, it seems clear that in general, Aberdeen looked with a fairly remarkable degree of objectivity and benevolence on the Reconstruction policies proposed and pursued by the American Radicals.

VIII Conclusions

Amid the confusing complexities of Reconstruction politics and policies, the early post-war move to enfranchise the Negro freedmen at least had the merit of appearing as a relatively clear, straightforward issue. As a result, Scottish observers would seem to have felt a certain added confidence in dissecting and passing judgement on this specific Republican proposal - a confidence doubtlessly further increased by the immediate relevance of the

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1 Ibid., p.476 .

American suffrage problem to the contemporaneous intense agitation for political reform in Britain itself. Accordingly, attitudes towards this particular aspect of Reconstruction tended in many instances to be comparatively well defined. Curiously enough, this fact does not, however, substantially ease the task of trying to determine the general mood of Scottish feeling on the question since as we have seen, extremely wide differences in opinion existed on this issue no less than on all other issues of American Reconstruction which attracted the critical attention of Scots at that time.

From the representative sample of attitudes which has been looked at in this chapter, it might, however, be suggested that if a broad pattern can be seen to emerge at all, it is one in which outright opposition, and reluctant but real misgivings, predominate, to be pierced at intervals by shafts of vigorous support and approval for the principle of early Negro suffrage. Although apparently in a minority, the force of those in Scotland speaking out in favour of black suffrage should not be depreciated. It may even be the case that the Scottish press in particular tended on the whole to be proportionately more radical on this issue than its English counterpart.[1] Total commitments to the American Radicals' course, such as those displayed by the members of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society, the Dundee Advertiser and the Aberdeen Free Press, for instance, were rare enough in Britain as a whole: and notwithstanding the ultimate inability of certain Scottish radical elements to accept the prospect of the ex-slaves of America being enfranchised before the working class of Britain, even these did often show at least an initial recognition of the basic need for Negro suffrage, and an early measure of approval for its fairly rapid introduction.

Clearly, there was not a total rigidity of attitude at all levels on

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1 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 175, for comments on the more specifically English press attitude towards Negro suffrage.

the question. But at the same time, the views of the more rampantly Whig and Conservative observers were largely inflexible. This is understandable enough since in their case there was little real need or inclination even to assess the pros and cons of the American Radicals' proposal before condemning it. All the cards were stacked against the possibility of staid Whig and Conservative minds recording the faintest glimmer of approval for such a measure. For in the last analysis, its rejection involved also a renewed rejection of many of the features which they found most deplorable about the United States political system and the country in general.

Thus, scathing attacks on moves to secure Negro suffrage came to be directly associated with scathing attacks on the principle of universal suffrage with its contemptible doctrine of the suffrage as a right, not a privilege; on the blatant attempts of, and the scope provided for, unprincipled politicians in positions of power to twist the Constitution and fashion legislation for their own mercenary purposes; and on the encroaching might of American radicalism which, it was feared and suspected, would spread to Britain. To a very real extent, then, the most consistent disapproval of legislation for Negro enfranchisement was closely tied up with disapproval for American democracy as a whole. In the same way, the most generous approval for the measure naturally signified not only a keen concern for the welfare of the freed Negro race but also general approval for the fundamental political and constitutional principles on which the United States, as a nation, continued to function.

However radical the domestic political affiliations of those observing American Reconstruction from the other side of the Atlantic, the steps by the Thirty-ninth and Fortieth Congresses to grant the vote to a black population who had just emerged from slavery nevertheless presented a unique radical proposition which required careful consideration and not a little heart-searching. The easiest and most common response was to disapprove

of the unknown quantity. Emancipation had been an act of justice; enfranchisement might be an act of disastrous folly. But that a fair proportion of Scottish commentators should have shown either open support for early legislation for Negro suffrage, or at least have recognized some merit and reason in the Radical Republicans' proposals, indicates that even in the relatively staid political climate of Scotland in the 1860s, the old spark of sympathetic radicalism in the Scottish outlook on the United States was not completely extinct.

CHAPTER VII

The Negro after Emancipation: (2) the use of freedom

It has been established that one of the most powerful factors governing Scottish attitudes to Negro suffrage in America was the conviction that the freedman should be granted the vote only after he had earned it by applying himself to steady, remunerative labour, and by giving adequate proof of his desire and his ability to appreciate and accept the responsibilities incumbent upon all enfranchised citizens of the United States. For Congress to pursue any other course in relation to legislating for the enfranchisement of the black race would, it was widely felt, be extremely unjust and, in all probability, highly dangerous to the wellbeing and stability of the nation. The adoption of such an outlook necessarily meant that there could be no serious consideration of the franchise issue without a corresponding close assessment of the general response of the Negroes to their recently won state of freedom. Inevitably, discussion of the freedmen's approach to their changed status became an essential corollary to any Scottish debate on Negro suffrage.

But although the need to consider the Radical Republicans' franchise proposals perhaps somewhat increased Scottish concentration on the Negroes' behaviour after freedom since in the minds of most contemporary Scots the two issues were inextricably related, it would be misleading to suggest that the subject of the freedmen's personal exertions to adapt to their new social and economic position enjoyed a certain prominence simply as an adjunct to the more vital issue of black suffrage. Rather, it seems likely that the volume of interest in the nature of the ex-slaves' conduct and progress after emancipation would have been fully as great had the question of introducing a Negro vote never been mooted.

I The application of the self-help philosophy to the American Freedmen: the inflexible stress on self-reliance

With the conclusion of the most devastating military conflict of modern times, and one which left behind it in full measure all the bitter acrimony peculiar to a civil war, a deep transatlantic concern was manifested in the black population's response to freedom because it was generally recognised that Negro behaviour during the difficult, early post-war period was one of the factors critical to the future of harmonious race relations in the South, and therefore to the progress of the tenuously reunited nation.

On a yet more basic level, Scottish interest in this particular aspect of the Reconstruction process derived a stimulus from the continuing, unabating fascination for attempting to gauge the innate abilities and character of the Negro race - a preoccupation intensified to some considerable extent by the occurrence in November, 1865 of the uprising in Jamaica. In a climate already highly receptive to exhaustive discussion and controversy on the subject of race, the circumstances obtaining in the United States after the war afforded a unique opportunity to make judgements on the progress (or the lack of it) of the Negroes in adapting to their new position as free citizens.

That the rate of this progress was assessed with some considerable degree of confidence and, frequently, presumptuousness by Scots who had no personal first-hand knowledge of the situation in the post-war South, but who formed and pronounced their conclusions from the other side of the Atlantic, was due largely to the fact that progress as it related to the Negro race in this context was measured by reference to a very definite and inflexible doctrine which governed attitudes towards the individual's response to the challenge of his particular environment. General acceptance of the universal applicability of the doctrine of self-help meant that the successful transition from chattel slave to free man was seen to involve

first and foremost the acknowledgement by the emancipated Negroes that they must from henceforth fend for themselves and their dependents, that their economic, social and political elevation would be dependent almost entirely on the strength of their own purposeful efforts to improve their lot by diligence, perseverance, and forethought.

Some reference has already been made to the earnest wholeheartedness with which Scots subscribed to the stern Calvinist maxim of "work or want".[1] Samuel Smiles was, after all, himself a product of Scotland,[2] and the self-help philosophy which he propounded and popularised was not only warmly received by his countrymen but also by no means unfamiliar to them. By the time that his Self-Help appeared in 1859, other Scots had already made significant and successful attempts to educate the country into an appreciation of the virtues of hard work and of the fruits of honest toil. Most important in this connection were certainly the contributions of Thomas Carlyle,[3] but a notable impact had also been made by William and Robert Chambers in the popular didactic tales which formed the backbone of The Miscellany of Instructive and Amusing Tracts.[4] And in 1852, the other leading Edinburgh publishing firm of Nelson and Sons had sought both to cater for public taste and to stimulate individual enterprise by publishing Success in Life, an anonymous work which drew heavily on current American ideas and exhortations on this theme, and which also foreshadowed in every essential the Smilesian creed of self-help.[5]

In the glow of mid-Victorian industrial and commercial expansion, the

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1 See above, Chapter V, p. 546.

2 Smiles was born in the town of Haddington in 1812.

3 See Asa Briggs, Victorian People (Penguin Paperback edition, 1965), p. 125. Briggs indicates that Smiles was much influenced by Carlyle.

4 Ibid., p. 125. The Tracts were published in Edinburgh from 1844 to 1847.

5 Ibid., p. 127.

arguments offered by Smiles and his precursors came to assume the status of truths, proven in practice. For, by the mid 1860s, the visible affluence of self-made Scotsmen who through the forties and fifties had clawed their way up to eminence and prestige, and the reassuring indications (manifested by such phenomena as the "Working Men's Institute" and the young workingmen's "mutual improvement" societies) that there did exist a stratum of "respectable" working men who seemed prepared to share the middle classes' acceptance of the self-help philosophy almost certainly served to entrench ever deeper the widespread belief in the validity of placing the onus for the betterment of the poorer classes largely on the poorer classes themselves. And when a shift in focus from the domestic to the transatlantic arena brought the plight and prospects of the newly liberated American Negroes up for consideration, the approach to the problem of their elevation was frequently governed by precisely the same basic assumption about the role of self-help which governed thinking on the British working man's ascent within society. With a supreme disregard for the peculiar - indeed unique - circumstances attaching to the position of the emancipated slave in the Southern states of America, very many Scots rigorously applied to the black freedmen the doctrine of the individual's own personal responsibility for his ultimate success or failure.

On the part of those who tacitly or overtly accepted Negro inferiority, and who were bitter at the defeat of the South, there was in some cases a conscious gloating acquiescence in the acceptance of this creed. We have already observed, for instance, the ruthlessness with which Charles Mackay insisted (like Carlyle before him) that the Negro freedman, no less than his white counterpart, must "work or die", and the manner in which, by emphasizing the evil consequences of allowing this natural law to be relaxed in the South, he used this axiom to insinuate that there existed in the Negroes' character basic defects which inclined them more towards idleness,

vagrancy, and stealing than towards steady labour and the honest pursuit of wealth.[1] Contemporaneously in the Fortnightly Review and in Blackwood's Magazine, he argued that if it should prove that the freedmen would not work unless under compulsion, only two alternatives presented themselves as means of saving the South from ruin and chaos.

The first practical remedy he believed to lie in the establishment of a Poor Law compelling every able-bodied man, irrespective of colour, to work, and not suffering "sturdy labourers" to become paupers, squatters and so forth. The Law would have its basis in, and function in accordance with, the accepted rule that no strong, physically fit individual was entitled to live on the charity of the community. And in the event of "thousands or hundreds of thousands" of ex-slaves being "unable to appreciate or turn to account the freedom too suddenly thrown upon them",[2] it would be imperative for the legislature to organize them into "labour companies".[3]

The alternative course, although yet harsher and more unpalatable, was nevertheless also frankly grounded in the rigid gospel that only those who were prepared to labour of their own free will deserved to enjoy in full measure the fruits of freedom. Thus, in Mackay's estimation, it was not outwith the bounds of possibility that if the Negro race failed adequately to face up to its new role as a free labouring population, it would suffer ultimate extermination in the United States. In his mind at least, so far as the law of "work or want" applied to the American freedmen, it was inextricably bound up with a succinct, unrelenting determinism. The Negro in the South must work or die: "If he will do neither, and expects to live at the public cost, he will be exterminated". Mackay conceded that it was

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 546-547.

2 Mackay, "The Negro and the Negrophilists" in Blackwood's Magazine, May, 1866, Vol. 99, p. 597.

3 Ibid., and "President Johnson and the Reconstruction of the Union" in Fortnightly Review, April, 1866, Vol. 4, p. 488.

a "cruel fate" but simultaneously stressed that it was an "inevitable" one, a fate already experienced by the intractable American Indians who would not learn the virtue of productive labour, and a fate which all the philosophy and philanthropy in the world could not avert from overtaking the Negroes if they succumbed to idle and improvident habits.[1]

On this as on other aspects of "the Negro question" in the Southern states, Mackay's views represented the more extreme edges of that substantial section of Scottish opinion which remained at best sceptical, at worst resentfully pessimistic over the likely progress and long-term prospects of the freedmen. Yet, while his personal conclusions regarding the nature of the choices facing the American Negroes may have been singularly austere, the essence of his reasoning - that the black population must provide for itself or suffer the consequences - was readily and vigorously echoed in other quarters where general attitudes towards the freedmen tended to be somewhat more balanced and marginally less hostile.

In the newspaper press, the related concepts of laissez-faire, self-help, and the fundamental obligations and responsibilities of the individual for his own welfare were nowhere more relentlessly and persistently applied to the Negroes in the South than by the influential Scotsman. The pattern of the Whig journal's tone of comment on this theme was fully formulated and set forth as early as the beginning of July, 1865 when there appeared an editorial principally devoted to spelling out the urgency required in the task of instilling into the coloured freedmen an understanding of the need to cultivate self-reliance and a thoroughly responsible attitude towards free labour.

The immediate stimulus for the leader in question would appear to have been the acceptance at face value by the Scotsman's editorial staff

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1 Ibid., p. 489; and "The Negro and the Negrophilists", pp. 596-597.

of American reports which conveyed a highly unfavourable picture of Negro conduct and the prevailing Negro mentality during the earliest post-war months. In the paper's estimation, the behaviour of the majority of the freedmen in the midst of the chronic disruption and dislocation of Southern society suggested quite definitely a clear disregard by them of their natural duties and responsibilities as free citizens. Against a background of sour grumblings over the Republicans' folly in having abandoned the plan to introduce gradual rather than immediate emancipation, the able-bodied free Negroes were censured for being "carried away by a dream of good fortune to the Northern cities, leaving the weakly, the old, the women and children a burden on the white population, itself enfeebled and impoverished".[1] While intensely strained race relations, the lack of ready capital, and continued internal trade restrictions were hampering the chances for an early start to the process of rebuilding the South's shattered fortunes, these difficulties were compounded by "the instability of the negroes who can be got to labour on the plantations, and the helplessness of the many who could not labour if they would".[2]

But if the economy of the South was being further damaged by the post-war attitudes of the former slaves, so, too, was its general security seen to be threatened by the same evil. Outrages and plunder, the Scotsman informed the Scottish public, had already been committed on a wide scale since the end of the Civil War by Negroes who had found that "the liberty which has been gained for them means liberty to starve if they do not work". Viewing the situation from the standpoint of a journal which throughout the Reconstruction years was to exhibit little respect or sympathy for the basic capabilities and calibre of the Negro race, the Scotsman was not even at this early stage prepared to

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1 Scotsman, 1 July, 1865.

2 Ibid

concede that some initial failure fully to appreciate the social obligations imposed by personal freedom might in the special case of the American Negroes be both natural and partially excusable:

> In view of these excesses, and of the disposition and indisposition out of which they spring, one is not so much inclined to be surprised or displeased at the strict treatment of the newly-freed black population in Richmond and other parts of the South; although in not a few cases strictness has unquestionably degenerated into oppression. The Negroes plainly need to be kept, whether they like it or not, from sacrificing to their facile caprice the prosperity of those States in which their labour has, by monopoly, become for at least a time almost indispensable.[1]

In common with many other British observers and journals (including its metropolitan alter ego, the London Times),[2] the Scotsman made no allowance for the possibility that, human nature being what it was, the Negroes simply did not feel constrained to plunge into a daily grind of manual toil immediately after freedom, and that they would naturally wish in the early post-war period to try out their new liberty by such novel ventures as moving around the South at will and refusing to remain in a specific place of employment if conditions there struck them as unfavourable or unjust. At the same time, the Scotsman did, however, make some slight effort to indicate that while the Negroes were unquestionably acting irresponsibly in freedom, this was not totally due to character defects within the race but also, in part, to the inimical legacy of slavery. It did not, the paper asserted, "unduly...disparage the intellectual status of the negro to say that the black population of the Southern States has not been ripened for freedom".

Entirely without recourse to immediate capital, and raised up in habits of complete dependence, the freedmen's views of the importance and the use of money were "loose in the extreme...With the Negro, to have is to spend...

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1 Ibid.

2 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 154.

This painfully dependent race all at once finds itself cut adrift from everything that it had for centuries been trained to lean on". The United States was accordingly seen to have a clear duty to acquaint the black population with its obligatory need to cultivate those virtues conducive to self-support: it was "beyond dispute" that a more pressing issue than the securing of the freedman's right to vote was "the guiding of the Negro into speedy and secure ways of earning bread for himself and for those who should be dependent on him, but whom, if left to himself, he might not improbably leave to starve".[1]

Adamantly persistent in reinforcing the conviction that emancipation had given the Negroes neither more nor less than "freedom of labour" and equal rights with whites before the law,[2] the Scotsman naturally disapproved vehemently of the tenor of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill. Far from attempting to inculcate habits of independence and personal initiative into the Negro mind, the Radical Republicans appeared to be intent upon encouraging a reverse result through the introduction of legislation which would ensure the freedman of "food, clothes, education, employment, lands, houses, hospitals, and asylums without any enforcement of labour" - and at a probable cost of £60,000,000 per annum.[3]

Essentially the same basic reasoning, the same basic fears that the freed Negroes could be pampered only at the expense of seriously retarding their progress towards responsible social behaviour, determined the paper's subsequent attitude towards the philanthropic activities on behalf of the American Negroes engaged in by the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. By December of 1866, while acknowledging that a current public appeal to the

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1 Scotsman, 1 July, 1865.

2 Ibid., 12 March, 1866

3 Ibid., 28 Feb., 1866. See also Glasgow Herald, 7 March, 1866.

citizens of Edinburgh by the Society doubtless sprang from "the very purest and holiest motives", the Scotsman nevertheless strongly objected, in principle, to the further extension of Scottish aid to the freedmen.

Acting on the assurances of an unidentified "gentleman" who, it was stated, knew something of the existing condition of affairs in the Southern states and of the practical workings of charity schemes for the freedmen, the Scotsman indicated that further donations from Scotland were not only unnecessary but also really unkind. Over the two years since the war's end, the Negroes, it was asserted, had

> had every advantage given them, and every inducement held out to them in the way of learning the lesson of self-reliance. No negro, who has been industrious and able to work, can have failed by this time to be fully able to take care of himself.[1]

And so far as the aged, the infirm and the helpless were concerned, the hitherto much maligned Freedmen's Bureau was dragged into the picture as an agency providing "ample support" for these sections of the community. Furthermore, the poor laws of every Southern state - and especially those enacted under the new state governments formed since the cessation of hostilities - were so framed "that no one who cannot work need suffer".[2]

Under these circumstances, it followed, then, that any general hardship which able-bodied freedmen were experiencing by the close of 1866 was almost exclusively attributable to serious, fundamental shortcomings in the Negro's own personal approach to freedom. The widespread extent of suffering which was still a reality in the South at that time did not suggest to the Scotsman the action of extraneous forces over which the ex-slaves had largely no control, but rather confirmed the standard, preconceived view that large numbers of them were by nature work shy,

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1 Scotsman, 7 Dec., 1866.

2 Ibid.

improvident, and incapable of coming to terms with the need to provide, as individuals, for their own future.

It was therefore bluntly stated that more Scottish contributions to the freedmen's aid cause would but help to prolong and intensify the proliferation of these undesirable tendencies among a substantial proportion of the coloured race. In the Scotsman's view, one of the greatest post-war problems had, for instance, been created by the utterly irresponsible decision of multitudes of freed Negroes to abandon the country for the towns and cities, where there was no work, "and where they live in idleness and on just such charity as the [Edinburgh Ladies'] Emancipation Society now proposes to extend to them". This was the class of Negroes, it was emphasized, to which the money, clothing and so forth would be sent from Scotland, "and the effect of its reception will only be to add, in an almost imperceptible degree no doubt, but still to add strength to the idea which these poor people are already too prone to adopt, that they can live without work".[1]

If the Scotsman stopped short of branding the venerable ladies of the ELES "negro-worshipping philanthropists", its opposition to their continuing exertions on behalf of the black race in America was nevertheless clearly solid and formidable. Yet, on purely humanitarian terms the paper's unequivocal disapproval of the Society's efforts to promote the wellbeing of some of the miserably depressed ex-slaves in the South would seem to represent a singularly callous attitude. It might validly be suggested, however, that on this particular issue the Scotsman was so confident of the rectitude of its stand as to have no qualms about possible accusations of callousness levelled against it. Indeed, on the question of recurrent Scottish aid for the freedmen of America, the humanitarian impulses of Scotland's leading journal were not so much regretfully laid aside as

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1 Ibid. The Scotsman's attitude towards Scottish donations for American freedmen's aid is considered in more detail below, Chapter VIII, pp. 368-371.

deliberately and consciously sunk by consideration of the ethics of providing relief for people whom it believed to be necessitous purely as a result of their own lethargy and incompetence.

The Scotsman's comments regarding the relevance of laissez-faire and self-help to the peculiar situation obtaining in the post-war South were all, in fact, characterized by an unshakeable confidence that strict adherence to these doctrines afforded the only sensible and acceptable way of dealing with the massive problems posed by the sudden emergence of four million coloured freedmen. This confidence was substantially boosted by the existence of an essential complacency in the paper's whole attitude towards the condition of the American freedmen. Sophisticated schemes for special aid were opposed not only because of the adverse effects which it was believed they had on the already highly unsatisfactory, unenterprising character of a large proportion of the Negro population; they were, it would appear, opposed also because the Scotsman considered that such measures simply interfered with and frustrated the natural, universal laws governing human progress and achievement as these related to the freedmen in the Southern states.

The tone of the editorial disputing the need for further Scottish donations for freedmen's aid clearly indicates, especially in its dominant argument that no able-bodied Negro should for long have remained unable significantly to improve his circumstances, the Scotsman's acceptance of the operation of a Darwinian process of survival among the freed Negroes. In effect, the paper's attitude simply illustrates how the concept of the "survival of the fittest" could be applied to elements within a race as well as among races. And at no stage was this theory more fully and openly advanced within its columns than in a typically tightly reasoned and authoritative report from the United States correspondent.

Published in early 1870, the American correspondent's conclusions had all the advantages of appearing to be the fruits of mature reflection,

carefully stated half a decade after the end of the Civil War by an observer who had had continuous, first-hand knowledge of the developments in the United States through the early Reconstruction years. While the convictions expressed might be basically the same as those voiced years before in Scotsman editorials, the perspective was completely different, and tended to invest the correspondent's statements with a persuasive authority. Accordingly, his comments on the extent of the Negroes' progress in the South and on the wisdom of recognizing that their future advancement must lie in their own hands carried the special importance of assessments made by one who had actually seen the mood and style of life of the black population after freedom. It was thus on tangible evidence culled from personal knowledge of deposits at freedmen's savings banks that the correspondent was able to base his general conclusions that

> One occasionally stumbles upon a fact or two going to show that the emancipated negroes of the South, since their emancipation, have acted very much like white folks, and have had the same kind of fortunes - the honest, sober and industrious among them getting on well and the others not getting on at all.[1]

From this premise, the correspondent went on to consider the laudable efforts to accumulate savings made by a substantial - and increasing - proportion of the Negro community, and to state his belief in the functioning of an infallible natural law which was universally applicable to all men and all races in freedom:

> The industrious portion of the negroes...share in the prosperity which now begins to bless all the Southern States, and the others endure the suffering always attendant on idleness and vice. In due time the law of natural selection, which was suspended among the negroes during slavery times, will put an end to the idle and vicious negroes, who will die out, and the better ones will be left.[2]

The effective, irresistable force of this natural process clearly precluded,

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c.)., 31 Jan., 1870.

2 Ibid.

of course, the necessity and, indeed, the desirability of charitable ventures on the Negroes' behalf. And the American correspondent was just as ready as the Scotsman's Edinburgh-based leader writer had been four years previously to suggest that the Freedmen's Aid Society, which had gathered "old clothes and old shillings" for the relief of the freedmen, might "now safely wind up its operations".[1]

At least from Scottish Whig and Conservative viewpoints, then, the values attached to a generous measure of laissez-faire in government and to habits of self-reliance and self-help in the individual were easily accepted as transportable in their raw form across the Atlantic. The insistence on strictly applying these values to an alien society perhaps sprang, however, as much from a desire to consolidate their role within the domestic sphere as from the customary practice of emphasizing the attractions of the social, as well as the political, doctrines adhered to in Britain. Thus, it might be suggested that for high Conservatives (such as comprised the readership of Mackay's articles in Blackwood's Magazine) and for the powerful Scottish Whig element, so assiduously catered for by Alexander Russel's Scotsman, there was a positive need to stick absolutely rigidly to the creed of self-reliance and self-help simply because it was a creed which, if once relaxed, would be speedily chiselled away by the efforts of various sections of the community to claim that their circumstances entitled them to be considered as a special case which ought to be exempted from its rigorous demands. The self-help philosophy, along with the related belief in the dangers of allowing the most hopelessly debased, feckless section of the British lower classes to participate in politics through an over-generous widening of the franchise, was

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1 Ibid. The correspondent did not specify which particular Freedmen's Aid Society he had in mind. It is possible that under this vague, generic title he was alluding to the entire American movement for freedmen's aid which in fact comprised numerous separate and independent organizations.

unquestioningly accepted as an incontrovertible article of faith. Consequently, just as British criteria for granting the vote to the "lower orders" in Britain was extended to apply to the American Negroes, so the insistence that the poor and the workers in Britain were largely responsible for their own welfare and elevation was also assumed to be applicable to the case of the freedmen in the Southern States.

Obviously, those stolid middle class Scots who set the greatest store by encouraging the virtues of industry, thrift, economy and general responsibility among the labouring class at home were also those who sought most avidly to see the appreciation of these same virtues instilled into the ex-slaves of the United States. But these sentiments, rooted in the basic attachment to the idea that ultimate progress for all individuals whatever their class, race, or previous social and economic condition was principally dependent upon the ability to become self-supporting, were by no means confined to this one sector in Scottish society. An automatic adherence in greater or lesser degree to the philosophy of self-help also tended to restrict thinking on the question of provision for the freedmen's future by elements inherently disposed to be much more sympathetic and generous towards the early post-war plight of the Negroes than were those represented by the views of the bitterly prejudiced Mackay and the strongly pro-Southern Scotsman.

Few contemporary journalists, for example, were more liberally-minded towards the American freedmen or more solicitous for their welfare than was Peter Clayden, the writer whose lengthy contribution on Reconstruction to the Edinburgh Review has already been looked at in some detail.[1] Highly optimistic in his prophesies about the character and prospects of the emancipated Negroes in the South, Clayden was possessed of both the compassion

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1 See above, Chapter III, pp. 239-240; IV, pp. 389-391; V, pp. 656-657; VI, pp. 34-37.

and the uninhibited common sense to appreciate that they might be "more languid than ever to begin with, being deprived of the overseer's lash and not yet having got used to the feel of the higher stimulus of reward". This initial phase would, however, soon pass, giving way, he believed, to a gradual recognition of the "advantages and dignity of freedom".[1]

In aiding the black population to make the difficult psychological readjustment from slaves to freedmen, Clayden readily acknowledged that the government and the white people of America had an important part to play - indeed, a certain responsibility to fulfil. At the same time, however, he clearly did not consider that the main burden of ensuring a prosperous, stable future for the Negroes should fall on United States authorities. On the strictly political side, he stopped short of approving Federal interference to secure the vote for the freedmen.[2] In precisely the same way, the scope of official action which he deemed it necessary to implement in order to ease the early social and economic trials of the freedmen and to give them a favourable start was strictly limited. The success - individually and collectively - of their transition from bondage to freedom was seen by him, no less than by most other British observers of the time, to depend largely on the Negroes' own efforts and enterprise. Hence he was enabled to be sanguine about the likely rate of the freedmen's adaptation to voluntary labour and habits of self-reliance partly because he firmly believed that "necessity will soon teach them".[3] And certainly his attitude towards Federal legislation for extending the suffrage to the black population was determined in substantial measure by a calculated acceptance of the fact that the Negroes would - and should - "fit themselves" for the political franchise by "industry and quiet plodding".[4]

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1 Clayden, "The Reconstruction", p. 549.

2 His attitudes on this aspect of the Negroes' position during Reconstruction are discussed above, Chapter VI, pp. 34-37.

3 Clayden, "The Reconstruction", p. 549.

4 Ibid., p. 555.

Basically the same line of reasoning, it would appear, was partially responsible for the Caledonian Mercury's "desertion" of the Negro on the question of safeguarding his interests through legislation for civil rights and the franchise. As we have seen,[1] the paper which so consistently championed the call for justice to the black freedmen of America, and which so readily extolled their character, was nevertheless not prepared to sanction on their behalf a gross over-centralization of power which, as well as offering a disconcerting threat to the balance of the Constitution, had as its raison d'être the introduction of measures which discriminated in favour of the black race over the white. By the spring of 1866, Clayden writing in the Edinburgh Review was thoroughly convinced that all that it was strictly necessary to guarantee the Negroes in order to ensure their rise to industrial and commercial importance was "a fair chance".[2] The Mercury, contemporaneously disputing the efficacy of Congressional Reconstruction, similarly maintained that with slavery abolished forever, and "the former bondsman placed on the same footing as to his life, liberty, and property as the white man", there was no valid reason why special, unprecedented Federal powers should be employed for the Negro's benefit, and State rights further "arbitrarily interfered with or set aside as not entitled to regard".[3]

The objections voiced by the Mercury and by Clayden to the concept of a fairly wide degree of United States governmental intervention to secure the Negroes' civil and political rights illustrates the strong disapproval felt by these observers for any measures which in their opinion smacked of undue favouritism and solicitude for the freedmen. It was an attitude which in its turn betrayed the critical lack of appreciation existing even amongst

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1 The Caledonian Mercury's stands on the issues of civil rights and votes for the freedmen have been examined in Chapters IV and VI.

2 Clayden "The Reconstruction", p. 549.

3 Caledonian Mercury, 13 April, 1866. See also ibid., 21 April, 1866.

those sympathetic to the ex-slaves of the uniqueness of the black race's condition and status in the South. Legislation which could be seen to expedite the freedmen's progress up the social and political ladder on any terms other than as a just reward for their own strenuous efforts was judged by the radical Caledonian Mercury, almost as clearly as by the Whig Scotsman, to represent a policy of pampering the Negroes - to their own and to the nation's disadvantage. Clearly, the mood of the time, which caught up radical as well as the more Conservative elements in Scottish society, dictated that freedom and a fair, open opportunity were not insufficient guarantees for the Negroes' economic (and by natural extension his social and political) future. Nor does the mutual tendency of the Mercury and of Clayden to believe that the freedmen were by themselves capable of rising fairly rapidly to security and relative prosperity significantly detract from the essential shortsightedness of the view that they should conform, like everyone else, to the hallowed philosophy of self-help.

Yet, in the context of the times, the radical conscience could easily enough afford to stick by a strict belief in the creed of self-support and self-reliance without seeming to shed its concern to see the enactment of positive legislative steps for the improvement of the general quality of life among the masses. For to depreciate the importance and value of the doctrine of self-help was largely tantamount to depreciating also the importance and value of such basic virtues as thrift, perseverance, the desire to get ahead, and the willingness to work hard and steadily. And there was perhaps additional vindication for British radical adherence to the creed in the fact that the great democratic society of the United States itself set tremendous store by the cultivation of a broadly similar philosophy.

As a widely pervasive dogma, Smiles' self-help tied up with, and was really the British variant of, what W.E.B. Du Bois has called the "American Assumption". According to Du Bois, the American Assumption was that "Wealth

is mainly the result of its owner's effort and any average worker can by thrift become a capitalist". It was a tenet which, he argued, had been recognized in the United States since the 1820s and which, although it lost validity with the Civil War, continued to be adhered to until the upheaval caused by the Great Depression.[1] It implied that men should better themselves through their own energetic strivings and it made the self-made man the American ideal. In retrospect it was obviously unrealistic (not to mention unfair) for white Americans to apply this hallowed philosophy to the freedmen. But there is evidence that even liberal contemporaries, sympathetically disposed towards the black race, had little reticence in this connection. Even Horace Greeley, for instance, freely made it known that he considered the agitation for the confiscation of ex-rebels' lands and properties and their transference to Negro ownership to be utterly deplorable.

Greeley's aversion for confiscation schemes certainly found echoes in the Scottish radical press,[2] but the most spirited objections to such proposals naturally tended to come from the yet more seriously perturbed Conservative and Whig element. And on this specific issue, the Scotsman once again assumed a leading role in speaking out against the forces which allegedly sought unnecessarily to benefit the freedmen at the ruinous expense of their ex-masters. By mid 1867, its American correspondent was eager to indicate that there were "bad advisers" among the Negroes in the South, encouraging them "to entertain new views as to the righteousness of confiscation", and generating in their midst great "exultation and expectation".[3]

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1 W.E.B. Du Bois, Black Reconstruction in America (New York, 1935), pp. 182-183.

2 See, for instance, Glasgow Sentinel, 10 June, 1865, in which it was hoped that the United States would not imitate "the despotism of Russia" by introducing a policy of confiscation; and, even more significantly, the Dundee Advertiser, 26 Sept., 1865, where confiscation was opposed as an "extremist"measure.

3 Scotsman (U.S./c,), 27 July, 1867.

Singled out by the paper as deserving of special censure at this time was, however, Benjamin F. Wade, the Radical Republican President of the Senate. Having already demonstrated his radical mettle by the strength of his commitment to abolition and by his part in framing the Wade-Davis Bill,[1] Wade further incurred the suspicions and hostility of the Scotsman through proposals for the division of property between labourer and employer which, it was recognized, went substantially beyond the already invidious confiscations for Southern Negroes advocated by Stevens and Phillips. Totally condemning his "astonishing and dangerous doctrines", the Scotsman complained that the United States should be the last place in which to find such pernicious creeds as communism, socialism or agrarianism. Land, it was insisted, was very plentiful and very cheap, and labour not at all oppressed. Poor men unquestionably had an excellent chance to make good there.[2] In other words, the incentives for self-help were recognized as being present in abundance for all, and it was up to all the nation's poor - black and white - to make good use of them.

It was thus against the background of a transatlantic climate basically congenial to the concept of the universal applicability of self-help, and a consistent editorial policy of vigorous opposition to all attempts (both British and American) to cosset and spoon-feed the Negroes, that the favourable image already formed by the Scotsman of the Southern whites' character was significantly reinforced. For clearly a contributory factor in the paper's deepening admiration and sympathy for the post-war South was

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1 The Scotsman seized on Wade's healthy radical reputation to imply that he was something of a professional agitator and trouble-maker: following the successful termination of the abolition cause, he was "look[ing] forward and around him for other foes to conquer. He is of that class which must always be on the aggressive. They are moral or political Alexanders, who weep when they have no more worlds to vanquish" - see ibid. (editorial), 15 July, 1867.

2 Ibid.

the apparent readiness of that section's white population to rally from the grief and stupor of its defeat and to make real, independent efforts to rebuild its spirit and its fortunes.

Looking at conditions in the war-torn states at the end of 1866, the Scotsman concluded that it was evident from Southern journals that the white people of the South were not going to allow any grief they might feel at their continued exclusion from the Union to discourage them in labouring to regain the material prosperity they had enjoyed before the Civil War. Fully alive to the necessity of helping themselves, "they do not propose to hang their harps on the willows and to sit down idly to weep amid the desolations of their homes".[1] On the contrary, the eminently commendable urge to set about improving their immediate lot had impelled them to embark upon numerous ambitious projects for the establishment of "manufactories". Included among these was the novel venture of manufacturing cotton within the Southern states themselves, thereby saving the heavy tax on raw cotton shipped from the South: and further evidence of the resourcefulness and the courageous adaptability of the old ruling planter class was the Southerners' willingness to give up "their immense plantations on each of which a thousand negroes used to work, and declare that forty acres of land is all that any one man ought to pretend to cultivate". Extremely impressed by the efforts to push ahead under the gravest difficulties, the Scotsman was encouraged to hope that "if the South persevere in the new path of development and self-reliance which she seems to have marked out for herself, she will not suffer greatly for want of representation in the national councils".[2]

Appearing in the paper only four days after the editorial disapproving of continued Scottish subscriptions for freedmen's aid and indicating the vital necessity of instilling the importance of self-support into the Negro

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1 Ibid., 11 Dec., 1866.

2 Ibid.

mind, this eulogy on the ex-Confederates provided the basis for a neat, implicit comparison between the prevailing response to freedom of the black and white communities in the early post-war South. The individual's personal responsibility for his own and his dependents' welfare, and the contribution he should be capable of making towards restoring the general prosperity of his native State, were burdens seen to fall equally heavily upon ex-master and ex-slave. And straight from the early years of Reconstruction it seemed clear to such Scottish observers as those represented by the popular Scotsman that the Anglo-Saxon character, so singularly endowed as it was with an inherent appreciation of the creed of self-help,[1] would inevitably outstrip the Negro character in achieving economic advancement within the drastically altered social and economic framework of the South.

Nor could there be among those who had always admired the "Southern chivalry" any special indulgence for the Negroes on the basis of what those who campaigned for freedmen's aid liked to stress as their peculiar (indeed, their peculiarly dependent) plight. For it could be argued that distressing though the immediate post-war condition of the ex-slaves undoubtedly was, they were manifestly not the only section of the Southern community to suffer severely from the total upheaval which the war had effected upon the civilization of the Old South. If the newly emancipated Negroes had been accorded a rough, unhappy start to freedom by being turned out propertyless, without capital, and with "habits dependent" into a hostile, war-crippled society, their former masters were also seen to be faced with immense and unprecedented problems. Sympathizing profoundly with the planter class in its seriously straitened circumstances, those Scottish observers who had

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1 Briggs, Victorian People, pp. 134-135, has shown that Smiles himself was thoroughly convinced that Anglo-Saxon countries like Britain and the United States were essentially different in their attitude towards work and economic independence from Latin countries, believing that "The spirit of self-help, as exhibited in the energetic action of the individual, has in all times been a marked feature of the English character, and furnishes the true measure of our power as a nation".

supported the Confederacy were ready, after the war, to imply that with their shattered fortunes and their loss, without compensation, of slave labour, the old Southern aristocracy were scarcely better equipped than were the destitute freedmen to cope with the new conditions and current dislocations of Southern society.

II. Unfavourable assessments of the Negroes' response to free labour

Inevitably, then, a persistent acknowledgement that the black population's post-war trials and miseries were matched in equal measure by those of the white Southerners, combined with an inflexible adherence to the self-help philosophy, increased the natural tendency of those who had backed the rebellion to take a generally dim view of the nature of the Negroes' response to freedom. A substantial body of Scottish opinion was therefore ready largely to blame the Negroes' conduct as free men for the economic - and to some extent the social - chaos of the South rather then to identify the endemic disorder and disruption in these States during Reconstruction, and the widespread mood of white intransigence, as factors militating against the easy adaptation of the Negro to free labour and his smooth assimilation into the body politic.

As we have seen, the Scotsman was particularly convinced that the newly emancipated Negroes, initially at least, would be utterly incapable of appreciating the vital responsibilities imposed upon them by freedom. This conviction was both supported and further encouraged by a series of reports on the South which reached the paper during mid-1865 to late 1866 from a "reliable" [1] correspondent in Mobile, Alabama. Having emigrated from Scotland to the south three years previously, the writer had quickly disabused himself of "the 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' ideas of the horrors and brutalities of slavery inherent in every Briton, until he learns better", [2]

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1 See Scotsman, 6 Oct., 1866.

2 Letter from correspondent in Mobile, Alabama, 7 June, 1865, in ibid., 6 July, 1865.

had cultivated a healthy respect for the comprehensive paternalism of the peculiar institution, and had formed a thoroughly unfavourable opinion of the Negro character. [1]

Accordingly, in a report fashioned only two months after the end of the war, he already morosely informed the Scotsman of the certain intensification of hardships which must fall to the lot of the stricken South as a result of the freeing of the slaves. Personal investigation had afforded him sufficient evidence on which to base his gloomy prognosis. A recent visit to a prairie region of South Carolina had revealed how the old "garden spot" of the State had been converted literally to "a howling wilderness" by the effects of emancipation. Just as the grain crops had been due to be gathered, the Southern armies had surrendered and the slaves had seized their liberty, leaving crops which had promised an average yield "literally destroyed, choked, and all because the Negroes are free and refuse to work". Subscribing totally to the stock Southern argument that the Negroes had been better off and happier under slavery ("singing their Negro melodies round their cabin doors far into the night") the correspondent bitterly concluded that had it not been for the misery and death attendant upon it, the Negro idea of freedom would have"excite[d] a smile". The black freedmen, he indicated, naively considered that "to be free means to be clothed and fed and to have nothing to do, and that all they require to do is to reach some Federal military post". [2]

The principal message which the ex-patriate Scot in Alabama was attempting to put across to his fellow Scots at home was nothing less than that

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1 The attitudes of this particular correspondent towards the Negro race are noted above, Chapter V, pp. 619-620, 661.

2 Letter from correspondent in Mobile, Alabama, 7 June, 1865, in Scotsman, 6 July, 1865.

emancipation in the United States had been a mistake which would prove a curse to both the freed slaves and the white population throughout the South. Subsequent reports sought to reinforce this early suggestion. By late July, 1865, he was plaintively recording that although the temper of the South was showing signs of gradually returning to "that state of tranquillity" common before the war, the process was being seriously hampered by the trials and turmoil consequent upon the emancipation of "the African race". It had earlier been a firm belief amongst the vast majority of planters, he stated, that the free Negroes would not work continuously, and that their failure to do so would result in the"total and irreparable" ruin of the planters and merchants, faced as they would be with rich plantations lying uncultivated and covered in weeds. Since emancipation had become a reality, no conduct on the part of the Negro had, in his opinion, given cause for the retraction of these dismal views. That the economy of the South was continuing to function viably at all was due not to the quality of the freedmen's work but to the strict regulations enforced by the Northern authorities, which had ensured that "the negro is now in reality ruled by a rod of iron, in comparison with which the planter's 'lash' was but a willow-wand". [1]

The gloomy picture of Southern conditions and prospects which the correspondent assiduously conveyed in 1865 remained unrelieved throughout the following year. Typical was his report, in mid September 1866, on the year's cotton crop. Replete with lamentations over the paucity of the yield, his account explained that everything had been working against a successful harvest

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1 Letter from correspondent in Mobile, Alabama, 24 July, 1865, in ibid., 25 Aug., 1865. The correspondent intimated that the North had introduced rules forbidding the Negroes to leave the planations on pain of being sent to "government plantations" and stipulating that Negroes found unemployed in the cities should be arrested and hired out for a year.

- the weather, the seed, and most importantly of all, the labour. Not only had labour on the plantations been "unsatisfactory and unreliable" but there had not been enough of it. The scarcity no less than the quality of the work-force was directly blamed upon chronic shortcomings in the general nature of the freedmen's response to liberty. Lack of competence and responsible attitudes, leading "of late years" to a high mortality rate among the Negroes, plus their senseless habit of congregating in the cities, had combined with the loss of around 180,000 able-bodied freedmen to the United States army to reduce the number of workers in the cotton fields in 1866 to half the 1860-61 figure. The total inadequacy of the labour supply had produced "the worst season ever", and left the most fertile cotton growing areas of Mississippi and Alabama over-run with weeds.[1] For the readers of the Scotsman, encouraged as they had always been by the paper to consider the South the fairest section of the United States, such harrowing first-hand accounts of the widespread ruin and desolation obtaining there after emancipation could only have had the double effect of hardening their attitudes towards those who had clearly granted the Negro his freedom before he was capable of receiving it, and of further lowering their estimation of the character of the black race itself.

Meanwhile, the readership of the Scotsman's greatest Scottish rival, the Glasgow Herald, was being fed essentially similar sentiments regarding the freedmen's approach to their new social and economic status. Reviewing the course of Reconstruction up until early August, 1865, the Herald was frankly disappointed with the pace of progress. A prime factor arresting the process of Southern regeneration was judged to be the exclusion from Johnson's amnesty of those ex-Confederates worth £20,000 or more. By this "impolitic and unjustifiable act", it was felt the outlay of capital in the South was being

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1 Letter from correspondent in Mobile, 15 Sept., 1866, in ibid., 6 Oct., 1866.

seriously retarded and, because of the paralysing threat of confiscation which the wealthy classes felt to be hanging over them, the general development of the country's resources and industry was being interfered with. The costly decision of the great Southern planters and capitalists to leave their estates uncultivated and their funds unemployed until the policy of the Federal government was more favourable in turn had its adverse effects on the black labouring people, a great many of whom, it was asserted, were already "very destitute".[1]

Clearly, then, the Herald was prepared to go some small way in recognising that factors other than inherent character weaknesses in the freed Negroes might help to determine their condition within Southern society during the early post-war era. This tendency was further illustrated in the paper's simultaneous acknowledgement of the very great change which was involved for the Negroes in rearranging the pattern of their existence from slavery to freedom. To be sure, the Herald did not hesitate to pronounce the black freedmen "ignorant, idle disposed, and improvident". But where the Glasgow journal displayed a judgement relatively more generous that that of the Scotsman was in its suggestion that the Negroes should not be expected to be immediately capable of conducting themselves "like sober citizens". Completely unprepared for the new role in which they found themselves, and with no previous need to look to their own welfare, the damaging legacy which years of servitude was likely to have left within the ranks of the freedmen was well appreciated: "They have been accustomed to eat and sleep, and they have been forced to labour, and that is about the sum and substance of their history and social experience".[2]

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1 Glasgow Herald, 3 Aug., 1865.

2 Ibid.

Yet, despite the Herald's attempts to inject a measure of understanding and balanced analysis into its outlook on the black population in the early post-war South, there nevertheless intruded into the same editorial observations which, by their tone, indicated that while the journal had filed some of the harsh edges off the standard Whig stereotype of the free Negro as a wilfully idle, thriftless blot on Southern society, the impression of the black race as essentially unequipped by nature to adapt easily to the demands of freedom was by no means entirely lacking. The recognition of certain extenuating circumstances in relation to the unfavourable conduct of the newly emancipated slaves could not fully obscure the Herald's basic, vigorous disapproval of the course of behaviour which a fair proportion of the Negroes seemed to be deliberately pursuing. In exacerbating their own troubles - and those of the South as a whole - the freedmen were clearly judged to be blameworthy, inasmuch as "the freed negroes, from South Carolina to Texas, are in a great measure idle through necessity or choice. They are idling about the military stations, or crowding into the cities and towns, and are either begging or robbing or stealing, or starving". Credence was given to disturbing American reports that they were deserting their employers in great numbers in East Tennessee and crowding into the streets of Memphis, and that a similar state of affairs existed in Texas and Louisiana. Equally distressing as illustrative of the sheer irresponsibility and laziness of a substantial section of the black population was the information that certain military posts and encampments had been "besieged by crowds of idle blacks" who had left only under threat of being imprisoned or pressed into the Quartermaster's service.[1]

Openly aware of the tremendous difficulties which faced the American Negro community in effecting the transition from bondage to freedom, but conscious also of a tendency among the freedmen unnecessarily to abuse their liberty, the Glasgow Herald was apparently prepared at this early stage in

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1 Ibid.

Reconstruction to suspend its judgement on whether the initial irresponsibility of the freed Negroes was merely a passing phase or whether it was an innate, largely ineradicable characteristic of the race. Further comment on the nature of the freedmen's adjustment to their changed circumstances was lacking throughout the summer and autumn of 1865; but in late November, the subject of the Negroes' ability to comprehend the concept of freedom with responsibility forced itself dramatically into the forefront of the Herald's attention.

The issue was raised at that time not in relation to the conduct of the freed American Negroes but with reference to the post-emancipation character of the rebellious Jamaican Negroes; and on this emotive question the Herald made basic value judgements about the race from which it was not significantly to depart in subsequent considerations of the American Negroes' use of their freedom. We have already observed how in the aftermath of the Jamaican uprising the paper formed a highly unfavourable opinion of the black population's progress and mode of life there after its emancipation in 1834 and implicitly stigmatized the Negro race as a whole as incorrigibly lazy and incapable of any substantial degree of independent elevation and advancement.[1] Negro laziness, it was argued, had created widespread poverty among the island's black community which in turn had led to crime and punishment and the mood of discontent which had produced the rebellion. The onus of blame was set squarely upon the Negro. With an abundance of waste and unoccupied land where the liberated slaves could have raised themselves "by honest industry to comfort if not to independence", the able-bodied labourers had declined to work perseveringly. On the contrary, prone to "fits of idleness or caprice", they had abandoned the fields at critical times, thereby gravely diminishing the planter's returns and actually ruining the entire economy of certain farms.[2]

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 540-541.

2 Glasgow Herald, 25 Nov., 1865.

By the summer of 1866, broadly the same views had come to be held in relation to the actions of the black freedmen in the Southern States of America. In an editorial comment (which appeared, significantly, under a main leading article devoted to censuring the Jamaica committee for its attempted prosecution of Governor Eyre and to stressing the uncontrollable ferocity of the Negro character) regret was expressed over the "very melancholy accounts" which were being received of the condition of the Negroes in the South. As in Jamaica, the hardships were seen to be largely self-inflicted: "they are said to have disregarded their labour contracts and preferred rather to wander about living the life of petty pilfering free-booters than to live by honest labour".[1] Earlier in the year, the Herald, noting the unhopeful view of the Negroes' prospects expressed by General Grant after his Southern tour, had decided that it was an idea "native to the African mind that a free man ought to be above all menial labour. The negro thinks that all who are not slaves are gentlemen".[2]

A mistaken conception of the meaning of liberty which helped to foster the "ingrained idleness" of the Negro was therefore judged to be rendering the freedmen in America totally incapable of realising their full potential as useful labouring members of society. Under these circumstances, the salvation of the black race, and the prosperity of Southern industries, clearly depended, in the Herald's opinion, on the extensive application of the contract system in labour relations. The paper admitted that the system was not particularly attractive, seeming to represent as it did "a modified species of serfdom"; but it nevertheless hoped that if the Americans could carry a form of contract labour out without encroaching too far on the master's rights or on the Negroes' freedom, it would solve a problem concerning the free black worker which had "baffled other

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1 Ibid 14 July, 1866.

2 Ibid., 5 Jan., 1866.

emancipating nations".[1]

As the South came ever tighter under the control of the Republicans in Congress, however, the possibility of introducing any such system gradually vanished, and the unregulated labour situation continued to be a focus of the Herald's displeasure, both with respect to the policy of the "ultra-radicals" of the North and with respect to the incompetence and character deficiencies of the freed Negroes. Southern industrial development was still being seriously retarded, it was maintained, primarily because of the black population's entirely unsatisfactory attitude to steady labour:

> The negro is now his own master, and is wilful as a spoiled child. In numerous cases he will not work if he can live by begging and stealing, and in many cases he will only work by fits and starts as it suits his necessity or convenience.[2]

Helped in the formation of its views by the impact of the Jamaican rebellion, then, the Glasgow Herald came firmly to believe that even allowing for the strong initial dislocation experienced by those newly released from slavery, there could be but little hope that the American Negroes would of their own free will prove able successfully to come to terms with freedom, and to meet the modest requirements which society in America demanded of them as free men. This editorial stance was reinforced by on-the-spot reports from the South furnished by the paper's "Rambling Reporter", and by several articles from a "Glasgow Artist" which found their way into the columns of the daily paper in the summer of 1867.

Reference has already been made to the highly derogatory manner in which the "Rambling Reporter" depicted the many Negroes with whom he came into contact during his sojourn in the Southern States.[3] In addition to

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., 24 Sept., 1867.

3 See above, Chapter V, pp. 628-629.

being outspokenly repelled by the physical features of the black race, he was in the main unimpressed by its pattern of behaviour. A visit to a Negro village in Virginia enabled him to conclude that "As a general rule, the negroes are lazy, dirty, and not very frugal in their habits". Land which he felt could have been utilized for gardens had been allowed to remain rough clay, and the general impression which he conveyed of the settlement was one of a lackadaisical community, surrounded by the dilapidated trappings of a rough and ready agricultural economy.[1] He was further confirmed in his unfavourable opinion of the freedmen's response to voluntary labour by the sight at Weldon railway station, North Carolina, of over sixty able Negroes "idling about... and looking the very picture of laziness and poverty", and apparently "inclined to do anything but work".[2]

Equally unflattering was the picture of the Negroes' misuse of freedom communicated by a "Glasgow Artist" - later identified as one W. Greenlees[3] - recently returned from a visit to the United States. Contributed in the first instance to the Glasgow Weekly Herald as a series of "American Sketches", the "Artist's" articles were considered lively and interesting enough to be worthy of repeat in the daily Herald. The trip having been a fairly comprehensive one and in no way designed to concentrate special attention on the Southern States, only a relatively small proportion of the writer's lengthy series[4] was devoted to portraying the state of affairs as he saw it

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1 Report on "The Heights of Arlington; The House of General Lee; and the Hamlet of Free Negroes" by "Rambling Reporter", in Glasgow Herald, 14 July, 1866.

2 "Rambling Reporter" in ibid., 8 Sept., 1866.

3 See ibid., 25 Sept., 1867.

4 The earliest of the "Glasgow Artist's" articles appeared in their abridged form in the Glasgow (Daily) Herald in March, 1867 - see "Etchings from the Life in Kentucky and the West" in ibid., 2 March, 1867. His concluding report, headed "Feeling between North and South - The Negro - General Butler", was published on 25 Sept., 1867.

in the conquered section of the Union. His succinct observations played their part, however, in endorsing the view of the freed Negroes' conduct set forth in the Herald's editorial comment and in the articles by the "Rambling Reporter".

Even before actually setting foot on Southern soil, he had detected evidence of the inability of the freedmen to cope with the changed circumstances in which they found themselves. Journeying South down the Mississippi in a steamboat, he had seen on one island many Negroes' huts standing in the midst of cotton trees, and had learned that at one time it had been intended to make the place a Negro settlement. Two thousand "darkies", he informed the Herald, had been placed there to cultivate it, but they had failed dismally in the attempt, finally leaving the island and the huts to go to ruin.[1]

Certainly not all of the sights from the boat presented quite such a depressing aspect for Greenlees, however. On the innumerable cotton plantations which came into view, he was fully as favourably impressed by the appearance of the Negro quarters ("often quite a small town of comfortable-looking wooden shanties") as by the "large, elegant, and handsome" houses of the planters. Greenville, in the heart of the cotton-growing country, afforded the encouraging spectacle of Negroes busily at work planting the crop; and he was reassured to hear that as free labourers they were earning a basic wage of $16 per month or, in the case of the great many who were share-croppers, that they were making money from a system which was working well. "As an extensive planter on board told us, 'Niggers are looking up'".[2]

This judgement appeared to be borne out by the conditions which he observed to obtain at the plantation of Judge Gilmour, one of the greatest

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1 "Glasgow Artist", "A Trip to the Tropics; or, Life on the Great Western Rivers of America", in ibid., 24 Aug., 1867.

2 "Glasgow Artist", in ibid., 31 Aug., 1867.

cotton growers in the world. The steamboat stopped to unload hay and corn and sundry provisions there, giving the "Glasgow Artist" ample opportunity to view at close proximity the hundred or so Negro huts. He was satisfied that

> Much more comfortable and superior looking are they than the houses occupied by our agricultural labourers at home, and not at all to be compared to the hovels in which our miners reside in Glasgow or neighbourhood.

But even when confronted with visible proof of Negro prosperity he remained cautiously sceptical of the race's aptitude or inclination fully to come to terms with the challenges of freedom. Significantly, while noting the flourishing circumstances of planter and freedmen at Gilmour's property, he was at the same time at pains to point out that by no means every plantation on the Mississippi was in such good condition, many of them being completely run down and going to waste from want of labourers.[1]

Subsequent travel through the South reinforced these basic suspicions about the endemic laziness and irresponsibility of the black population. The Louisiana countryside from Baton Rouge to New Orleans contained, in his estimation, a succession of the finest plantations in the South which clearly cultivated exceedingly well - when they were cultivated. In too many instances, however, Greenlees found them sadly out of heart, and he lamented deeply over the great number of beautiful plantations overgrown with weeds and the sugar houses lying idle and disintegrating, all for lack of steady Negro labour.[2] By the time that he reached New Orleans itself, his consternation over the senseless waste of natural resources which was being intensified and perpetuated in the post-war South had substantially increased his irritation with the freedmen for their widespread failure to apply themselves to consistent voluntary labour. Their blatant

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., 7 Sept., 1867.

disinclination to constitute an essential work-force or to show any nascent sense of ambition ultimately provoked a bitter Carlylean outburst against the character of the Negro race as represented by the black community of New Orleans:

> There they are, loafing about the levee, idle, half-clad and worse fed, or lying on their backs on the cotton bales with their mouths wide open, swallowing down the sunbeam as if it was sherry cobbler, instead of...a ray of fire, intense enough to melt iron or anything else but a negro's head. Work they won't; they come into the city to enjoy their newly found liberty, a liberty to starve or die out, which they are fast doing, while the plantations are going to waste and overrun with weeds (sic) for want of hands to work them.[1]

Like the Scotsman, then, the Glasgow Herald offered much of its information on the unsatisfactory conduct of the liberated Negroes through the medium of reports and communications from individuals with first-hand experience of the situation in the Southern States. The tendency within the Scottish newspaper press to rely on such vigorous personal testimony was of course understandable, given the fact that it was both usually eminently readable[2] and invariably of a nature which accorded well with the particular journal's preconceived ideas on "the Negro question" in the United States. Thus, although no single writer contributed consecutive articles to the Edinburgh Courant, that newspaper, too added a hotter, more authentic flavour to its reporting on the Negroes' adjustment to freedom by the occasional inclusion in its columns of statements by persons who had close personal knowledge of conditions in the South during Reconstruction.

True to its image as an ultra-Conservative organ vehemently opposed to the workings of Radical Reconstruction in America and staidly convinced

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1 "Sketch of New Orleans", in ibid., 11 Sept., 1867.

2 The style and content of the reports by the "Glasgow Artist" and especially those by the "Rambling Reporter", for instance, fit perfectly into the travelogue genre, then so extremely popular in Victorian Britain.

of the inherent inferiority of coloured races throughout the world, the Edinburgh Courant was from the outset prepared to take a sour and totally pessimistic view of the likely nature of the response which the Negroes would make to their freedom. By the beginning of August, 1865, it was fully in agreement with the reactionary London Morning Herald in pronouncing the current state of the Southern States to be deplorable in the extreme. and while the blunderings of politicians in Washington were recognized to be partially responsible for the increasing ruin and chaos, much of the blame was attributed to the freedmen, who were accused of refusing to work except for "exorbitant" wages and of abusing their liberty by loafing around, thieving and begging.[1]

Despite the predictably intense disapproval of the black population's behaviour in the Courant's immediate post-war editorial comment, however, yet a more trenchant early assertion in the paper that the Negroes were proving themselves totally unfit for the freedom so prematurely granted them came from a woman native to, and resident in, the Southern States. Writing in late August to a friend in Edinburgh, the "Southern lady's" letter found its way into the columns of the Courant two months later, its publication being accompanied by an editorial recommendation to the effect that it gave "a good deal of interesting information" regarding the social and political conditions of the South, as well as a "vivid picture of the cruelties which its inhabitants sustained at the hands of the Northern soldiery".[2]

Primarily intended, by relating her personal experience of the state of affairs in the wartime and post-war South, to register a protest against what she considered to be the one-sided accounts of the war which had

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 3 Aug., 1865. See also ibid., 5 Aug., 1865.

2 Ibid., 27 Oct., 1865.

appeared in the Northern press and in the comments of British sympathizers with the North, the letter was in fact simply a catalogue of the apparently unrelieved trials and miseries of the white Southerners. It presented the gloomiest of pictures, the writer maintaining not only that "the bitterest hate exists, and ever will, between the two sections", but also that the South was completely friendless in the world. The hopelessly despairing tone of the entire communication was epitomised in the rhetorical question, "Where is there any hope this side the grave?"[1] And instrumental in prostrating the South, it was vigorously argued, had been the Yankee troops. These were bitterly and relentlessly castigated for the atrocities and barbarities which they had perpetrated on the Southern population - in particular, for the degredation which they had forced Southern womanhood to suffer[2] - and for the despicable way in which they had contributed, by the stealing of plate, silver and other valuables, to the utter destitution which prevailed in the post-war South.

But while by far the greatest acrimony was reserved for the Northern soldiers in particular and Northerners in general, the conduct of the freed Negro population of the South was also cited as a critical factor contributing to the chronic ills and confusions of Southern society and economy. Almost inevitably, the "Southern lady" did identify the North as being directly culpable in this connection too; as well as introducing a patently over-hasty emancipation for a totally unprepared black community, the idyllic paternalistic set-up which she retrospectively depicted had, she asserted, been

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1 Private letter to an Edinburgh friend from a "Southern lady", 26 Aug., 1865, printed in ibid., 27 Oct., 1865.

2 By way of giving some indication of the horrendous wartime experiences to which Southern women had been subjected and which "in many cases" had "turned them into lunatics", the Southern lady ventured to mention that in some specific cases, madness had been induced by "Young, delicate and modest girls hav[ing] been forced at the point of the bayonet to perform at the piano for the amusement of their cruel tormentors" - ibid.

replaced by exceedingly cruel Yankee soldiers acting in the capacity of plantation managers, and in general, by a system which was much more productive of "evil"conditions for the unfortunate Negroes than slavery had been.

This said, however, she was at the same time more than ready to level severe criticism at the black freedmen for the nature of their own reactions and responses to liberty. She was fully convinced that they were very badly off largely because extremely few of them were ready to labour voluntarily and on a sufficient scale to provide for themselves: "Freedom and a state of perfect idleness are with them synonymous terms". They would never, the letter further declared, work for their own maintenance unless under fear of punishment; and appositely bringing into play her vast experience of the Southern way of life, the writer indicated that "I was always bitterly opposed to having these people punished under any circumstances, but the result of this war proves clearly to me the necessity of it in some cases". With the impressive confidence and authority of one who observed and commented upon a changed situation within a society of which she had always been a part, the Southern correspondent bluntly concluded that the Negroes were "utterly improvident" and, frequently, completely hopeless cases.[1]

Encouraged, perhaps, by these unambiguous statements from the heart of the South to persist in and intensify its earlier adverse comment on the American Negro freedmen, the Edinburgh Courant itself sprang back shortly after the publication of the Southern woman's letter to renew its scathing observations on this subject. The "blameless Ethiopian", it was suggested, was "doing his best to forfeit his Homeric title" by "now costing the American Government more anxiety than all its other administrative concerns put together". And again, the root cause of the difficulties which he was accused of creating

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1 Ibid.

was held to be his refusal to work except when compelled to - and, indeed, even then "only when the compulsion takes the form not of his physical wants or responsibilities as a parent, but of an appeal to his sense of bodily pain". Emancipation for the American slaves had meant, from their irresponsible point of view, immunity from all claims of social or even domestic duty: "it means ...the utmost freedom from every human tie, in order to become the willing slave of every brutal form of sensual indulgence". With customary resource to an allusion to the innate superiority of white over coloured races, the Courant insisted that post-emancipation developments had totally vindicated the judgement of those Americans who had sought to postpone the liberation of the Negroes on the grounds that they were not ready for independent existence "and that, placed side by side with more energetic races,...[they are] worse off in an emancipated than in a servile condition". [1]

The Courant's invective in relation to the Negro race as a whole was, as we have seen, to be increased at this time by the occurrence of the uprising in Jamaica. [2] So far as the American freedmen were specifically concerned, however, the task of focussing attention on their shortcomings switched once again in early 1866 to an individual who had close first-hand knowledge of and an active interest and involvement in the contemporary state of the economy in the Southern states. The particular concern of Thomas Affleck of Washington County, Texas, was the condition of labour relations in the South, and it was in his capacity as a labour recruiting agent visiting Scotland in the course of his work that he wrote to the Edinburgh Courant from Dumfries in mid February, 1866. Openly acknowledging the Courant as a highly sympathetic organ in which to offer his statements on the plight and requirements of the

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1 Ibid., 7 Nov., 1865.

2 See above, Chapter V, pp. 533-534.

Southern economy, Affleck, an emigrant Scotsman, made his own position fairly clear at the outset by launching into a vehement refutation of statements circulated by Northerners then in Britain which insisted that the planters were reluctant to use Negro labour. It seemed "strange, cruel and unfeeling", he suggested, that after all they had made the South suffer "our Yankee enemies should keep up their persecution of us even to this extent, of sending pestilent lecturers here to our mother country to misrepresent, vilify, and defame us".[1]

In like manner to the Southern woman who had written privately to her Edinburgh friend, Affleck was, indeed, much preoccupied with the business of portraying the Northerners in as diabolical a light as possible, and to this end he was prepared to argue uncompromisingly that the victorious Federal authorities had set out on a course purposely designed to erode the last vestiges of the Southern planters' social and economic (as well as simply political) power. In explaining the process by which the North proposed to accomplish this, he simultaneously channelled a substantial share of the opprobrium attaching to the nature of the Negroes' response to freedom away from the freedmen themselves and on to the shoulders of their "Yankee" mentors.

Thus, it was indicated that in the initial period after emancipation the general aspect of the South had been fairly cheering and prosperous, with the Negroes basing their labour satisfactorily on the contractual system, and working reasonably well. The serious trouble and disruption had only started, Affleck maintained, when Northern generals and others, deliberately bent on seeing the ruin of the planter ("even though it involved the ruin of the Negro"), had flooded into the South. This element was accused of having urged the freedmen to forsake their former masters and of having made the

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1 Letter, headed "Slaves, Freedmen and Texas", from Thomas Affleck, at Dumfries, 19 Feb., 1866, in Edinburgh Courant, 26 Feb., 1866.

black population so increasingly restless, resentful, and unco-operative that work had eventually beenbrought to a virtual standstill. Denounced as constituting the greatest potential danger of all in this connection was the Freedmen's Bureau, its agents issuing as they did "mischievious" advice of an inflammatory kind conducive to stirring up a war of races.[1]

Yet, although Affleck might strenuously impute the burden of blame for the chaos which had developed in Southern labour relations to Northerners guilty of inciting the freedmen to unrest, nevertheless there was, for an observer of his nature, implicit in the existing situation also strong grounds for censuring the basic approach of the Negroes to their new status as free citizens. In describing their arrogant lethargy, their insolence, their mass removal to Southern cities, and their flagrant breaking of contracts, Affleck made no attempt to minimise the restless and dangerous irresponsibility which he judged to have characterized their behaviour following the flow of malicious but influential Northern advisers into the South. Essentially, however, his chief, if largely tacit, contention would seem to have been that the black freedmen were relatively less deserving than were the Federals in Washington and in the South of utter condemnation for their part in creating the ruinous conditions obtaining in the ex-Confederate States, and their guilt in this connection was the lesser simply because inherent character defects rendered the Negro race incapable of satisfactorily fulfilling, without guidance, the requirements and obligations demanded of a free community. Innately impressionable and dependent, the Negroes in the Southern States were in his view bound to retrogress under a regime which cared nothing for them except insofar as they could be manipulated for the purpose of destroying their former masters:

> Their nature is one that leads them to depend upon and submit readily to superiors, and to be happy and comfortable only when under authority, and to go back rapidly to their original condition of barbarism when left to themselves.[2]

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

It followed, then, that the crippled condition to which the Southern economy had been reduced would not appreciably improve in the forseeable future so long as the planters were obliged to rely on a work force of black freedmen. While Affleck continued to accept that no other country could successfully compete with the Southern States in cotton production, he predicted that the crop would never again be produced to any great extent by Negro labour. It was accordingly on this assumption that he based his appeal for Scottish emigrants and the urgency of the South's needs seemed to be demonstrated by the fact that he had returned to his "native land" after more than thirty years for the single specific purpose of recruiting a labour force.

From the highly favourable response which he claimed to be receiving to his campaign, he felt emboldened to offer an opinion concerning the contemporary mind and direction of Scottish philanthropy which importantly conveyed something of the resentment which could be felt by an emigrant, thoroughly imbued with the Southern mentality, towards the ignorant meddlings of "negrophilists" in the old country. Hundreds of people, he asserted, had enquired about his scheme, and had professed their desire to go to the Southern States. The readiness of so many to emigrate was associated, he inferred, with the "discontented, unpleasant feeling exist[ing] amongst the labouring classes". Having clearly discerned such a mood, Affleck could not help feeling that

> the right-thinking and benevolent of you would do much better to devote your time, energy, and means to bettering the condition and temper of your own poor of every grade and position, than in supporting emancipation societies, etc., which have already done enough of most cruel wrong to the poor race so mistakenly intended to be benefited; and in listening to designing lecturers, whose sole object is to draw money our of your pockets.[1]

Affleck's detestation of the tendency for individuals and organizations in both Britain and the United States to pamper the freed Negroes, thereby encouraging the persistence of such undesirable character traits as lack of foresight and dependence on others, was naturally shared in full measure by

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1 Ibid.

the Edinburgh Courant itself. In an editorial in early March, 1866, discussing President Johnson's ability to hold his own against the "extreme abolitionists" and condemning the aim and content of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill, the paper drew directly on Affleck's recently published letter to remind its readers of the instrumental part played by the Freedmen's Bureau in fomenting trouble and tensions between the races and in spreading general unrest throughout the South. Attacked as an "ingenious device" of Northern fanatics, instigated for the purpose of continuing to wreak vengeance on the South, its minions were accused of urging the Negroes on to stop working and to adopt an exceedingly insolent, disobedient attitude towards the white planter class. The scope which the Bureau was seen to enjoy for influencing the mood and manner of the freedmen through its ostensible function of caring for their welfare was in itself sufficient reason for the Edinburgh Courant's hostility towards the institution, without the additional abhorrent aspect of the authoritarian nature which it allegedly displayed in its dealings with the Southern white population. Proscriptive, and wholly unnecessary, it had no redeeming features: "The 'Freedmen's Bureau' combined the worst features of the old English poor law with a military despotism, of which the guiding principle was that the white man ought to be the servant of the black".[1]

Yet, despite this base and despicable aim the Freedmen's Bureau, in the Courant's estimation, had clearly done little enough in the period up until Spring, 1866 to ensure the basic material wellbeing, or a real measure of security, for the black population in the South. Having paid tribute to the paternalism of the planters during slavery times, the paper reiterated the convictions of those who had testified from their long experiance of

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1 Ibid., 6 March, 1866.

Southern society to the actual worsening of the Negroes' condition after emancipation:

> There, amid the devastated homesteads of the South, remains the black, scowled on by the Southern white, and allured to seek from the patronage of fanatic Northerners all that was afforded him by the old system of what was euphuistically termed 'involuntary servitude'. [1]

In the reasoning of the Edinburgh Courant, therefore, the possibility of an easy, fairly rapid and successful adjustment by the American Negroes to their status as free citizens was not only precluded by their inherent character weaknesses but was also seriously frustrated by the (often ill-designed) attempts of Northern authorities and individuals to upset the traditional temper of the working relationship between white employer and black labourer. By bringing in its wake an "irreconcileable antagonism" [2] between the two races in the South, the Civil War, it was implied, had had fully as inimical an effect on the material condition of the black slaves whom it liberated as it had had upon the white planters whose settled fortunes and prestige it had shattered.

Essentially, the stress which the Courant laid on the importance of preserving after Negro emancipation the natural master/servant relationship between white and black was simply an echo of the concern expressed on this aspect of "the Negro question" by Thomas Carlyle almost two decades earlier. Indeed, throughout the Reconstruction years in the United States the Courant's general tone and attitude towards the character of the Negro race and its use of freedom closely reflected both the intensity and conviction and the vigorous line of reasoning voiced by the influencial Scottish writer at the end of the 1840s.

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

This similarity in sentiment was eventually importantly brought out by the Edinburgh Courant itself when in late 1874 it openly acknowledged its total agreement with the conclusions of Carlyle.

A leader on "the Negro question" which appeared in the London Times during early November, 1874 was the immediate spark which triggered off not only further editorial comment by the Courant on the current condition and prospects of the black population in the Southern States of America but also a renewed focus on Carlyle's classic disquisition on the subject. According unstinted praise to his effort, the Courant implied that the "Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question" (as it termed the essay) could safely be accepted as a definitive comment on that controversial issue. It represented, the paper suggested, "one of the most brilliant essays of the greatest literary genius of our time...Seldom...in the treatment of any question so vitally important has such analytical and logical power, such prescient wisdom, and splendid literary ability been displayed".[1]

Marvelling at the depth and accuracy of his foresightedness, the editorial acknowledged how Carlyle, writing in 1849, had forseen the "War of Secession", and the war of races which it judged to be raging in the South at that time. Furthermore, with regard to the social and economic conditions existing within the Southern States during the mid 1870s, the gloomy prophesies in the "Occasional Discourse" concerning the likely consequences of a rash, uncontrolled emancipation of Negro slaves had clearly been fully vindicated. For Carlyle had also forseen that

> To cut asunder the ties that united master and servant, and to throw the slave population loose, would simply be - as it was in the case of our West Indies - to emancipate them into unrestricted idleness, self-indulgence, and active antagonism to industry and progress, ending in universal ruffianism and outlawry.[2]

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1 Ibid., 10 Nov., 1874.

2 Ibid.

Nor had Carlyle's essay been in any sense a negative one, a mere doom-laden prophesy. Had the United States carried out his remedy of fixing a price which the Negro slave could have paid in return for his freedon, the Civil War and the subsequent turmoil of Reconstruction would almost certainly, it was suggested, have been avoided. And the strictures and advice contained in the "Occasional Discourse" were still in the Courant's estimation critically and directly relevant to the situation obtaining in the South in the mid seventies. It was accordingly with satisfaction that the paper discerned from reports in the American press - even in the Republican press - a distinct tendency among Southern planters and Negroes to establish a stable labour relationship, thereby meeting one of the cardinal requisites recognized by Carlyle as necessary for the material prosperity and racial harmony of a society which had undergone the transformation from slave to free labour.[1]

The Edinburgh Courant's citing of Carlyle's essay at this late stage in the Reconstruction process in America and the unreserved praise and endorsement which it accorded to his views are highly significant not only for the light which they shed upon the essential nature of the Courant's own attitudes towards the American Negro during Reconstruction but also because the comments constitute a unique open acknowledgement of the value of Carlyle's work on "The Negro question". Clearly, the arguments and conclusions set forth in the "Occasional Discourse" continued into the 1860s and 1870s to exert a deep influence on Scottish writing and thinking on the subject. Yet, among those most obviously indebted to Carlyle as

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1 Ibid. With unflagging Conservative partisanship, the Courant looked hopefully to a Democratic triumph in the Presidential election of 1876 to provide a powerful stimulus for the general improvement of conditions in the South. With the Democratic party in control at Washington, it was suggested, the despicable carpetbag and scalawag regimes would be swept away, and the natural policy would be "to largely employ the negro at a fixed rate of remuneration, to teach him to be thrifty, and assist him to be prosperous".

the mainspring of their particular beliefs and convictions regarding the Negro race, there was surprisingly little overt recognition of the accepted wisdom, the strength, and the impact of his early reasonings. We have already observed some instances (most strikingly and consistently in the articles of Charles Mackay but also notably in the Glasgow Herald and the Scotsman) in which pure Carlylean concepts and attitudes were adopted although at the same time no reference was made to Carlyle himself.[1]

One such standard, straightforward example of the way in which a Scottish commentator could, when required, regurgitate the doctrines and sentiments of the "Occasional Discourse" without feeling obliged to mention Carlyle was afforded by a review article contributed by Archibald Alison, junior, to Blackwood's Magazine in early 1870. To Alison, the political Conservative and the ambitious, dedicated and distinguished soldier and militarist,[2] fell the somewhat unlikely task of reviewing the radical Sir Charles Dilke's Greater Britain. Identifying Dilke as an "advanced Radical", Alison's own politics and career put him instinctively and unshakeably out of sympathy with the author's general hypotheses and specific convictions. Predictably - although conceding that the work was "original", "striking" and "thought-provoking" - he unhesitatingly isolated as the book's

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1 That the Glasgow Herald, at least, did during the Reconstruction era consciously recall the existence and teachings of the "Occasional Discourse" is evidenced by a remark at one stage that Carlyle's reference to the Negro being "improved off the face of the earth" was equally applicable to the American Indians - see Glasgow Herald, 10 Aug., 1867. But apart from the Edinburgh Courant's editorial, the only real, outspoken acknowledgement in the Scottish press of the merits of Carlyle's judgement of the Negro character appeared in the Edinburgh Daily Review's leader on the Jamaican insurrection. Here it was wholeheartedly accepted that Carlyle's view of the Negro as constitutionally lazy, temperamentally sensual, deficient in reflective powers, and largely incapable of independent advancement was indisputably correct - see Daily Review, 17 Nov., 1865.

2 For a biographical note on Alison, see above, Chapter III p.220, fn. 2. At the time when this particular review was written for Blackwood's Magazine, he was on the staff at Aldershot as an assistant adjutant-general.

greatest fault its "simply blind and entire adoration of democracy pure and simple". Dilke, he stated, worshipped democracy, judged everything on its standard, and totally failed to consider that there might be evil as well as good in it. And in Alison's view, at least one major facet of this evil was represented by a "democratic" proposition which Dilke evidently welcomed, namely, the dismantling of the existing employer/employee structure in all spheres of labour. In Greater Britain, it was contended, the author had made it plain that he wished to see the end of the master/servant relationship "in all its guises", and to welcome the advent of a system where everyone was "dead-level" and each working for himself. For Alison, with Carlyle at his back, such a prospective state of affairs was anathema: "To Sir Charles Dilke, this seems the acme of civilisation and progress. To us, it seems a simple relapse into barbarism".[1]

Alison's attitude towards the retention of the separate and distinct status of master and worker by no means comprised the full extent of his affinity with the sentiments expressed in the "Occasional Discourse", however. Much more important, indeed, was the close similarity of his conclusions on the character and conduct of the emancipated Negro with those of Carlyle. It was directly in relation to Dilke's discussion of the condition and prospects of the freedmen in the Southern States of America that Alison offered his own opinions on the universal response of the black race to sudden liberation from the strict regulation and tempo of slave labour.

Finding the section on the United States of America one of the most valuable and interesting parts of Dilke's book, Alison was nevertheless careful to stipulate that the treatment of the Southern States was biased entirely towards the Federal viewpoint. This being so, he discerned that "the Negro question" had "obviously" been "puzzling" to the author: Dilke,

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1 Alison, "Democracy beyond the Seas", p. 220.

it was explained, was clearly very anxious to believe that the Negroes would work, but he had been unable in all conscience even tentatively to assert that he thought they would. Dilke's hesitancy on this score gave Alison the opportunity to hammer home his own beliefs about the intrinsic inability of the Negro race in America and elsewhere to make good use of their freedom.[1]

He took a resignedly dim view of the likelihood of the black population in the South ever elevating itself by application to steady labour, basing his conclusion on the demonstrable fact that the examples of Hayti, Jamaica and Africa itself did not favour such a prospect. Dilke's argument that the Negroes of Barbadoes had made the island prosperous by their industry was quickly demolished by the explanation that in Barbadoes there existed unique circumstances which literally forced the black labourers either to work or to face starvation or emigration. "In similar circumstances the African will always work". On neighbouring islands, however, where waste land was plentiful, the Negro populations, Alison insisted, were utterly irresponsible, improvident and work-shy. The impression which he conveyed of the race in conditions of unrestricted freedom clearly owed much to Carlyle. Hence he stated that wherever the opportunity existed within the West Indies, the Negroes elected to run off into the bush, build a hut, clear a plot, and subsist for a year on a fortnight's work. A major drawback in remedying this situation was the fact that the Negro's needs were so few that there was no real reason for him to work. Money for extras was commonly earned by a few days toil on the estates, but there was no regular, sustained hard labour such as was necessary for successful sugar-cultivation.[2]

Alison's vigorous opposition to the "despotic democracy"[3] of America

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1 Ibid., p.224.

2 Ibid., p. 224

3 Ibid., p. 226

which had violently overpowered the legal right of the Southern cause in the Civil War and which had not scrupled during Reconstruction to "hand over the government of the South to its Helots",[1] almost certainly helped predispose him to look with particular disfavour upon the degree of latitude which during the early post-war years the Radical Republicans in Congress had been prepared to grant the freedmen in the matter of adopting their own approach and practical response to liberty. A predominating political spirit of dangerous, vindictive radicalism,[2] and a recklessly extreme egalitarianism (both commonly judged by its critics to be integral components of the democratic system of government) had, Alison implied, been factors working indirectly but nevertheless potently to encourage and foster the Negroes' unfortunate tendency to mistake liberty for license. The fact that the radical element in the United States could be closely - indeed, exclusively - associated with the unwise policy of cosseting, for its own mercenary purposes, the freed Negroes and thereby inevitably arresting the development of their appreciation of the need for self-reliance, stimulated Alison to emphasize all the more strongly the innate character weaknesses of the race which even in the most favourable circumstances tended to frustrate hopes that Negroes could accomplish independently a successful transition from the paternalism of slavery to the responsibilities of freedom.

By the later stages of Reconstruction, however, observers surveying the American scene did not require to share Archibald Alison's animus towards the principles and practical effects of democratic government in order to subscribe fully as much as he did to basically Carlylean sentiments regarding

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1 Ibid., p. 225.

2 In criticizing Dilke for adhering to a radical outlook which allowed no room for any sympathy whatsoever for the Southern cause, Alison denounced the American Radicals for having pledged themselves after the Civil War to a policy grounded in the abolition of State rights in the conquered section and the establishment of a "slave despotism" in the South, amounting to "an ingenious and cheap method of persecution to the Southern planters". The Radicals' course was likened, in intent and effect, to Russia's contemporary treatment of Poland - see ibid., pp. 225-226.

the conduct of the emancipated American Negroes. As we have repeatedly seen, throughout the early post-war years the attitudes of the ultra-Conservative Blackwood's Magazine (Alison's vehicle) and the radical Aberdeen Free Press towards virtually every aspect of American Reconstruction were poles apart. Yet, despite the Free Press' liberal, enlightened record of consideration for the plight and exceptional circumstances of the freedmen in the Southern States, there nevertheless appeared in the autumn of 1873 a strongly worded editorial which expressed the paper's deep disappointment with the lack of progress achieved by the Negroes in the decade following their liberation, and which openly associated their failure in this respect with inherent and extremely persistent shortcomings in the collective character of the black race throughout the world.

Preceding the editorial comment by several months, however, and perhaps contributing significantly towards encouraging the unfavourable attitude subsequently adopted by the Free Press itself to the behaviour of the freed Negroes, was an adverse account of the black population in the South furnished by yet another agent seeking to recruit Scottish agricultural labour for the United States. Unlike Thomas Affleck writing to the Edinburgh Courant seven years earlier, this particular individual did not concentrate exclusively on attracting workers to one specific Southern State or even to the South in general; rather, it was his concern to list, in a series of articles published in the Aberdeen Free Press, the manifold advantages and opportunities existing in every section of the United States for the thousands of impoverished farm labourers and small-farmers in the agricultural North East of Scotland.

Yet, at the same time, in the agent's recommendations a unique appeal did seem to attach to the ex-Confederate States as a field for prospective Scottish emigrants. The particular attraction of this area was tacitly put across as consisting in the very special conditions obtaining there both as

a result of "the ravages of war" and - most importantly - of the proven inability of the Negroes satisfactorily to adapt to the status of free labourers. Looking in some detail at Virginia, the writer graphically depicted the ruin which had engulfed the old aristocracy of that State consequent upon the Civil War and Negro emancipation, and asserted that the greatest continuing drawback to its material prosperity was the unhappy position of labour. The black freedmen, he indicated, were not naturally hard workers. While they had certainly been "made active by the overseer's lash", once left to themselves, "they have confounded idleness with liberty". It was a grievous misapprehension on the part of the race which in his considered judgement it would take at least a generation to remedy. Nor by any means was such a debilitating social and economic affliction confined to Virginia: throughout the entire South, the article stated, the field hands were thoughtlessly misusing their freedom by working erratically, building "squalid hovels", and scratching a meagre subsistence from cultivating garden patches.[1]

Once again, then, the Negroes' apparent incapacity to appreciate that they had an obligation to make a positive contribution to the society in which they lived by working well and steadily was forcefully deplored. And it was following this lead that the Aberdeen Free Press in mid September expressed precisely the same strain of sentiment in its editorial column. The clear, unequivocal criticism of the nature of the Negro race's response to freedom, hitherto totally absent from the paper's comment on the black population in the United States, may perhaps partly have been inspired at this stage by the general disillusionment felt by the Free Press at the

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1 "Scotch Farmers and American Emigration": article by an unidentified contributor in Aberdeen Free Press, 5 May, 1873.
The article considered here was the fifth in a series run under this heading. It is not clear whether the author of the series was himself an American or a Scot paid to recruit labour for the United States.

continuing inability of the Federal government to bring the Southern States back into a fully normal, satisfactory relationship to the rest of the country. Furthermore, it is conceivable that following the death in 1870 of the paper's radical, sympathetic head, William McCombie, there was a conscious hardening of the editorial line on the character and condition of the free American Negroes.[1]

But whatever the motivating causes of the change in tone on this issue, the leading article certainly demonstrated in no uncertain manner that by the mid 1870s the Aberdeen Free Press, no less than its more Conservative, more blatantly racist contemporaries in the Scottish press, was prepared to apportion a very considerable measure of blame for the protracted miseries and material retardation of the South to the Negroes' chronic indifference to conventional patterns of free labour. Recognizing the obvious fact that one of the most important considerations raised by abolition had been the ultimate effect upon the political and social condition of the Southern States, the Free Press, displaying an altogether startling change of attitude, declared that in that particular regard, "prospects...have never been very encouraging". British experience in the West Indies, it was

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1 So far as the Free Press' attitude to the United States as a whole is concerned, while the admiration and esteem for transatlantic democracy which had so visibly characterized editorial comment during the 1860s largely continued to be a feature of the journal during the next decade (see, for instance, a leader on "The American Centenary Epoch" in ibid., 21 June, 1875) there were nevertheless indications in the later years of Reconstruction of a significant and fairly substantial tendency to highlight and strongly criticize numerous aspects of contemporary American politics and society (see, for example, ibid., 26 Nov., 1871; 25 Aug., 7 Sept., 1874; 6 Nov. 1875; 1 Aug., 9 Nov., 7 Dec., 1876; and especially 21 June, 1872, where an editorial on "Monarchy versus Republicanism" contained an important demonstration of the disenchantment felt towards United States political institutions.)

Succeeding McCombie as editor in 1870 was the paper's former sub-editor, William Alexander - see above, Chapter VI, p. 128, fn. 1.

suggested, had been enough to check too optimistic an estimate of the effect of liberty on the Negroes in America.

> The negro is not by nature an energetic individual; and in his native regions, where nature yields a spontaneous abundance, and where he can get his hunger appeased and his laziness gratified with little trouble, does not concern himself about the comfort or improvement of his condition.[1]

With its total departure from a sanguine outlook towards the prospects for the South's early improvement, and towards the black race's future in the United States, the paper thus adopted an earnest belief that the ills of the South and the generally unhappy circumstances in which the majority of the emancipated Negroes continued to find themselves were largely the consequences of the freedmen's own irresponsible attitude to work. This belief was in its turn based on the essentially racist assumption that the American Negroes' unsatisfactory performance as free labourers was entirely predictable: the race as a whole was considered to be guilty on the grave charge of refusing to accept that steady, conscientious work was in itself a virtue - and an obligatory virtue at that. It had taken "the compulsion of slavery" to quicken the Negro's faculties and make him "a more useful member of society according to Anglo-Saxon notions".

At the same time, however, it was acknowledged that while the black freedmen's failure to constitute a strong, necessary work force was a vital factor hampering the revival of the Southern economy, other influences were also contributing towards the same result, and, indeed, towards checking the general development of a more harmonious and contented society within the South. The manner in which emancipation had been achieved, it was argued, had inevitably produced alienation and even enmity between the two races in the Southern States, thereby curbing the white enterprise, capital, and capabilities so invaluable to the prosperity of the devastated section.

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, "The Negro in the United States", 17 Sept., 1873.

Yet, these difficulties might have been surmounted, the Free Press maintained, had it not been for "gross aggravation" by adventurers from the North. To these was attached all the opprobrium reserved for those who used others for personal political gain; and the carpetbaggers were uniformly denounced as "men who, with the national taste for political corruption, saw by the admission of the negroes to the suffrage and the jealousy between them and their former owners, an excellent opportunity of getting themselves elevated to place and power".[1]

Nothing remained of the Free Press' earlier readiness to believe that at least some of the Republicans of the North were motivated, in their active political intervention on the Negroes' behalf, by aims other than their own political advancement.[2] Yet, while the estrangement between black and white (and therefore the deepening of the South's trials) was held to have been greatly increased by the "disastrous" policy of the carpetbaggers, the onus of blame for the highly unfavourable material and moral condition of the black population in the South could not, in the paper's view, validly be shifted from the freedmen themselves. "The condition of the negroes after eight years of the most complete social and political freedom",it was ruefully announced, "is very far indeed from what it were desirable to see". Substantiating this judgement was a lengthy extract culled from a report by a correspondent of the New York Tribune stationed in New Orleans. In it, the Negroes were represented as the people who had come off worst within the United States from emancipation - a state of affairs deriving from the critical failings in their character

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1 Ibid.

2 It will be recalled that the Aberdeen Free Press was one of the few newspapers in Scotland to support unreservedly the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills, to advocate the early enfranchisement of the Negroes, and to applaud the nature of the Radical Congressmen's objectives in pushing these measures through against a hostile President. See above, Chapters IV, p. 380 ; VI,pp. 130-134.

and in their conduct as free members of society. They had suffered excessively due to lack of energy and a total absence of economic sense which led them to put "childish fancies" before essentials, as well as from steadily increasing ill health and a rising mortality rate largely brought about by lax hygiene and general incompetence in coping with personal and family needs. According to this particular on-the-spot report, even the women and children were amazingly idle, while dishonesty was prevalent and habitual among all sections of the black community.

Disposed to believe that the Tribune's correspondent "seems to be a trustworthy witness", the Aberdeen Free Press, helped by the unflattering opinion which by this time it had independently formed of the Negro race, was fully prepared to endorse this gloomy assessment of the freedmen's position in 1873: "The picture is not a favourable one, but it accords only too well with what was likely to be the case". The paper did also accept, however, the correspondent's conclusion that there were "many respectable Negro families" in the South; and it shared his conviction that once the coloured race as a whole really began to understand the responsibility which fell upon the individual to provide for himself and his dependents, a restoration of peaceful relations between the Negroes and the ex-planters would be perfectly feasible in the future. Yet at the same time the Free Press remained keenly aware of the obstacles blocking an early achievement of harmonious association between the black and white peoples of the Southern States. It cautioned that up until that time, there had been no great progress made towards a satisfactory or permanent adjustment of relations between the two races. And it tacitly indicated that such an adjustment depended in large measure upon the nature of the Negroes' adaptation to freedom.[1]

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, 17 Sept., 1873.

In the considered judgement of the Free Press at that stage, then, (and despite the paper's earlier understanding of the unique difficulties which the freedmen faced) during the first eight years after the Civil War the emancipated slaves had, by virtue of their obviously innate character defects and their general disinclination to assume the responsibilities which accompanied their new status, succeeded not only in inflicting additional sufferings upon themselves but also in frustrating the internal processes necessary in healing the scars of bitterness and distrust in the South.

But it did not require retrospective disappointment with the American Negroes' early response to liberty in order to provide a basis within the press in northern Scotland for the advancement of the notion that the intrinsic shortcomings in the character of the race were directly exacerbating the problems of reconstructing the nation. At the other end of the Reconstruction era, the Inverness Courier, for instance, had lost no time in adopting a distinctly Carlylean attitude towards the freedmen's contribution to moulding the alarmingly unhealthy situation which was seen to exist in early post-war America:

> The negro difficulty in particular grows and changes every day. To the mass of those who were formerly slaves, liberty means idleness; the white soldiers and officials take rough methods of teaching them their mistake, and the negroes, finding that liberty includes work, and does not provide any provision...are miserable and rebellious.[1]

Thus, in the Inverness paper's criticism of the Negroes' general failure to take positive, commendable steps towards adjusting their habits and their mentality for freedom, the major, constant emphasis is yet again seen to be on the race's highly unsatisfactory approach to the question of work. And as will have become evident, in the majority of cases, Scottish

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1 Inverness Courier, 3 Aug., 1865. See also ibid., 17 Aug., 1865; and for a slightly later testimony in the north of Scotland's press to the laziness of the American Negroes, Aberdeen Journal, 3 Nov., 1869.

observers who took a bleak view of the black population's attitude to labour during Reconstruction not only feared but were already largely convinced that it was not merely a transitory attitude, the temporary product of massive practical and psychological problems of adaptation after years of enforced servitude, but an attitude which, because it was natural to the Negro race, would persist through succeeding generations. This realization gave rise to concern over the lamentable wastage of the country's rich natural resources, which trend, having already become visible in the Reconstruction era, seemed bound to intensify as the Negroes continued to show indifference and contempt for wage labour and little or no aptitude, as independent farmers, for cultivating the land satisfactorily.

We have already observed the indignation with which certain Scottish travellers in the South during the early post-war years viewed the sorry, desolate aspect of the arable country there, and the obloquy which they were prepared to shower on the freedmen as the factor primarily responsible for creating such a deplorable state of affairs.[1] Untiring in his efforts to disparage the fundamental character of the Negro race, Charles Mackay had added perspective to contemporary reports of this nature. In his first article on "the Negro question" for Blackwood, published in the magazine in spring, 1866, his intense urge to demonstrate the full extent of the black race's intellectual inability to cope with freedom as conferred on it by the American model prompted him to cite the utter failure which had attended a much earlier attempt to establish the Negroes as self-reliant landowners on United States soil. Employing his knowledge of American history in his customary inimitable fashion, Mackay related how John Randolph, of the famous Randolph family of Roanoke, Virginia had in his will freed his four hundred

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1 See above, pp. 172-175.

slaves and left money for the purchase of land for them in Ohio, to be divided up into forty acre farms, and how the experiment had been an unmitigated failure and disaster.

In Mackay's reckoning, the principal reason for the dismal outcome of the scheme was simply the fact that, left entirely on their own, the Negroes were "very bad agriculturists":

> They found it pleasanter to smoke than to plough, to snooze than to dig. Idle, thriftless, improvident, and careless of the morrow, they speedily reduced themselves to poverty.

Before three years had elapsed, he indicated, over half of them had sold out by foreclosures of mortgages, and within ten years not one proprietor had remained.[1] On Mackay's interpretation, then, even in the eighteenth century sanguine hopes that the slaves, once freed, would prosper as masters of their own smallholdings had been decisively smashed "on account of the natural incapacity of the negro to till the soil except under compulsion".[2]

But it was neither in the incessant vitipurations of Mackay nor in the sporadic contributions to the Scottish newspaper press by Scots visiting the Southern States that the most authoritative Scottish account of the Negroes' general failure as free agriculturists appeared during the Reconstruction era. Unquestionably, this was contained (albeit with modifications) in The Southern States Since the War: 1870-71, the full-length work by the prominent

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1 Mackay, "The Negro and the Negrophilists", p. 594.

2 Ibid., p. 594. There is some indication in this article that in relation to attitudes towards work and personal advancement, Mackay was disposed to consider mulattoes more responsible than full Negroes, the former occasionally "possessing some of the virtues of thrift, prudence, and industry, inherited along with...their white blood" - see ibid., p. 594.

Glaswegian, Robert Somers.[1] Somers' impressively thorough and comprehensive book was well received in Scotland at the time of publication,[2] and notable among those enthusing over it was the strongly liberal, erstwhile pro-Northern Peter Clayden (by this time leader writer and assistant editor of the London Daily News). Reviewing the work in the Edinburgh Review, Clayden referred to the dearth of "inside knowledge" which had been forthcoming from the Southern States after the Civil War and the consequent lack of British understanding of the social and commercial aspects of Reconstruction. Somers' book was accordingly welcomed as the most complete account of the condition and prospects of the South to emerge in the early post-war years, and Clayden implicitly approved of its general conclusions by judging its author a man very well qualified to write on the subject, being "a businessman thoroughly acquainted with the cotton trade, and very conversant with all questions of labour, production, capital and culture".[3]

Robert Somers probably deserved the compliment which Clayden chose to pay him. A competent journalist of some twenty-five years standing who had spent a decade as editor of the influential North British Daily Mail and who, when he set off on his American trip, had only just relinquished the editorship

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1 Examination of the files of the Glasgow Herald for the period 24 November, 1870 to 26 August, 1871 yielded the interesting discovery that the information published in Somers' book was in fact initially communicated by him to the Herald in a long series of detailed reports, which appeared regularly in the paper's columns under the heading"The Southern States under Reconstruction". The writer's name was not divulged, the articles being credited to "a special correspondent". But comparison of the dated itinerary recorded by Somers in the book with that given in the various instalments of the series, and the identical content and phraseology, afford conclusive proof that the Herald reports were written by Somers. The book is, indeed, basically these articles brought together, with little alteration or addition. No statement to this effect is made in the Preface, however; rather, Somers somewhat enigmatically declared that "to explain how it came to be written would lead only to personal details of no interest to the reader" - Somers, The Southern States, p. v.

2 Posterity has also been kind to The Southern States Since the War: the Dictionary of National Biography in its entry on Somers, for instance, paid tribute to it as "a work of considerable research" - see DNB, Vol.53, p. 229.

3 Clayden, review of The Southern States Since the War: 1870-71 in Edinburgh Review, Vol. 136, Aug.-Oct., 1872, pp. 153, 148.

of Glasgow's Morning Journal, he had early been actively interested in British social and political issues, and over the years had also given sufficient skilled attention to financial and commercial questions to become a recognized authority in these spheres.[1] Thus accustomed to the discipline of setting forth his views lucidly, and of marshalling and arranging his aims, facts and conclusions in a systematic, purposeful manner, he devoted the introductory chapter of his book to a careful definition of the precise subjects and scope of the enquiry which he had undertaken in the post-war South.

The essential purpose of his effort, Somers indicated, was simply "to give some account of ...[the] condition [of the Southern States] under the new social and political system introduced by the civil war", and to this end he had concentrated on collecting "such notes of the progress of their cotton plantations, of the state of their labouring population and of their industrial enterprises, as may help the reader to a safe opinion of their means and prospects of development".[2] Clearly, then, Somers' self-imposed terms of reference for the enquiry into the current condition and future prospects of the South involved both directly and indirectly a close investigation of the nature of the Negroes' performance as free labourers and agriculturists. As we shall see, Somers himself fully appreciated the critical importance of this pivotal factor, believing as he did that the production of cotton was, and would continue to be, the indispensable staple industry of the Southern States.

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1 For a fuller biographical note on Somers, see appendix I.

2 Somers, The Southern States p. 1. An ancillary intention of Somers was to relay information regarding natural resources, public works, and so forth which would be relevant to those looking to the South as a potential field for increased immigration and foreign trade - ibid., p. 1.

While earnestly stressing that he had no intention of seeking to influence the current price of cotton or to speculate on the prospective yields in the South during the coming years, Somers' own personal interest in and knowledge of the cotton market induced him not only to fix a particularly keen focus on the state and prospects of cotton culture in the South but also to approach the problems and developments which he encountered in that industry from a firm, preconceived standpoint. The kernel of his attitude towards the sustained production of Southern cotton was contained in his conviction that in this specific field of commerce there existed a vital interdependence between Britain and the Southern States. Having adduced statistics to back up the statement, he flatly claimed that "[t]he cotton trade of the United Kingdom leans to American cotton" - and this despite the alternative sources which had of necessity been tapped during the Civil War. Conversely, it was "only through the instrumentality of the cotton manufacturers of England and Scotland" that the South could hope to restore and increase its prosperity: "It is the United Kingdom which has its hand on the fabrics, the markets, and all the mechanical, artistic, and commercial resources by which the produce of the Southern plantations can find a profitable outlet".[1]

As Somers saw it, in order for this mutually advantageous transatlantic commerce to flourish as it should in the immediate future, two crucial prerequisites obtained. These were a substantial increase in cotton production by Southern growers, and a reduction - or at least a stabilization - of costs to British manufacturers. And in mooting these points, Somers necessarily entered the sphere of consideration and analysis of current production and labour efficiency in the South. He recognized clearly the forces which dictated the future, no less than the contemporary, state of the cotton trade

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1 Ibid., p.3 .

between Britain and the United States:

> The question of a larger supply and lower prices of cotton resolves itself practically into a question of greater skill of culture, greater efficiency and economy of labour, better handling in all respects of the whole agricultural resources of farms and plantations, whereby the necessary profit may accrue from the larger quantity of cotton produced at the same cost.[1]

Somers' emphasis on the paramount need for progressive, highly skilled production and business techniques and a thoroughly active, competent labour force in refurbishing the fortunes of the Southern cotton industry is of especial importance in this context because from the very outset, he sought to elaborate upon the nature of the work force which he had in mind, and to state the peculiar problems and unanswered questions attaching to it. Consideration of the existing state and the potential of "the labouring population" in the South meant quite simply an assessment of the emancipated Negroes' progress in satisfactorily adjusting to free labour during the first five years after the Civil War, and (largely on the basis of this) speculation upon the likely rate of their future advancement and the direction which labour relations between the two races might most profitably take.

Somers, it is clear, was not only completely convinced of the absolute indispensability of Negro labour to the future prosperity of the Southern plantations but was also fully aware of the importance and magnitude of the essential task of attempting to discover the prevailing ethos among the black workers and to estimate whether current attitudes towards work were likely to persist in succeeding years. He was, moreover, simultaneously prepared to recognize that as well as exacerbating the commercial problems of the South, the emancipation proclamation had created a situation fraught with "a moral significance of the highest human interest". Declaring that "The emancipation of four millions of Negro slaves is in itself a revolution of which the world has

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1 Ibid., p.2.

seldom seen the like", he respectfully added that "in contemplating such an event one is raised above commercial interests to the borders of the divine and the religious in human destiny".[1]

Perhaps Somers judged it impolitic (if not somewhat unethical) to bombard his readers with a mass of information about the freedmen's contribution to the economic wellbeing of the South and about the imperative need to make free Negro labour profitable without giving at least some passing indication that he did also appreciate the "higher issues" connected with the liberation of the American slaves. Certainly, he felt obliged to pause and acknowledge that other questions just as basic and as important as the commercial future of the Southern States and the Negroes' role in moulding it had been raised by emancipation. But, at the same time, he remained unabashed in insisting that for the purposes of his own purely commercial enquiry, concerned as it was with examining economic conditions in the South, the character of the black population's transition to freedom was of the utmost importance. With considerable facility, he demonstrated at the outset both his appreciation of the wide ramifications of Negro emancipation, and his strong conviction that the future of the South was largely dependent on the ultimate attitude adopted by the majority of the freedmen towards work:

> To observe the effect of such a total change of personal standing and social relations on the character, the industry, the sense of responsibility, and general habits of the negroes - how well or ill they adapt themselves to their new conditions of life, and whether they are likely, as free people, to rise in dignity and prosperity, or to stumble downward into deeper physical and social degradation - must be acknowledged to be a matter of more than merely commercial interest. Yet, in such a line of inquiry, there is obviously the key to the immediate future industrial condition of the Southern States. In its economic bearings, it is the question of the relative value and efficiency of slave and free labour in the South, with negroes as the labourers, so often contested in theory, but now put to the test of practical experiment.[2]

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1 Ibid., p. 4

2 Ibid., p. 4. Emphasis added.

While he obviously considered the Negroes' use of freedom to be the most important practical question at issue, it should be noted that Somers, however, in identifying the factors shaping the economic condition of the South, also attached much significance to the temper and spirit of the white plantation owners. From that section of the community, he decided, it was necessary to see "a course of fresh energy and enterprise", the discarding of all "lethargy and despondency", and an enthusiastic effort to rebuild the South's prosperity through improvements in cultivation and labour systems.[1] Recognition was also made of the effect of Federal legislation - most especially with regard to the tariff and taxation - on the state and structure of the Southern economy during Reconstruction.[2]

The remarkably thorough nature of Somers' enquiry, whereby eight ex-Confederate States were visited[3] and every major facet of their existing economic framework, as well as their commercial prospects, painstakingly and exhaustively scrutinized, did not lend itself to sweeping general conclusions on the overall state of affairs of the South in 1870-1. Inevitably, the depth in which he conducted his investigation yielded ample information both of a kind which indicated that the South was experiencing a steady, vigorous revival in fortunes - her economy recovering healthily and her prospects cautiously bright, and of a completely conflicting character, which suggested that the states of the defeated Confederacy were still in too many instances languishing hopelessly, unable to master the difficulties of recouping the material losses inflicted upon them by the Civil War.

Evidence tending to nurture the latter point of view was of course most plainly presented for Somers (as for other Scottish travellers less

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1 Ibid. p. 4

2 Ibid. pp. 4-5.

3 These were Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee.

capable than he of making balanced, sophisticated assessments of the South's real condition and prospects) in the visible ruin and devastation which still, after five years, remained in disturbing abundance, scarring the fertile lands of the South. Representative of the scenes of desolation which he frequently encountered throughout the Southern States were those which he observed as obtaining along the northern frontier of Alabama, in the Valley of Tennessee. For the most part, Somers did in fact tend to refer fairly briefly to the most strikingly dismal aspect of a South which naturally still bore across its landscape grim reminders of the wastage and total economic disruption incurred by war. With regard to this particular region, however, he chose to furnish a relatively more detailed description of the lamentable waste of resources which he found.

It may have been that the Tennessee Valley was singled out for special attention in this respect because it presented a particularly harrowing picture for Somers. Immensely impressed by the scenic beauty and the abundance of water, his enthusiasm over the agricultural potential of the area was total: to the agriculturist, he declared, it offered itself "simply as 'a land of Goshen' where every product of the soil may be grown and cultivated with rare success".[1] The future of cotton cultivation he did, however, represent as being in the balance, attributing the uncertainty largely to the valley's position as an old border area capable of producing relatively less per acre than the newer lands of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas. But while natural circumstances of change and progress could thus validly be held accountable for any future decline in the cotton production of this fertile region, there is nevertheless a strong indication that Somers also felt an irresistable inclination to believe that the Civil War and its aftermath had contributed very significantly to lessening its

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1 Ibid., p. 113.

chances of ever again securing worthwhile returns from cotton crops.

> An inspection of this valley does not at first view convey a very flattering impression of the regular and progressive extension of cotton cultivation. It consists for the most part of plantations in a state of semi-ruin, and plantations of which the ruin is for the present total and complete. They are mostly large plantations, 2,000 acres in extent or thereabouts... The trail of war is visible throughout the valley in burnt-up gin houses, ruined bridges, mills and factories, of which latter the gable walls only are left standing, and in large tracts of once cultivated land stripped of every vestige of fencing. The roads, long neglected, are in disorder, and hav[e] ...in many places become impassable...Borne down by losses, debts, and accumulating taxes, many who were once the richest among... [the old families] have disappeared from the scene, and few have yet risen to take their places.[1]

Although acknowledging that "many valiant efforts" had been made since the war to "stay the advancing tide of barrenness and ruin", Somers regretfully concluded that even where rebuilding and reorganization were at their best, restoration was still sadly incomplete: "a plantation, however firmly held and actively cultivated, has seldom more than one-third of its good arable soil in crop or grass, the balance being abandoned to broomsedge - a tall, grassy weed, which waves...over immense sweeps of this fertile valley".[2] The chief immediate causes of "this wide-spreading inutility of soil" were in his view the lack of means of effective ploughing, and most significantly, the want of labour. "There is", he stated, "a marked deficiency of labour in the valley for the cultivation and improvements which the planters would otherwise be willing and prepared to undertake."[3] And he was quick to attribute the rise of this situation to the irresponsible conduct of the black population, as it had been manifested initially in the evidently foolhardy decision by many of the young, able-bodied Negroes to follow the Federal armies to the war, and latterly in the "swarms" of freed slaves who

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1 Ibid., p. 114.

2 Ibid., p. 115.

3 Ibid., p. 115.

in the early years of Reconstruction had wandered off to seek new masters and were only gradually returning to "their old homes" after bitter disillusionment.[1]

While the description of the existing condition of the Tennessee Valley was probably the most gloomy report on the process of Southern restoration in the entire book,[2] scattered references to the essentially slow rate of real progress which was often being made in reviving the South were certainly not lacking,[3] and frequently these contained pertinent allusions to the basically unsatisfactory nature of the Negroes' response to freedom. More attention will presently be given to Somers' attitude towards the black population's conduct as free labourers and agriculturists, that factor which, as we have already seen, he regarded as so extremely vital to the future of the Southern States. It is necessary at this stage to mention, however, that Somers was also fully aware that there were elements other than the legacy of material ruin left by the war and the feckless character of the freed Negroes tending seriously to impede the process of Southern economic restoration.

With characteristic precision, he listed under three heads the current grievances which deeply affected the commercial prosperity of the South and which, coincidentally, were all remediable by the Federal government. These were the tariff; deficiency of capital; and "excessive taxation with misgovernment."[4] Of the three, the brunt of his attack was directed against the tariff, which he emotively denounced as an invidious instrument pandering to "the lust of protection, misdirecting and perverting all... [America's] great commercial and political energies, and making Republican

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1 Ibid., p. 115.

2 Even here, however, there were extremely important modifications to his gloomy view of the region - see below pp. 214-215.

3 See, for instance, ibid., pp. 142, 163, 166, 179, 239; and passim.

4 Ibid., p. 204

institutions themselves a hollow sham and imposture as regards true material development."[1] Lambasting the North for its stubborn adherence to protectionist policies, Somers accused the United States of being "anti-commercial" and of lowering its own international prestige.[2]

From this vehement indictment the South was, of course, excluded. The Southern people, who had long suffered deeply from the system, and who were "ground under it still", had "no sympathy with the suicidal and incomprehensible follies of tariff legislation".[3] On the contrary, with but one exception, there was "no interest of any account in the South which enjoys its so-called protection, while it robs and maims all interests in the South, giving every Southern man a direct blow in the face...and falling in its totality... like a sledge-hammer on the whole Southern region, with a cruelty of oppression enough to 'raise the stones of mutiny' among any people less loyally American than the Southern people appear to have always been".[4] Added to this evil were the only marginally less damaging and restrictive spectres of capital deficiency and excessive taxation.[5]

These features,plus the widespread imperfections which he detected in the system of free Negro labour as then constituted, clearly represented for Somers a fairly powerful cumulative force operating to retard and frustrate the sensitive process of steadily rebuilding and developing the shattered

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1 Ibid., p. 185.

2 "[T]his tariff-enmity to reciprocity of trade - this narrow, exclusive and self-degrading war of the American Republic against foreign commodities, seems", he declared, "in the light of economic science shining so brightly everywhere else, to obscure and dwarf its otherwise resplendent greatness" - ibid., p. 205.

3 Ibid., p. 185.

4 Ibid., pp. 205-206. "The tariff of the United States", Somers witheringly remarked, "is arranged alphabetically, and is nearly as large as a Johnson's or a Walker's Dictionary" - ibid., p. 205. For further references to the inimical effect of the tariff on the Southern economy see ibid., pp. 132-133, 137, 234-235, 260-261, 283.

5 These factors are discussed in ibid., pp. 209-213.

Southern economy. Furthermore, there is some suggestion that he was not completely satisfied that the white Southern agriculturists, even allowing for the massive, formidable difficulties with which they were faced, were always doing all within their (necessarily limited) powers to extract the maximum financial returns from their lands. Certainly, his "concluding remarks" tended to reflect such an impression, as well as carrying undertones of protest against those factors actively working to check the rate of the Southern recovery. Thus, one of the principal conclusions which he drew from his extensive investigation was the imperative need for more diversification of agriculture in the South.[1] It was clearly with some consternation that he noted the continuing trend among Southern planters to modify their agriculture only to the extent of growing smaller or larger proportions of corn or cotton, as the market demanded:

> Yet this goes but a small way towards a satisfactory condition of agrarian industry: the farms require to be more abundantly stocked, and to be made the arena of a more varied husbandry, in order to supply the loss of former profit arising from the abolition of slave property, in order even to give desirable permanence and success to the culture of cotton; and hence the revolution in the South, though the vast changes it had made are in full and so far hopeful progress, cannot be said to have spent its force or to have reached a complete or durable settlement.[2]

Yet, as the latter part of this remark reveals, despite the many serious drawbacks and difficulties - both material and psychological- which he found to be hindering the progress of the South, Somers was by no means unduly pessimistic about the future of the States which he visited. In every one of these, indeed, he discovered healthy signs of a considerable economic and commercial revival, as well as frequently encountering a heartening spirit of hope and action among those sections of the white community most

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1 This is a theme which does in fact run through the whole of Somers' book.

2 Ibid., p. 280.

instrumental in spearheading the Southern resurgence. And even where the deep suffering and grief engendered by the war was still most palpably evident, a very respectable degree of material restoration had been undertaken and continued to be carried on.

Thus, in Richmond, Virginia, he was moved to comment that " A sober sadness may be described as the prevailing mood of the people". Noticeably, however, great sorrow had not produced the enervation of despair:

> There is no dejection, no loss of honourable pride, and little repining at the bitter consequences of the war, but a resolve, ... deeply felt[,]...not only to accept the situation, but to turn it to account of improvement, and to build up anew the prosperity of the old Commonwealth, which the Virginians love with an ardour and a faith in the future hardly credible in a community so greatly shattered...[1]

In practical terms, this spirit manifested itself in such highly successful ventures as the city's ironworks, completely reconstituted after the war but already operating, by 1870, on an impressive scale, and in the growing interest shown by farmers in artificial manures, this testifying to the attention being directed towards soil improvement and to a general revival of agricultural enterprise in the State.[2] Even while recognizing the tremendous dislocation existing within Virginia at that time as a result of the massive acreage of land thrown on the market by impoverished white proprietors,[3] and the fact that the State, "crippled by years of devastating war", was "needing supremely every natural facility in the cultivation of her soil and the increase of her wealth and produce",[4] the marvellously rich natural resources and the generally promising aspect of agriculture led Somers to conclude that "It seems only a nightmare, or some hideous misunderstanding, or unaccountable

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1 Ibid., pp. 15-16.

2 See ibid., p. 15.

3 See ibid., pp. 21-23.

4 Ibid., p. 19.

caprice of evil fortune, that can retard the progress of Virginia to prosperity and wealth greater and more substantial than she has known at any former period".[1]

Moving on through North Carolina, he was again encouraged by tangible signs of progress and development in the agricultural and commercial spheres.[2] But if he had been favourably struck by the pace of restoration in Richmond, Virginia, he was more than equally impressed by the achievements of a parallel process in Charleston, South Carolina. In his personal estimation, "Never had a completer ruin fallen upon any city than fell upon Charleston in the years from 1860 to 1865".[3] Yet, although the town clearly still had "much to recover", in Somers' view the spirit and energetic endeavour of the white South Carolinians had in the space of five years following the end of hostilities worked an astonishing improvement in its economic life and prospects:

> Seldom, with a deeper ruin of the old, has there been a more hopeless chaos out of which to construct a new order of things than Charleston presented in those early post-war days. Yet the process of amelioration has year by year been going steadily forward. Many of the old merchants of the city, and many active agents of exchange, both new and old, have come to put the wheels of trade once more in motion. Some of the old planters have also survived, and are seen, though in diminished numbers and with saddened countenances, yet with the steady fire of Anglo-Saxon courage in their eyes, attending to affairs like men determined to conquer fortune even in the depths of ruin and on the brink of the grave...The quays and wharves are busy; new ones...have been built...; the cotton presses are again at work; lorries laden with the staple products of the interior pour the livelong day along the streets towards the river; revival is extending from the business parts of the town to the quiet quarters of private residence...[4]

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1 Ibid., p. 26

2 He found both the extent and "the fervour and energy" of cotton cultivation in North Carolina much greater than he had expected to find in an area situated on the northern fringe of the Cotton Belt - see ibid., p. 30. And in Wilmington, the chief port of the State, he noted "a great number of intelligent, energetic and honourable men" who were prepared to develop the commercial capacity of the town - ibid., p. 32.

3 Ibid., p. 37 .

4 Ibid., p. 38.

In contemplating the aspect and mood of Charleston and the surrounding area, Somers could only marvel that "affairs should already be so lively, so hopeful and elastic, as they everywhere appear".[1] Yet, so far as the character of his observations are concerned, his remark might have been made in relation to each of the several States through which he travelled. In Georgia, for instance, as well as paying tribute to the exceptional post-war exertions of the population in restoring and extending the State's large railway network,[2] he was also able to record with satisfaction that the important commercial centre of Savannah had progressed steadily after the war and was continuing to flourish ("the force and elasticity of rapidly-expanding trade are carrying Savannah successfully over all impediments "[3]). And in the vital sphere of cotton cultivation, he made the agreeable discovery that "[a] great revolution in agriculture is going forward... throughout the whole of Georgia". This was characterized by such salutary features as increased lively discussion and interchange of views on methods of crop improvement and on general agricultural topics, and the establishment of Agricultural Societies and periodicals designed to stimulate and promote the atmosphere of co-operation and enquiry.[4]

Significantly, even with regard to the Valley of the Tennessee in Alabama, the region which, as we have seen, presented a particularly disheartening scene for Somers, there was seen to be room for optimism regarding the future. Behind all the difficulties, he believed that there

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1 Ibid., p. 41. He was most forcefully struck by the fact that not only young men but also "men of advanced life" were energetically applying themselves to business problems in the State.

2 See ibid., pp. 86-91.

3 Ibid., p. 74.

4 Ibid., p. 64. Somers detected in Georgia a "strong feeling of the necessity of bringing intelligence and an active spirit of improvement to bear on the management of plantations" which in pre-war times had for generations "drag[ged] along" with slave labour and overseers.

was "an undergrowth of wholesome influences at work that promise ultimately a great revival and deliverance".[1] Not least among these were the confidence and abundant energies of the old planters' sons, prepared as they were to "cast...all the past behind them", and the new role as substantial cotton producers assumed by the poor whites in the hilly districts.[2] And in this area too, Somers found methods of agricultural improvement being "discussed with animation in society and in the newspapers" and he was willing to pronounce that once a greatly modified system of agriculture had been adopted, the Tennessee Valley would "find its way at no distant time to new prosperity and fruitfulness".[3]

Nor was Somers' general impression of Louisiana - dominated as it was by his concentration on the condition of New Orleans - especially gloomy. Having with his usual thoroughness investigated the state of commerce in New Orleans, he was once again amazed at the rapidity with which the Southern city, like so many Southern towns and cities, had succeeded in re-establishing its business and a measure of its prosperity. With only half the season gone, already that year 850,000 bales of cotton had been landed on the levee, he indicated. And although neither the sugar nor tobacco market had made very satisfactory progress after the war, the State's production of rice had rapidly increased.[4] Echoing the commercial resurgence of New Orleans, and likewise reflecting the rate of regeneration of cotton production in the rural areas which used it as a market, was Memphis, Tennessee. There, Somers observed, receipts of cotton for the

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1 Ibid., p. 116.

2 Ibid., pp. 116-117

3 Ibid., p. 117

4 Ibid., pp. 197-200. Somers made it clear that he held the United States tariff policy and the wartime destruction of New Orleans' mercantile and banking capital primarily responsible for hampering its post-war progress in all branches of trade.

current season when he was there had shown an increase of 81% over receipts at the same period the previous year.[1]

Playing its part - and an absolutely vital part at that - in fashioning the actual conditions which helped Somers to build up his complex, composite picture of a South where economic stagnation and retardation were counterbalanced by nascent economic development and prosperity was, of course, the nature of the Southern Negroes' conduct after freedom. Since Somers' view of the condition of the Southern economy in 1870-71 was neither unduly adverse nor totally sanguine, it might reasonably be expected that his attitude towards the related question of the freedmen's response to liberty would reflect something of this wider flexibility of outlook. And to some extent such was, indeed, the case.

Implicit in Somers' own reasoning regarding the importance of free Negro labour to the South was the assumption that a substantial improvement in the material prosperity of the individual Southern States could hardly be achieved without a corresponding satisfactory disposition to work on the part of at least some proportion of the black population. Accordingly, encountering on his travels many signs of gradual, real restoration, he clearly could not afford to be consistently condemnatory in his estimation of the Negro freedmen. Nor, in fact, did his own observations incline him to form any such sweeping conclusion.. At an early stage of his tour, in the north-eastern pine forest region of North Carolina, he had come across "negroes and other small cultivators" settled on many of the clearings in the forest who, he decided, "have not yet the art or the means either of

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1 Ibid., p. 259
Of all the Southern States which Somers visited, Mississippi would seem to have created the least favourable impression on him. No specific examples of enterprise or particularly creditable post-war achievement were recorded in relation to the State: on the contrary, he found its material condition "by no means satisfactory" and, despite "an annual progress from the desolation of 1865", judged that Mississippi was "much poorer and wilder" in 1870 than it had been before the war - ibid., pp. 253, 234-257.

growing or picking their cotton well". Yet at the same time, he was forced to remark approvingly that "several negro lots have come under my observation which are little models of industry and improvement, from the cottage outward".[1]

Still more substantial proof of the freedmen's capacity for advancement and enterprise was afforded him by the encouraging progress of a section of South Carolina's black community. In this connection, he did not hesitate to offer a clear, straightforward opinion:

> That the negroes are improving, and many of them rising under freedom into a very comfortable and civilised condition, is not only admitted in all the upper circles of society, but would strike even a transient wayfarer like myself in the great number of decent coloured men of the labouring class and of happy coloured families that one meets.[2]

In arriving at his own favourable assessment of the prevailing character of the South Carolinian Negroes, he had been especially impressed by the healthy state of deposits in the Freedmen's Savings Bank in Charleston. Indicating that the accounts held at the Charleston branch amounted to £165,000 at the end of October, 1870 - a sum "monthly on the increase" - Somers found it "gratifying" that in Freedmen's Savings Banks throughout the South, "the negroes have in five years accumulated nearly half a million sterling of deposits".[3] With the Charleston bank alone boasting something in the nature of 2,500 Negro depositors, Somers, with his deep interest in and extensive understanding of monetary matters, could only conclude that "While some portion of the former slaves are probably sinking into an even worse condition than...[at] first, there are others who are clearly rising, both morally and socially. The system of free labour, as was to be expected, will thus, in its own rough but salutary way, sift the chaff from the wheat".[4]

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1 Ibid., p. 29.

2 Ibid., p. 54.

3 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

4 Ibid., p. 55.

Although therefore fully prepared to acknowledge specific instances of Negro industry, thrift, or general responsibility which he himself had encountered Somers, when offering favourable comment on the black race's conduct and progress after freedom, was for the most part, however, strongly inclined to rely on the testimony of "candid and substantial"[1] Southern whites. The policy was after all valid enough, and totally in keeping with the penetrating and thorough character of Somers' enquiry. Clearly, the carefully considered assessments of planters and other men of influence whose association with the Negroes stretched back over the years could be seen to carry more weight than the necessarily superficial and hastily formed impressions of a "transient wayfarer", and were thus bound to lend additional depth to the investigation.

At the outset of his journeyings, in Virginia, he was given a foretaste of the view which he was to find recurrent throughout the South. In consultation with "effective employers" both in Richmond's manufacturing works and on the farms and plantations, the general opinion had been, he related, that the Negroes would work readily when regularly paid.[2] In South Carolina, this judgement had been carried one stage further by the State Treasurer, Mr. Parker, who informed Somers that free Negro labour was proving more efficient than slave labour.[3] He reported that a broadly similar frame of mind existed among other leading whites in the States:

> There is little or no disparagement of the Negro as a labourer among respectable countrymen, who need his services and employ him. On the contrary, there is much appreciation of his good qualities, a good deal of kindly patience towards his bad qualities, and much greater satisfaction with what he has done and may yet be trained to do, as a free labourer, than one might be prepared to find.[4]

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1 See ibid., p.30

2 Ibid., p.17

3 Ibid., pp. 58-59.

4 Ibid., p.60.

Spokesmen for the neighbouring State of North Carolina had impressed upon him that while a more steady supply of efficient labourers would be welcome, the Negroes were doing much better than had been expected before emancipation;[1] and from Georgia, he was obliged to conclude that "public opinion is well reconciled to free labour", the planters generally having declared that the freedmen had recently worked more steadily than at any time since the introduction of free labour, and that their labour was absolutely indispensable.[2]

By the end of his enquiry, Somers was left in no doubt about the prevalent attitude of the white employers of the South towards the free Negro worker. "The system of free labour", he stated in his concluding remarks, "has been attended with a degree of success to which the planters themselves are the most forward of all in the Southern community to bear testimony...[A]part from...[the]vexed question of politics,...I can scarcely recall an instance in which a planter or other employer of Negro labour has not said that the result of emancipation, in all its industrial bearings, has been much more favourable than could have been anticipated, or who had not added an expression of satisfaction that slavery...has been finally effaced".[3] The impressive unanimity of Southern white opinion on this issue, however, was not in itself enough to convince or persuade Somers of the essentially satisfactory operation of the free labour system as established in the post-war South. On the contrary, his own keen, critical observations of the general economic situation in these States led him in the end to disagree markedly with the conclusions of the experienced men whose views he had canvassed.

Arguing from the premise that an unhealthy competition had arisen in

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1 Ibid., p. 30.

2 Ibid., p.76; see also ibid., p. 84.

3 Ibid., p. 280.

cotton cultivation between the larger plantations employing a Negro work force, and the smaller holdings farmed with a minimum of Negro labour, Somers went on to dispute the Southern planters' basic assertion that free Negro labour had proved itself more efficient than slave labour because, even despite Negro mortality in the war and the post-war loss of Negro women and children as field workers, the crops were still commensurate with those of pre-war days. To Somers, such an argument was "superficial", failing as it did to recognize both that most plantations had not in fact reached earlier levels of cotton production, and that the total cotton yield of the Reconstruction South was substantially boosted by "the great number of small white farmers" who had never before grown cotton on any significant scale. It was, indeed, his fixed contention that "the larger proportion of the annual expansion of the cotton crop since the war is due to the energy, on small farms, in gardens, and in crops taken on waste and unoccupied plantations, of white labour", and he believed it to be "a misapprehension to take the cotton crop now as the product of Negro labour in the same sense as it was before the war".[1]

But it was not merely on the basis of depreciating the black freedmen's role in contributing to crop expansions in the South that Somers showed himself to be more sceptical than the Southerners themselves about Negro efficiency after freedom. "[P]roceeding on my own observation" he declared "the introduction of free labour in the Southern States has been bound up with such novel relations betwixt employer and employed, in particular the payment of the field-labourers by one-half the produce of the land, that...I have had the greatest difficulty in attempting to reconcile then with any sound principle".[2]

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1 Ibid., pp. 272-273.

2 Ibid., p. 280. Emphasis added.

The crux of his uneasiness about the entire Southern agricultural system and the Negroes' place in it in fact centred largely around his strong antipathy to the institution of share-cropping and to the Negroes' flagrant abuse - both consciously and unconsciously - and lack of appreciation of its principles of operation.

Somers was certainly not unaware of the effort involved in running against the tide of experienced Southern opinion,[1] yet so totally convinced was he of the extreme unsuitability - the extreme folly and failure, even - of share-cropping that he did not hesitate to offer a vigorous, persistent denunciation of it. In his view, the system, both in its conception and in its practical application, was an unqualified curse to the agricultural economy of the South. Essentially, "the existing pact of capital and labour on the Southern cotton plantations partakes of the largest communism probably ever attempted in any part of the civilized world";[2] and while this circumstance was enough to render it immediately suspect, its unattractiveness was greatly heightened by the fact that share-cropping was seen to be in no sense an adjusted system, with fixed rules regarding division of profits and losses which were fully understood and obeyed by labourers and planters alike. To understand the nature of Somers' basic objection to the Southerners' chosen method, it is necessary yet again to quote him at some length:

> While payment by share of the crops affords the careful and hard working labourer an opportunity of doing well, in which his employer participates, it tends to introduce a confusion of sense as regards right and duty, and an uncertainty and fluctuation of reward for labour, that are more likely to be adverse than favourable to the formation of steady industrious habits among a race so lately freed from the most absolute dependence. The few Negroes who are wise enough to thrive

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1 See ibid., p. 281.

2 Ibid., p. 249.

> under this system take advantage of the abundance of land to rent and crop for themselves, while the planter is left to struggle with the mass who abuse the opportunities and privileges they possess; so that the worst results of the system are apt to be reproduced, if not aggravated, from year to year on the great majority of farms.[1]

Clearly, Somers was much concerned not only about the actual deleterious effect which share-cropping as practised in the South was having upon agricultural development, but also about the way in which it was hindering the emergence among the Negro population of more responsible attitudes towards free labour and the utilization of the country's natural resources. This latter facet of the situation was given early consideration and most forcefully expounded in the course of his analysis of agricultural conditions in South Carolina. In that State, it will be recalled, he heard much favourable testimony on the general nature of the freedmen's transition from slavery.[2] Nevertheless, recognizing that the relative advantages and disadvantages of share-cropping and wage labour did constitute an important ground for discussion among South Carolinian planters, he was not deterred from propounding his own decided preference for payment in wages and simultaneously condemning the positively evil effect which he believed sharing the crop tended to have on the Negroes' still imperfectly developed sense of responsibility and self-reliance.

For in Somers' opinion, a major fault of the share system was that

> it renders the negro indifferent to and reluctant to perform any kind of work on a plantation which does not bear immediately on the corn and cotton crops in which he has a share. A planter who cultivates on the share system must see his fences falling out of order, his manure heaps a diminishing quantity, and his hogs and cattle strayed, stolen, or starved; or, resorting to the wages system after all, must employ special hands to do these and other kinds of farm work.[3]

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1 Ibid., p. 281.

2 See above, p. 218.

3 Somers, The Southern States, p. 60.

Obviously, Somers' vision of the essential future diversification of agricultural activities on the plantations stood to be seriously retarded so long as such a narrow attitude was tolerated and perpetuated among the black labourers. Nor was there seen to be any stimulus within the system for increasing the Negroes' appreciation of the virtue of thrift and of the necessity of using money wisely. On the contrary, the planters' practice of allocating to the Negro share-croppers rations along with a proportion of the crop inevitably led to reckless waste and improvidence on the part of the untutored freedmen, and eventually to heavy indebtedness to their employers.[1]

In Somers' view, therefore, the share-cropping system critically restricted the process of inculcating habits of responsibility and self-reliance into the emancipated slaves by affording undue scope for the Negroes to concentrate selfishly on pursuing merely their own economic wellbeing and by frequently preserving in a very real degree their economic dependence upon the planter. It was, he eventually declared, "more like a half-way slavery than any relation to capital and labour of an advanced type".[2] In reaching this conclusion, he was evidently influenced also by the conviction that the free Negro labourer was being pressed almost without choice into a system which he could not possibly be expected to understand, and which, when it failed to provide him with satisfactory returns for his work, would cause him to believe that he had been fraudulently or unjustly treated. The attendant disappointments, confusions and discontents aroused among the black population made it clearly undesirable, according to Somers' slant on the situation, that the freedmen should be "dragged, at his present stage of progress, into all the ups and downs of cotton speculation".[3]

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1 Ibid., p.60. See also ibid., pp. 241-243 where Somers describes in some detail the additional temptations and pressures exerted on the share-cropping Negroes of Mississippi (where part payment in rations was most prevalent) by unscrupulous plantation storekeepers.

2 Ibid., p. 281.

3 Ibid., p. 31.

Helping to mould Somers' objection to share-cropping, there was thus a conscious awareness that as a method of formalizing the labour relationship between planter and worker in the post-war South, it had the unhappy effect of offering no solid incentives for the Negroes to adopt new habits of sustained industry beneficial to Southern society as a whole, or to cultivate a more sophisticated, responsible approach towards domestic economy. At the same time, however, in order to understand the complete nature of his denunciation of the system, it is vital to realise that in Somers' view, the measure of the failure of share-cropping was to a large extent the measure of the Negroes' own failure to respond satisfactorily to free labour.

The debts which the freedmen still accumulated after having had five years in which to accustom themselves to the burdens placed on the individual by the ending of the planters' comprehensive paternalism could not fail ultimately to suggest to a British observer of Somers' stamp the existence within the Negro character of a virtually ineradicable streak of recklessness and incompetence. With "opportunities of money-making seldom enjoyed by labour in any part of the world before", the vast majority of the Negroes, he asserted, "scatter all behind them in a careless spirit",

> The negro is one of the most liberal buyers in the world, Stores exercise a kind of charm over him, and when he looks round on the wealth of wares he is ready at once to fling every dollar out of his pocket, and to open a credit account with boundless faith in the future...The planters have unusual pleasure under the share system in pointing out the good hands that (sic) have made a profit at the end of the year. Yet it is doubtful whether the share system will survive; and if it be swept away, the result will be due to the folly of the Negroes.[1]

After all, it was basically to the Negroes' great discredit that they chose so frequently to exploit the weaknesses undeniably inherent in share-cropping by refusing to undertake any work on the plantations not immediately connected with the crops in which they had a share. Their conduct in this

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1 Ibid., p. 146.

respect was seen to throw a massive burden on to the white planter who was obliged to recruit at extra expense special labour to attend to the general upkeep of the plantation. From his observations, Somers evidently deduced that there was absolutely no reason, outside of his own temperament, why the Negro share-cropper should not work well and prosper, the planter providing "the land, his stock and implements, working capital and credit, his skill, and plodding care and watchfulness from day to day for the chance of half the cotton which his hands may be induced to plant and till, or may think it worth their while to gather when it is ripe".[1]

It was indeed a main plank in Somers' exhaustive argument against the share system that it did not in practice operate to give a fair and equal division of returns between white planter and black freedman but instead accorded excessive privileges and benefits to the Negroes. Perhaps the most "outrageously absurd" proof of this in Somers' view was the fact that the Negroes, receiving as they did rations or credit notes from the planter throughout the whole year, stood to lose nothing from the failure or poor yield of a crop marketed in December, while such a circumstance necessarily reduced the planter to dire straits. Apart from that, however, along with the unrestricted profits of half the crop, the black field-hand received such "privileges" as a free cottage, wood from the planter's estate, free and extensive pasturage for his livestock, and hunting and shooting rights, as well as being exempt from contributing any portion of the seed for the crops, and being paid for incidental manual work on the plantation.[2]

The totally disproportionate advantages allegedly enjoyed by the freedmen as share-croppers naturally had the effect of throwing into exaggerated relief the unsatisfactory manner in which the Negro race in the Southern States was making use of the economic opportunities afforded it

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1 Ibid., p. 121.

2 Ibid., pp. 128-129.

by free labour. In general terms, it had not required the testimony of a Scot called Ross who had bought a plantation near Montgomery, Alabama in the late 1860s to convince Somers of the difficulties of cultivating the land by free Negro labour:[1] in Mississippi, he himself had already concluded that "The best and most willing negroes seem to have little self-reliance, and never work so well as when they have a white man at their right hand to show them how to do it".[2] To some extent, the flagrant, widespread abuse of "the principle of Republican equality", whereby in the United States "serving another by any useful kind of labour in serving oneself has become a sort of sin, shame, and disgrace", was identified as a contributory factor to the chaos of Southern labour relations. Among the Negroes of the South, Somers estimated, "where a man will often neither serve himself nor anybody else, the great doctrine of equality has palpably run to seed, and all industrial organization and social progress become well-high impossible."[3]

But in the Negroes' visible lack of propensity for significantly improving their material condition under the exceptionally favourable system of share-cropping there lay for Somers the ultimate proof of their collective inability as a race either to achieve independently or, indeed, to desire a real and rapid measure of economic prosperity.[4]

> Yet the negroes, with all their superabounding privilege on the cotton field, make little of it...They are almost all in debt; few are able at the end of the year to square accounts with 'the merchant'; and it is rarely the planter can point with pride, and with the conscious joy of recording his own profit, to a freedman who, as the result of a year's toil, will have a hundred or two of dollars to the good. The soul is often crushed out of labour by penury

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1 See account of the interview with Ross in ibid., p. 179.

2 Ibid., p. 147.

3 Ibid., pp. 130-131.

4 The persistently servile demeanour of a fair proportion of the Southern freedmen, even "where they have everything their own way down to the possession of the land and its produce", was, he suggested, " considerable proof that they have been elevated by some 'patent hoist' unknown to ordinary human experience" - ibid., p. 130

> and oppression. Here a soul cannot begin to be infused into it through the sheer excess of privilege and licence with which it is surrounded.[1]

Detailed consideration has been given to Somers' opinions on free Negro labour and its part in determining the state of the Southern economy in the early 1870s because his lengthy work is by far the most comprehensive and authoritative analysis of the subject to emanate from a Scottish observer at that time. Obviously, one of the most important central themes of his study reflected his eager desire to inform the Scottish public of the positively harmful effects which the widespread system of share-cropping was having on all sections of the community throughout the Southern States of America.[2] The fact that he had arrived at this conclusion (and at the concomitant assessment that the free Negro labourers had not acquitted themselves as well as they might reasonably have been expected to) independently of the stated views of the majority of Southern planters almost certainly helped to increase the intensity with which he argued his case.

It is just possible, however, that a more positive factor, rooted directly in the peculiar nature of labour relations in contemporary Scotland, also contributed to the vigour with which Somers castigated Southern share-cropping, with all its attendant evils. As a prominent authority on questions relating to British commerce and industry, he would certainly have been fully aware of the continued existence within Scotland itself at this time of a remarkably pervasive and deeply entrenched paternalism in the relationship between employer and employee. Stretching out to cover several

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1 Ibid., p. 129.

2 For those Scots who were deeply interested in the situation in the United States during Reconstruction, Somers probably rendered a real service in explaining the existence no less than the operational methods of the share system, since in contemporary Scottish travelogues and press comment virtually no mention was made of this important aspect of the agricultural structure in the South.

key industries, this manifested itself most conspicuously in the invidious truck system. With the widespread evasion and violation by employers of the 1831 law prohibiting truck, wage payments in kind (a carry-over from the prevalent eighteenth century practice in Scotland) continued for two-thirds of the nineteenth century to create a situation wherein Scottish miners, for example, were partially paid by supplies of coal, free or at a reduced rate. In addition, their houses, in common with those of a large proportion of workers in the iron, ship-building and cotton industries, were invariably tied.[1]

The truck system undoubtedly flourished at its strongest and most notorious in the rapidly developing collieries and ironworks of the West (although at the same time it was extremely common in these industries throughout Scotland). Under it, money payments were made at lengthy intervals, most commonly varying from between a fortnight to a month, with the inevitable result that workers were forced to seek credit in the form of an advance in wages. The ignominious manner in which this need was met constituted one of the worst abuses attaching to the system. In some instances, owners and employers actually charged "poundage" on the sum advanced, but much more frequently the total amount of the wage was given on the strict stipulation that the employee spend at least part of it in the company's store. A proportion of the employers, indeed, went so far as to force their workers, under threat of dismissal, to spend all of the money thus advanced to them at the store.[2]

The companies' stores were in themselves institutions which increased the highly unsatisfactory structure of labour relations imposed on Scottish industry by the truck system. Usually run by a relative or employee of

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1 W.H. Marwick, "Paternalism in Victorian Scotland" in pamphlet reprinted from Juridicial Review, March, 1935, pp. 45-47.

2 R.H. Campbell, Scotland Since 1707 (Oxford, 1965), p. 201.

the firm, these "truck shops" were extremely profitable, operating as they generally did on the unprincipled principle of offering inferior goods at inflated prices.[1] A colourful - not exactly impartial - retrospective assessment of the truck system has depicted the miners and iron-workers as being compelled to purchase everything from provisions to Bibles at the owners' stores: "The collier had everything trucked to him - except his coffin".[2] And clearly this particular facet of the situation did represent a very significant stranglehold by the employers over the activities of the labour force. Thus the Truck Commission of 1871 discovered that in that year approximately 36,000 employees, mainly in the coal mines and iron works of West Scotland, were being compulsorily provided for by company stores.[3]

The Commissioners appointed to conduct an enquiry into the system in 1871 were unequivocal enough in their condemnation of it; yet although truck progressively lost ground during the seventies, it was not finally abolished by act of Parliament until 1887. With its perpetuation of a large measure of dependence by worker upon employer,[4] its built-in tendency to encourage the unhealthy habit of securing credit, and its establishment of company stores by no means geared to functioning in the best interests of the workers who used them, the truck system in Scotland might have been seen to bear in certain respects at least some broad, superficial resemblance

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1 Ibid., p. 201; Marwick, "Paternalism in Victorian Scotland", pp. 44-45.

2 Thomas Johnston, A History of the Working Classes in Scotland (Glasgow, 1922), p. 280. Johnston widened his frame of reference in relation to truck shops by suggesting that in the Shetlands, in the Argyllshire quarries, and in "monopoly areas all over Scotland" workmen were forced to buy from the master under pain of dismissal - see ibid., p. 280. His study is written from a Marxist standpoint.

3 Marwick, "Paternalism in Victorian Scotland", p. 44.

4 In addition to the aspects of dependence already described, workers very frequently had to accept arbitrary deductions from their earnings made by the employer to cover the cost of medical and educational services supplied by him - see ibid. pp. 47-48; Johnston, A History of the Working Classes in Scotland, p. 280.

to the share-cropping system which had arisen in the Southern States of America after the Civil War. It was of course probably entirely coincidental that at the very time when Somers was investigating the operation of share-cropping in the South and inveighing against it, a simultaneous enquiry should have been taking place within Scotland into the truck system - an enquiry which in its conclusions likewise spoke out strongly against those features which were common to the framework of labour relations in both countries. Yet it might be suggested that Somers, hostile as he almost certainly would have been to truck, and also aware of the rising tide of Scottish opposition to it,[1] would at this particular time have been the more sensitive - and the more antagonistic - to the vaguely similar evils which he identified as existing within the share system in the Southern States.

As we have seen, Somers attacked share-cropping for the critical lack of incentive which it provided (in comparison with the wage system) for the free Negroes to use their labour energies to the full and to develop a sense of ambition and responsibility. It has also been observed, however, that at the same time he nevertheless did clearly believe that so far as the black share-croppers were concerned, the stuff of which the human element itself was composed was undisputably weak. This conviction was pointedly illustrated when in one reference to the insignificant progress which these freedmen had made notwithstanding their highly privileged position, he declared that "a [grossly underpaid and overworked] ploughman or a herd in the old country would not exchange his lot for theirs, as it stands and as it appears in all external circumstances".[2]

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1 Taking the lead in vigorously and consistently objecting to the continuation of the truck system were the Scottish Trade Unions, a particularly active role being assumed by Alexander Macdonald, the miners' leader. Prior to the Commission of 1871, both public and private investigations into the truck system had been conducted during the 1860s and 1870s - see Marwick, "Paternalism in Victorian Scotland", p. 44; Johnston, A History of the Working Classes in Scotland, p. 280.

2 Somers, The Southern States, p. 129.

III The miseries of slave and freedman: the persistance of a tendency to emphasize the better aspects of slavery

Somers' disgust and irritation at the Negroes' failure to avail themselves of the economic opportunities which he believed existed for them within the agricultural structure of the post-war South was perhaps increased by the tendency to assess the basic status and condition of the black share-cropper in relation to that of agricultural labourers in contemporary Britain. In permitting his investigation to be partially influenced in this way, he would appear, indeed, to have reflected to some extent a wider, broadly similar trend of outlook current in Scotland around that time. Certainly, during the later 1860s there emerged within the Scottish focus on British agricultural labour a distinct readiness to draw a comparison, not exactly between the condition of the emancipated Negro labourer in the South, but rather between the condition of the Negro slaves on the ante-bellum Southern plantation and the immediate condition of a particularly oppressed section of rural workers in England.

This comparison was most forcefully made in relation to the plight of the many thousands who toiled under the gang system then operating on a substantial proportion of English farms; and the general conclusion was that the condition of these poor unfortunates was decidedly worse than that earlier endured by the slaves in the Old South. Scottish attention was especially directed towards this particular domestic abuse by the publication in the spring of 1867 of the Report of the Gang Labour Commission.

Priding itself on its knowledgeable involvement with all questions relevant to the improvement of the British worker's lot, the Glasgow Sentinel was quick to sound a blast which called up a comparative analogy between the contemporary English agricultural gang labourer and the vanished American Negro slave. While the condition of the British factory operative had progressively improved, the agricultural workers, it was suggested, had

simultaneously sunk to a state "worse than Egyptian bondage":

> Far away from the smoke and din of machinery, amid the green fields of 'Merrie England', there has grown up a system which has all the worst features of slavery...[And with the] exception that its wretched victims are not bought and sold[,]...the agricultural gang system, which prevails to a great extent in the agricultural counties of England, is fully as iniquitous as the slave system of Virginia and Carolina, and with this aggravation, that its victims are white women and children - nominally born to an inheritance of freedom, but in reality to an inheritance of slavery and degradation.[1]

Gang-masters were squarely denounced as being "nearly as bad as Southern slave-drivers"; and, accentuating the extreme hardships placed upon young children by the system, the Sentinel maintained that "In many respects the boys and girls who make up the gangs are worse situated than the negroes of Carolina were in the days of slavery". True to principle, it called upon the landlords to stop being hypocrites who strove to show an interest in the welfare of town operatives, and to end the gang system with more ease than had characterized the eventual abolition of the comparable American slave system.[2]

Following the Glasgow Sentinel's emotive outburst, the Scotsman, with perhaps even greater relish, seized upon the parallel which seemed to be offered between the circumstances of the former slaves in the United States and those of the gang workers on the English farms. And in the Edinburgh paper's editorial comment, this parallel was significantly elaborated upon. As no doubt befitted its comparatively less "radical" stance on championing the British working class and praising its qualities against the oppressions of British employers, the Scotsman showed none of the Glasgow Sentinel's

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, "The Slave Gangs of England: Life in the Agricultural Districts", 30 March, 1867. The Sentinel rejoiced that there was nothing in the Scottish structure of agricultural labour corresponding exactly to the English gang system. But at the same time, it did deplore the fact that in the North and North East of Scotland a great proportion of farm work was done by women who were miserably paid and obliged to tackle tasks which they should not have had to do.

2 Ibid.

reticence in describing the debased character of the labourers who were victims of the gang system. On the contrary, the paper positively revelled in demonstrating the chronically low standard of civilization exhibited by this section of the British working population, and in so doing, it extended the scope of the basic comparison with the Negroes of the United States.

Thus, employing a tense which importantly suggested that the comparison was still valid with respect to the character of the Negro freedman no less than to the Negro slave, the Scotsman asserted that in the extent of their ignorance, the English labourers in the Fen district were on a par with the American Negroes. And in the display of certain undesirable character traits, these benighted Britons were actually seen to surpass the black race across the Atlantic:

> [I]n the shamelessness of their bestial sensuality, the 'Caucasians' seem to sink lower than the 'Ethopians'; and in 'religious sense' also, the latter appear to have the advantage - the wildest extravagences of a nigger 'revival meeting' as indicating some conceptions, however grotesquely distorted, of the unseen, being preferable to the spiritual stoneblindness of the drudges that (sic) toil almost 'within shadow of ancient cathedrals'.[1]

It was necessary, of course, to counteract any impression that the Anglo-Saxon character could be inherently more degraded than the Negro character, and this had effectively been done by an earlier statement to the effect that the conditions endured by the British agricultural workers under the gang system were much more demoralizing, and worse in very many respects than the conditions which had obtained on the Southern plantations before the Civil War. "The gang system", the Scotsman thundered, "is an ogre that grinds English bones to make its bread". Yet, while it too sought to emphasize for the Scottish public the abominable state of the gang workers by contrasting their plight with the position of the erstwhile American slaves, the Scotsman approached the comparison from an angle

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1 Scotsman, 19 April, 1867.

significantly different from that of the Glasgow Sentinel. Whereas the Sentinel had tended for the most part to convey a strong sense of the evils common to both agricultural systems and simply to indicate that in certain aspects the British workers were worse off than the enslaved Negroes had been, the Edinburgh paper placed at least as much emphasis on explaining the positively salubrious features in the former condition of the American Negro as on describing the specific tribulations of the English labourers.

Accordingly, in arguing that "the hired English human beasts" were certainly more ill-used than their earlier American counterparts had been, the chance was grasped once again to rail against Harriet Beecher Stowe (and, by implication, those many Scots who still by 1867 shared her sentiments about slavery) for presenting a largely "ficticious" view of plantation life:

> Dispassionate reporters agree...that the average human beast of burden in America was not hardly worked; and, so far as his animal wants went, was kindly treated both in health and sickness - a negro paradise of do-nothingism being even provided for him when he was past work. The hoary heads that used to mop, and mow, and jabber in the negro-houses, were in themselves a proof that their owners could not have been very hardly used before their superannuation - dating sometimes more than a quarter of a century back...The very fact that [the Negroes] were permanent property operated to their advantage. Men who are not merciful are often merciful to their own beasts...[1]

The sporadic tendency of Scots even after the American Civil War to persist in following Southern arguments and convictions that the Negro fared well enough under slavery can perhaps be seen to represent something of a continuation of a line of reasoning which had led such an individual as the Scottish weaver, William Thomson, to go to the United States a convinced abolitionist in 1840 and to return two years later a firm champion of slavery. Thomson, it has been pointed out, was one of the few Britons to undergo conversion of this nature as a result of a visit to the Old South;[2]

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1 Ibid.

2 See Max Berger, The British Traveller, pp. 108-109, 119-120.

and just as the Scotsman was prepared in 1867 to argue that the exceedingly comprehensive care lavished by the planter on his Negro slaves had considerably compensated for enforced labour, so Thomson in his time had come to favour slavery because of his admiration for the paternalism which characterized the system.[1] And he too had concluded that the slaves were not overworked, and that they were generally better provided for and less miserably oppressed than were the factory hands in Britain.[2]

From a subsidiary account by David Macrae of his trip to the United

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1 In his book A Tradesman's Travels in the United States and Canada (Edinburgh, 1842), Thomson maintained that slaveowners tried hard to keep slave families together and did their utmost to ensure their welfare - see Berger, The British Traveller, pp. 119-120. William Thomson went to the United States for health reasons and from 1840 to 1842 he travelled throughout the country, covering over 5,000 miles and supporting himself by manual labour. For the greater part of his stay, however, he was resident as a weaver in Ohio. On first arriving in the South, he had faced a dangerously hostile reception as a suspected abolitionist. See ibid., p.216

2 Thomson was moved to record that "Truth...compels me to say that the planters in general treat their slaves with great humanity...Would to God the aristocracy [of Britain] would interest themselves half so much to improve the physical condition of the factory slave in England"- Thomson, A Tradesman's Travels, p. 191; quoted in Berger, The British Traveller, pp. 119-120.

Wall, Andrew Carnegie, p. 184, indicates that Thomson's comparison of conditions under American slavery with conditions in Scottish factories was widely read by such radical Scotsmen as Alexander Campbell, editor of the Glasgow Sentinel during most of the Civil War period, an Owenite Socialist, and an extremely active and influential figure in organized labour and politics for over forty years (see Harrison, "British Labour and American Slavery", p. 301), and George Troup, erstwhile editor of the North British Daily Mail, first editor (until 1862) of the Trade Unionist owned Bee-Hive, which journal he was instrumental in making a rabidly pro-Confederate organ, and champion of Glasgow ship-owners (see ibid., pp. 312-313, and "British Labour and the Confederacy", pp. 95-96). In this connection Royden Harrison, "British Labor and American Slavery", p. 310, has pointed out that prominent Owenites and Chartists were in fact disposed to adopt a stance the same as that eventually arrived at by Thomson, and publicly to proclaim it. Thus Bronterre O'Brien condemned the narrow view of the Abolitionists in failing to recognize the plight of "British wage slaves", Robert Owen himself declared that a far worse form of slavery existed in Britain than among the coloured population of the United States; and Peter Mackenzie, a militant radical reformer who rivalled Campbell in his command of working class support and who edited until its demise in the early 1860s the Glasgow Gazette, along with Robert Buchanan, the Owenite who owned the Glasgow Sentinel, until 1860, shared similar opinions. A further interesting example of such a sentiment is afforded by Andrew Carnegie's maternal grandfather, Tom Morrison. Believing that British activities on behalf of Negro emancipation had a damaging effect on the agitation for domestic industrial reform, Morrison in a work entitled The Rights of Land and published in 1837 bitterly declared that a child pleading for the introduction of a ten-hour bill would be passed off with "a monody over the miseries of the blacks, a lamentation for their slavery, and an exhortation (sic) to thankfulness for its white skin and blessed freedom" - see quote in Wall, Andrew Carnegie, p.185

States in 1868 there also emerges evidence of the continued flourishing during the Reconstruction years of this particular Scottish attitude among emigrant Scots settled in the Southern States. Pointing out that it was a mistake to accept a monolithic view of the character of the native American slaveholders of the South, and that it was vital to realize that many were sincere in their inability to interpret the slave system as Britons did, Macrae incisively recorded that "nothing helped me to judge charitably of the Southern people more that this extraordinary fact, that of all the pro-slavery men I met in America, perhaps the most determined were persons from this country [Scotland], and from the North, who had gone into the South abolitionists, and had become converts to pro-slavery views".[1] By way of illustration, he cited the case of a Mr. K. from Inverness-shire who had held strong anti-slavery views while in Scotland but had come stoutly to defend the system after seeing it in operation. This man in turn assured Macrae that the Negro slaves had been far better off than day labourers on farms in Scotland.[2]

After the Civil War, the tendency smong a certain proportion of the Scottish people to believe that the Negroes had really been fairly comfortable in their condition as slaves may actually have been reinforced by the uphill struggle which the black race was seen to be having in adapting to freedom. We have already noted how a commentator with such strongly biased views as Charles Mackay would capitalize on the American Negroes' difficulties in readjusting their lives to drive home the suggestion that slavery agreed with them best, being in effect their natural niche in a civilized society.[3]

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1 Macrae, Amongst the Darkies, p. 13.

2 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
Macrae, ibid., p. 20, indicated that he had on several occasions heard Scots spoken of by ex-slaves as having been more severe on them then were native Southerners.

3 See above, Chapter V, pp. 544-546, 663.

The Marquis of Lorne set out on his trip to the tropics and America in early 1866 fully convinced that at least up until that time, sudden liberation had proved more of a curse than a blessing to the black race in the United States, the Negroes being despised as "insolent upstarts and enemies" instead of being well treated as slaves. [1]

Visiting the Southern States at the end of 1873, another Scottish aristocrat, Lord Rosebery, remained clearly as unconvinced as Lorne had been eight years earlier that freedom had substantially benefited the American Negroes. In Savannah, Georgia, for instance, he judged that while the population was about equally divided between black and white, Negro mortality in the post-war years had been in the ratio of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, "consequent on persons hitherto dependent and tended being left to their own carelessness and ignorance". [2]

Rosebery recorded his conclusion at the end of 1874; and to some extent, it had been foreshadowed earlier that very year by T. Lloyd in an article for the Edinburgh Review on the recently available information from the 1870 census of the United States. Although recognizing that by early 1874 the returns of the previous census were already very considerably outdated, Lloyd nevertheless believed that they merited consideration on the twin grounds that they were at least authentic and that the particular census in question related to a period which was "undoubtedly one of the most interesting in modern history; for the experiment that is being worked out in these Southern States is without precedent or parallel in the records of the past". [3] And for all its imperfections, the census, he was prepared to argue, was as "true to nature"

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1 Marquis of Lorne's Journal, 1863-1867: 22 Dec., 1865, Inveraray, Argyll MSS.

2 Lord Rosebery, "Negro notes - Southern States of America", 26 Dec., 1874, in Rosebry's Notebook, Rosebery MSS., MS. Acc. 4070, Box 112, National Library of Scotland. Archibald Philip Primrose, the fifth Earl of Rosebery and ultimately Prime Minister in 1894-1895, made his transatlantic trip during the autumn to winter of 1873 - see A.R.C. Grant (ed.), Lord Rosebery's North American Journal, 1873 (London, 1967).

3 T. Lloyd, "Ninth Census of the United States" in Edinburgh Review, Vol. 139, Jan., 1874, p. 130.

as to make it possible to judge confidently from it the results of "the Southern experiment". [1]

Approaching his analysis from this standpoint, Lloyd was in fact fairly sanguine in his general conclusions about the post-war progress and future prospects of the Negro race in the South, estimating that since emancipation their general condition and advancement was "as favourable as could reasonably have been expected. [2] At the same time, however, while totally refuting the popular Southern contention that the Negroes were dying out, he found that the census did demonstrate a very substantial drop in the rate of increase of the coloured population after the Civil War. In 1874, he calculated, the Negro population in the South was but half of what it would have been if the pre-war increase had been maintained. This "extraordinary" decline was shown to have occurred only in the latter half of the 1860s, and Lloyd readily attributed it to the fact that at that period the Negroes had become responsible for their own welfare, the majority of them having continued right up until the end of the war to live and work as slaves and thus to be cared for in the usual way. [3]

On the strength of the statistics presented in the census, it was his opinion that a "fearful waste of Negro life" had been brought about simply by "the reckless, inconsiderate manner in which emancipation was effected". The war itself, he suggested, had done unwanton damage in providing the opportunity for thousands of refugee Negroes to get their first grim taste of freedom in the Federal camps. There, the comparative neglect of the authorities had combined with the helplessness of the hitherto totally dependent

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1 Ibid., p. 133.

2 See ibid., pp. 139-142.

3 Ibid., pp. 134, 136.

slaves to create amongst them great distress and extremely high mortality rates. Furthermore, these camps had invariably proved to be the starting point from which masses of Negroes made the thoroughly irresponsible move from rural areas to the towns and cities of the South, there, due to their ignorance and lack of guidance, to experience yet more keenly poverty, sickness and death.[1]

The manner in which emancipation had been accomplished had also, Lloyd argued, set the free black community at a disadvantage from the very outset in as much as the bitterness engendered within the planters towards the Negroes immediately after the Civil War had frequently made them refuse longer to maintain aged and infirm ex-slaves on the plantations. In consequence these had been "turned adrift to perish miserably"[2] in a situation where even the young and able-bodied of the race had generally found it difficult enough to provide for their own personal needs, far less the needs of those who after emancipation necessarily looked to them rather than to the white planter class for support in their infirmities.

Lloyd perhaps approximated most closely to Rosebery's charge of "carelessness and ignorance" against the Negro race, however, when in further criticizing the way in which the United States had gone about abolition, he implied that before freedom had been granted, Negro women should have been educated in how to care for their families. The laws and the general instability governing the Negro's family unit during slave times had led, he contended, to a "withering of the maternal instinct". When they suddenly found themselves free, the Negro women, therefore, had been both ignorant of the basic practical knowledge and the sense of responsibility required of them in running a home, and often unwilling to submit to the restrictions which such responsibilities placed upon their newly won liberty. Thus, the

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1 Ibid., p. 137, 139.

2 Ibid., p. 138.

continuing negligence and incompetence of the freed women in this sphere had meant that - lacking a paternalist master to see to their wellbeing - Negro children had in the post-war years died in "multitudes". Even in 1874, Lloyd felt confident to state that "excessive infant mortality" was still rife among the black population in the South.[1]

In the course of his enquiry, Robert Somers had also spotlighted the steep rise since emancipation in the mortality rate among all sections of the Negro population and most especially among children in one Southern city, Charleston. There, he had found the post-war disparity in the death rate of the white and black races utterly "remarkable". For 1869, he learned that in proportion to their respective numbers, almost twice as many deaths had been recorded among the Negroes as among the whites. And so far as child mortality was concerned, the 1870 figures had shown that of the 453 whites who had died, 181 had been children of five years and under while of the 918 Negro deaths, no less than 461 had been infants.[2]

Somers, adopting a strictly practical and common sense view of the advantages which had accrued to the Negroes from the strict control on their movement out of the rural areas and from the planter's paternalism, was quick to discover "natural reasons enough for an increased liability to death in the severe ordeal they have passed through since their emancipation". At least part of this ordeal, however, he saw as being self-inflicted. Once again, the thoughtless irresponsibility of the newly freed slaves in flocking into the cities (in this specific instance, into Charleston) and "produc[ing] all the evils of overcrowding" as well as ruining trade and wealth was loudly deplored. And having listened to the testimony of doctors in the five health districts of Charleston, Somers, like Lloyd after him, was fully prepared to indict Negro women for "extreme carelessness" in looking after their offspring.[3]

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1 Ibid., pp. 137-138.

2 Somers, The Southern States, p. 52.

3 Ibid., p. 53.

IV. The debate concerning the indispensability of Negro labour in the South

Obviously, one of the most predominant features in the attitudes of those Scots who looked glumly upon the condition of the freed Negroes during Reconstruction was the readiness to blame their plight (and to some extent the whole economic and social chaos of the South) largely, and even primarily, on their own utterly inadequate conduct, rather than to make any serious attempt to identify the natural dislocation of the Southern States after the devastation of war and the powerful phenomenon of white intransigence as factors militating stronly against the easy adaptation of the Negroes to free labour and a comfortable place in society. And as we have seen, a major concern and complaint of these observers was the deplorable failure, as they saw it, of the free black population to utilize to anything like their full extent the fertile lands of the South. This recognition of the Negroes' inability rapidly to organize their lives and labour in such a way as to meet the basic requirements of Southern agriculture stimulated in due course some critical consideration of the Southern planters' proposals to import Chinese coolies as an alternative labour force.

With his usual blunt directness, Charles Mackay asserted in early 1870 that nothing but the "unfavourable trial" which they had made of free Negro labour in the years following the Civil War had forced the Southern planters by that time to think in terms of coolie labour. This fact was in itself sufficient, he felt, to illustrate how "precarious and unsatisfactory" was the position of the freedmen, faced as they were with their numbers "dwindl[ing] and dwin[ing] upon the teeming soil which they were once compelled to cultivate with rich plenty as their reward", and with the need to impress upon leading statesmen the necessity of looking "fully and fairly" at the Negro question. [1]

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1 Mackay, "The Antagonism of race and colour..." Blackwood's Magazine Vol. 107, March, 1870, p. 327.

Obviously hopeful that the supplanting of Negro by Chinese labour would constitute an effective step towards salvaging the fortunes of the South, Mackay was confident that if the Southern planters preferred coolies to Negroes, and obtained the permission and supervision of the Federal Government, there could be no difficulties in exchanging one work force for another. The question of the importation of coolies to replace the Negroes on the plantations was, he declared, a social one into which "the antagonisms and antipathies of race" did not enter.[1] Perhaps this uncharacteristically naive statement should not, however, be accepted as a totally faithful representation of Mackay's views. Certainly, his own exceedingly high reward for the industry and general character of the Chinese[2] would have contributed substantially to his ready conclusion that the race could immeasurably benefit the Southern economy by displacing the Negroes, towards whom his contempt and denigration were constant and unrelieved.

More forthright in affirming its belief that racial characteristics and racial antipathies played critical parts in directing the attentions of the planters towards coolie labour was the Edinburgh Courant. Noting in mid 1869 that the Chinese were already "pressing in" to fill the places in the nation once occupied by the American Indians and by the Negroes, the Courant stressed the quality of their character : "the orderly patience of the Orientals is spoken of in high terms by their employers". The prospect of their taking over the brunt of labour on the Southern plantations was welcomed both on account of their industrious nature and because of the spur which such a development would be to the ending of "Negro domination": "their presence in the cotton plantations would speedily console the planter for the

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1 Ibid., p. 330.

2. See above, Chapter V., p. 684.

loss of his slaves and inspire him with renewed hope".[1] And at the same period, the Dundee Courier greeted favourably the information that Chinese emigrants would "soon...flood the Southern labour market". Praising the race's diligence, thrift, and willingness to be satisfied with comparatively low wages, it accepted with satisfaction the report that 60,000 coolies had been engaged by Southern planters, since the latter had "found freed slaves extravagant in demands for wages and extremely disinclined to apply themselves steadily to hard work".[2]

It would seem however, that opinions of such a nature were essentially minority ones. For the most part, the proposition that free Negro labour in the South could be generally and effectively replaced by a work force comprised of immigrant Chinese coolies was largely dismissed and/or criticized. From its position within the Scottish press as a leading defender of the rights, the liberties, and the character of the Negro freedmen in the United States during Reconstruction, the Dundee Advertiser predictably enough recorded its total opposition to the planters' scheme. In a forceful editorial published just one day prior to the rival Dundee Courier's leader voicing approval of the plan, the Advertiser stated that as affairs stood at that time, the introduction of Chinese labour into the South would be a "great calamity". This conclusion was reached by according paramount consideration to the effect which the move would have on the Negro population rather than on the white planter class: "The negroes must have work or they cannot eat; the Union has duties to the men it has set free".[3]

Far from considering that the black labourers had largely brought the threat of wholesale unemployment and wretched misery upon themselves by their casual, unsatisfactory attitude towards work, the Advertiser was convinced that the proposal to import coolie labour was simply a plot by the planters

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 7 July, 1869.

2 Dundee Courier, 11 Aug., 1869.

3 Dundee Advertiser, "Chinese Labour in America", 10 Aug., 1869.

who were "naturally chafing at being on a position of more or less equality with their ex-slaves", to get their revenge on the Negroes. Although the former slaveowners had acknowledged defeat, in many cases, it was suggested, this had been done very grudgingly: "there has been an incessant fight ever since [the end of the Civil War] to neutralize the victory, and preserve as much as possible of what the South contended for in so many battlefields". The notion of employing coolie labour, which would allow the planters to cultivate their lands, preserve their dignity, and starve the Negroes "who presumed to be free", was but another phase in the post-war Southern struggle.[1]

Having asserted that there was an adequate supply of competent Negro labour in the South, the Dundee Advertiser went on to prophesy that the Chinese, with their tendency to transport intact their native culture and their facility for acquiring property, would eventually become Southern planters in their own right and be more bitterly hated by the white plantation owners than ever the free Negroes had been. The techniques of attempting to arouse increased public feeling on behalf of the Negro labourer by emphasizing the pervasive impact which the Chinese, once established, would have on the white planter dominance in the South was yet more sensationally employed by the Advertiser when it asserted that the only good thing that could come from the importation plan was an increased mixing of races in the United States. At the same time, however, given the paper's contempt for and bitter dislike of the Southern planters, and the radicalism of its standard views on the assimilation and mixture of the heterogenous races in America, it seems certain that the Dundee Advertiser was sincere in hoping that

> one of them [the Chinese] might perhaps be induced to endure the grand-daughter of a man who was 'out' with Jefferson Davis,

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1 Ibid.

> trying to bind up a slave empire. And when this comes it will be deserved, for the [importation] project is based on one of the worst and most offensive kinds of race and class prejudice...[1]

Nor did the paper's strictures and speculations on this theme stop there. The desire to castigate the plantation owners for their heinous intention to dispense with Negro labour prompted it to offer a totally remarkable statement regarding the potential influence of a combined force of the Chinese and Negro races in the South:

> [I]f [the Chinese]...and the Americanised negro could pull together, who knows but the world might see the British race superseded in the Southern States; and all because these planters are too proud to employ the free negro.[2]

Such distasteful contemplations were definitely not part of the staid Scotsman's reasonings on the issue of coolie importation. Yet, proving that Scottish opposition was not confined merely to comment in the radical press, the Edinburgh journal - its frequent recognition of the shortcomings of free Negro labour notwithstanding - was unwavering in its disapproval of the Southern planters' scheme. The first blast against the idea was sounded in July, 1869, by the Scotsman's American correspondent. His report contained information about a convention of Southern planters and merchants which had recently been held at Memphis, Tennessee, to consider the wholesale import of coolie labourers, and it gave details of the capital and the scope of transactions of the "Mississippi Valley Emigration Company", a body which had been organized at the convention to push the project ahead. Despite his appreciation of the magnitude of the decision to discard the traditional labour force in the South, the correspondent was unimpressed and, to say the least, dubious about the wisdom of the move:

> There is no end to the things which might be said about this matter of introducing Chinese labour into the United States.

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

> It is a 'big thing'...view it as you please. I suppose the Southern planters know what they are about - but it is difficult to see why a Chinese coolie at $12 per month in gold is better than a negro at $10 a month in greenbacks, and the whole South is swarming with negroes who are glad to work faithfully at the latter wages. [1]

Unable to fathom the business mind of the planters, the Scotsman's correspondent was tempted to the suggestion that the "Southern gentlemen" might have had it in mind to frighten the freedmen into accepting yet lower wages by threatening to supplant them. And while not exactly anticipating the Dundee Advertiser's later contention that the planters had adopted their novel course as a means of venting their spleen against the emancipated Negroes, he did venture to entertain the idea that they perhaps wished to employ Chinese coolies because, unlike free Negroes, they had no vote, and "the force of ancient habit inclines the planters to prefer labourers who have no political rights, and who can be walloped without much danger". [2] Going one step further, the Scotsman itself, in an editorial comment shortly afterwards on the "momentous" new influx of Chinese to the United States, observed that "Already the Southern planters, detesting the freedmen, are awaiting with interest the arrival of the Chinese in sufficient number to dispense with negro labour". [3]

Whereas the Dundee Advertiser's objection to the introduction of coolie labour was firmly based on the disastrous effect which it would have on the condition of the black population in the Southern States, however, the Scotsman's criticism remained solidly centred on the unsound economics of the scheme in relation to the prosperity of the Southern planter class. In mid August, 1869, the American correspondent again hammered away at this theme, maintaining that it was plain that the coolie could not take the place of the Negro as a plantation hand in the South "unless the planter is prepared to pay a higher price for unskilled labour than he now pays for skilled labour".

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1 Scotsman (U.S./C., New York, 17 July, 1869), 31 July, 1869.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 7 Aug. 1869. Unlike the Dundee Advertiser, the Scotsman, however, strongly implied there that the incoming chinese were of a more able, energetic race than the American Negroes.

By way of indicating the sheer folly of the proposed change-over, he estimated that a Negro hand, employed at the same task work as in slavery days, could be engaged for £100 per annum. As against this, the mere passage and related costs of bringing the immigrant coolie to the United States would be $100, while the lowest sum for which Chinese labour - although unskilled in plantation work - could be hired would average around $300 per year. The United States correspondent's whole attitude towards the issue was, indeed, contained in the terse observation that "cheap labour is the prime necessity of the South, and negro labour is only one-third as dear, or at best only two-thirds as dear, as coolie labour". [1]

In that section of the Scottish press which had, like the Scotsman, assiduously supported the Southern planters throughout the war but which also professed its attachment to the principles of American democracy and claimed to champion the interests of the working classes, the concern was not, however, that the plantation owners would bring ruin upon themselves by needlessly introducing a totally inexperienced, highly expensive work force. On the contrary, opposition to the plan was here based on the very real fear that the Chinese coolies would supply cut price labour in the South and ultimately throughout the United States, thus seriously damaging the prospects for European emigrants, and on the equally disturbing belief that by providing an alternative labour force on the plantations, they would give the employer, in the shape of the Southern planter, an atrociously unfair advantage over the regular labourers, affording him a free hand to oppress and dismiss as he thought fit.

This latter contingency was early recognized by the North British Daily Mail. Pleading in the autumn of 1865 for "kindness and equitable dealing" on the part of the planters towards the free Negro workers, it rejected as

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c., New York, 17 Aug., 1869) 31 Aug., 1869.

"utterly inadequate" the idea that the importation of coolies could solve current problems in Southern labour relations. In order to revive the profitability of cotton cultivation, the need, it was recognized, was not for a new, unskilled brigade of labourers over whom the planters could again wield undue authority, but for the existing black work people to be granted justice and fair terms:

> It is upon this labour basement that the edifice of national peace and prosperity must be reared, and if the leading men of the South are sincere in their avowed desire to restore political and social harmony to the nation, the interests and rights of the manual worker, be he black or white, must be justly dealt with. [1]

Once the threat of wholesale replacement of the Negroes by the Chinese in the Southern States had actually become, in the minds of a fair proportion of those within the Scottish press, a real possibility, it was the Mail's local rival, the Glasgow Sentinel,which took up the fashion of viewing the prospect in the context of its relevance to the cause of international labour. In late 1869, when discussion of the coolie labour issue was already rife in the Scottish press, the Sentinel joined in with a note of wistful regret over the fact that just as the Americans were congratulating themselves on settling the Negro question with due regard for equal rights, their sense of satisfaction had been jolted by the appearance of "another alien race on the scene". From the paper's own point of view, the most disturbing feature about the influx of the Chinese was their readiness to work for low wages, and it indicated with disgust how the Southern planters were eagerly looking forward to having the coolies cultivate their cotton at a rate considerably cheaper than that paid to the ex-slaves. [2]

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1 North British Daily Mail, 31 Oct., 1865.

2 Glasgow Sentinal, "A New Race in America", 13 Nov., 1869.

The Sentinel was fully aware that the cut price labour of the Chinese would set up an insuperable barrier of competition to native white American and emigrant European labour; but while it deeply sympathized with these elements, it was not prepared to support any call for prohibition on the numbers of Chinese allowed to enter the United States. On this whole question, indeed, the Glasgow journal was faced with something of a dilemma. Clearly, having given every impression (at least throughout the Reconstruction era) that it considered the free, democratic American Republic a haven to which oppressed and impoverished Scottish working men might flee with every hope of bettering their condition, the Sentinel strongly regretted the restrictive effect which the impact of Chinese labour was bound to have on the flow of European emigration to the United States. At the same time, however, the paper's very recognition of America as a place of refuge for the underprivileged of all nationalities militated against its easy acceptance of a curb on Chinese emigration for the sake of protecting European wage rates. Prohibition of the proposed coolie immigrants to the Southern States and of the Chinese throughout the nation would, it argued, destroy the character of America as "a home for anyone" and, by setting a precedent for the introduction of wider prohibition, could lead to great injury and injustice: "the waste places of the earth ought by right to belong to those who are unable to make for themselves a comfortable home in the land that gave them birth".[1]

The Sentinel was certainly anxious at this particular period that no further undue erosion of the United States reputation as a land of liberty and equal opportunities for all should occur. For earlier in the year, the paper had already been forced unhappily to conclude that if current trends in capital and labour continued, America would rapidly lose her traditional, well-merited attraction for the underpaid workers of the Old

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1 Ibid.

World. So perturbed was the paper about the existing situation there that it actually felt obliged to caution working class Scots against large scale emigration at that point. Moderate emigration to "suitable localities" was sensible enough, it decided, but in general terms, it was very questionable whether the United States, with all its great resources, was not after all being filled up too fast.

With increases in costs outstripping increases in wages, the position of the skilled and unskilled labourer in America was, on the Sentinel's reckoning, much less satisfactory than in pre-Civil War days. For the benefit of its readers it published a detailed analysis of costs from the figures of Walls, the special commissioner of United States revenue, and concluded that these showed a serious disparity in the spread of wealth among all sections of the population: "The creation of a huge national debt, along with a corresponding creation of speculators and bondholders, who live upon the industry of others, has been in the highest degree prejudicial to the interests of the working classes, and every year America will become less and less a poor man's country". While it would be long before the United States was plagued by destitution and poverty on the scale which existed in Britain, it was recognized that the same causes were nevertheless at work, with labour likely to deteriorate in value every year because it had to keep an increasing class who lived on the work of others.[1]

But if the Sentinel would appear to have deplored cut price Chinese labour largely in the context of its anxious disapproval of a wider trend towards depreciation of labour in the United States, another spokesman for the Scottish working class tended at this period to be more narrowly specific in his criticism of the role played by the new immigrant labourers in the United States. Addressing a meeting of the New York Working Men's Union on 3 December, 1869, Alexander MacDonald, the Scottish miners' leader who was

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1 Ibid., "Work and Wages in America", 1 May, 1869.

by that time President of the Miners' National Association, spoke out vigorously against cheap Chinese labour in America. Stressing its highly inimical effects, he condemned it as degrading for the whole of society, as well as for the Chinese themselves, who were living in dreadful conditions.[1]

MacDonald's speech was delivered during the second of three trips which he made to the United States in the years from 1867 to 1876. Shortly after his third visit, he returned to this theme in an informative talk to British miners on the state of the American labour market in the late stages of the Reconstruction era. Having described the wonderful opportunities which he had seen to exist for working men in the United States during his 1867 - and to an only slightly diminished extent - his 1869 tours, he painted a uniformly gloomy picture of the circumstances which he had found obtaining in 1876. With the coal and iron trades "sadly depressed", not only the wages within these industries but also the earnings of virtually all other sectors of working men had fallen drastically. But while he paid due attention to the influence of over-production and post-war inflation in bringing this unhappy situation about, MacDonald also indicated that other factors had critically exacerbated the plight of United States labour. Thus, dissuading potential emigrants from going to American coal-fields, he stressed that while there was not enough work on the east, further west, the Chinese with their low wage rates had completely taken over.[2]

Amongst those of MacDonald's miners who had emigrated to the United States in the palmy days before the mid-1870s recess in the coal industry, however, there was evidence of a personal recognition of the instrumental part which coloured labour had played in lowering the bargaining power and in generally worsening the condition of white mineworkers. Writing to MacDonald

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1 Ibid., 25 Dec., 1869.

2 Account of a Report by Alexander MacDonald to the members of the Miners' National Union on the conditions and prospects of labour in the United States, in ibid., 28 April, 1877. Mac Donald had gone to America in August, 1876.

from America in the spring of 1876, "W.D.", an emigrant Scottish miner, complained that he and his companions were earning but half of what they had done when first he went there in 1872. Crippled by "fearfully dull" trade, "the coal bosses are all bursting up, nearly" and union affiliations were slipping. For the bad relations between white labour and management, however, he significantly blamed not the cut price labour of the Chinese but the over-obedience of the Negro miners:

> The white miners can do nothing for themselves, they [the mineowners and managers] say. The negro works in whatever way the bosses order. The white man must do as he does or starve.[1]

Intimating that things had reached the stage where a white miner had recently shot a Negro, "W.D." told MacDonald that he was considering going to California to see if conditions were better there. MacDonald's response to this information - obviously publicized by him with a view to enlightening miners in Scotland who might still also have felt inclined similarly to try their luck in the far west - was an interesting reflection of the strength of his conviction that throughout the United States, coloured labour, both Negro and Chinese, had effectively ruined the good prospects for emigrant colliers. Even before gaining reassurance on this matter from his forthcoming American trip of 1876, he had retained enough from the impression which he had formed of the condition of labour in 1869 to warn those who read "W.D.'s" letter that "My friend will meet the Chinamen on the Pacific slopes - quite as much a difficulty as the negro".[2]

Judging from the nature of the concern manifested by them in relation to the influx of Chinese labourers into the United States, it would seem evident, then, that so far as working class spokesmen such as Alexander MacDonald and Glasgow's "working class" journals, the North British Daily Mail and the

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1 "Deplorable State of Things in the United States": extract from a letter from "W.D.", an emigrant Scottish miner, to Alexander MacDonald, printed in ibid., 22 April, 1876.

2 Postscript by Alexander MacDonald to the letter from "W.D.", ibid.

Glasgow Sentinel were concerned, much of the interest in how the Negroes were working during Reconstruction would have been generated by the recognition that, with their free status, they constituted a most important new sector of American labour which could substantially influence the conditions and prospects of Scottish working class emigrants. Furthermore, a measure of interest on this level was directed specifically towards the quality of free Negro labour in the Southern States because at least in the earlier post-war years, the South was seen alike by Southern labour recruitment agents in Britain and by a proportion of Scottish immigrants in America as a potential destination for Scottish workers.

As early as the summer of 1865, P. Sinclair, a Scotsman writing from New York, informed the Glasgow Sentinel that, due mainly to the remarkable energy and adaptability of the American people, the land was already "smiling with abundance", with employment for all and wide opportunities in everything from domestic service to coalmining and shipbuilding. At the centre of this flourishing post-war revival he depicted the States of the defeated Confederacy: "The South is a new claimant on the people who desire to emigrate to a land where there is ample reward for industry and abundance of openings for the investment of capital". Skilled labour, he indicated, was in particularly short supply there, and the constituent States of the South would certainly require to gather a sizeable emigrant labour force fully to develop their resources.[1]

Three years later, a yet more direct and important statement describing the attractions of and incentives for Scottish settlement in the Southern States was made in a letter to Alexander MacDonald from Alexander Gardner, a miner, formerly well known in Glasgow, who had emigrated to Washington.

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1 "A Voice from America to the Working Men of Great Britain": letter from P. Sinclair, New York, Aug., 1865, in ibid., 23 Sept., 1865.

Full of exhileration over the extremely promising report which he had received from a party of friends just returned from a visit to Alabama and Georgia, he wrote enthusiastically to MacDonald in late 1868, "I tell you that must be your direction when you come out here again". With the application of "a little capital and a big amount of energy" there were, he indicated, large profits to be made from iron. But most significant was the general, vast extent of mineral wealth within the Southern States, requiring for its exploitation only "enterprising labour" - a commodity which, Gardner suggested, "you ought to be able to furnish...from your association".[1]

Gardner's effort to impress upon MacDonald the wisdom of enticing Scottish working men (and especially miners) to the Southern States during Reconstruction sprung from a desire to benefit materially both those who would be emigrating and - most importantly - those who would remain as labourers within the coalmining industry in Britain. It emerged from his letter that he foresaw the South with its rich resources and massive opportunities for white labour being used as a draining board for drawing off large numbers of British miners, so easing and improving the situation in Britain by leaving only sufficient numbers to do the work and therefore to gain increased power in dictating wage levels. He naturally envisaged MacDonald playing a key role in establishing a pattern of Scottish emigration which would meet these aims, and suggested that the miners' leader should organize a commission to go to the South to report on the prospects for workers there.

> Let all come who can take themselves out in the first place, afterwards you might help your poorer brethern by small loans; in five years you could quadruple your capital and have withdrawn from the labour market at home so largely that you could dictate the wages for those who remained...[T]he whole

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1 "A Cheering Voice from the United States": letter from Alexander Gardner, Washington, 26 Oct., 1868, to Alexander MacDonald, printed in ibid., 5 Dec., 1868. Original emphasis.

> working population of Great Britain might, in a few years, be put in affluent circumstances by your making a trip to these States.[1]

It was implicit in the communications of both Gardner and Sinclair that neither, in the first five years after the Civil War, regarded the main Southern labour force of free Negroes as a serious threat to the job opportunities existing for Scottish emigrants in that section of the Union. Presumably it was estimated by such observers that the black freedmen were not only simply incapable at that time of filling the positions for skilled labour which were so plentiful in the South but that their generally and persistently unsatisfactory approach to consistent labour of any kind also made their impact upon such occupations as coal mining much less disastrous, in terms of labour recruitment from Europe, than it might have been. We have already observed the manner in which Southern labour agents in Britain during the early Reconstruction years sought to woo prospective working class emigrants by attempting to persuade them that white labour was inevitably destined to replace free Negro labour in the South. And certainly the Glasgow Sentinel itself shared something of this attractive conviction in the period before it finally became obvious that the black population was to be a permanent fixture in the labour organization of the Southern States.

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1 Ibid.

There is no indication, however, that MacDonald himself became as a result of his 1869 trip wildly enthusiastic about the opportunities for Scottish mineworkers in the Southern States or that he ever adopted Gardner's plan for organized emigration. Before leaving for the United States in 1869, he was receiving glowing reports also from the Northern States regarding the conditions for miners - see, for instance, a letter to him from a former Motherwell miner John Barrowman, Clay County, Indiana, in ibid., 3 April, 1869, in which the writer compared the bad and worsening conditions of colliers in Scotland with the highly satisfactory conditions in the American mining industry.

At this time, too, the Glasgow Sentinel reported on how the current low wage rates for Scottish miners was creating a substantial emigration movement to the United States, with steamship lines booked up months in advance and thousands of miners being prevented from leaving only because of lack of funds - see ibid., 10 April, 1869.

In the course of a lengthy investigatory series on "Fields for Emigrants", the paper came round in mid July, 1869 to a discussion of Virginia. The State was approved as being as attractive for labour or capital as any part of America, the usual reference being made to the glut of ex-planters' land on the market suitable for purchase by emigrants. The most important feature recommending it to the Sentinel as a prospective centre of Scottish working class emigration was, however, the strong likelihood that white labourers would "oust" the Negro freedmen. Virginia (always "more suited" to "energetic white labour") was portrayed as a state which had been retarded economically by being restricted under the slave system to the production of cotton and rice. Describing its great and diverse potential, its "all but illimitable" resources, the Glasgow Sentinel predicted that Virginia would enjoy a new impulse to prosperity with the gradual disappearance of inadequate free Negro labour and its replacement by immigrant white labour from the North and from Europe.[1]

V. Denunciations of the freedmen's attitudes to law and order

It has become abundantly obvious that no facet of the American Negroes' transition from slavery to freedom could have aroused more critical scrutiny or more vigorous criticism from those elements pre-disposed to depict the black race in an unfavourable light, than did the Negro's attitude to voluntary labour and the practical nature of his response to his new obligation to provide for himself and his dependents by steady, satisfactory work. Since this was after all a pivotal - perhaps the central - issue determining both the progress of the Negroes themselves and the future prosperity of the South, the preoccupation of Scots (and more especially of the generation of Scots reared on self-help and self-made men) with this theme is understandable enough. Yet, there was of necessity more to assessing

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1 Ibid., "Fields for Emigrants", 17 July, 1869.

the quality of the American Negroes' adaptation during Reconstruction to their new status in society than merely examining their willingness, energy, and native competence as free labourers. And this the Scottish detractors of the freedmen well appreciated, for if the Negroes were extensively criticized for their misuse of opportunities to become worthy labourers, cultivators, and landowners, their response to freedom was also attacked in another sphere, namely, with regard to their attitude to law and order.

The earliest reference to unrest caused by the free Negro population appeared, appropriately enough, in that most tireless of denunciators of the black race, the strictly Conservative and law conscious Edinburgh Courant. Having digested the latest American news reports, it concluded as early as June, 1865 that the Negroes, and especially the coloured soldiers, were "giving more trouble than ever to their Yankee friends".[1] By the end of the year, it judged that the Negro was "still causing considerable trouble to his friends", and that it was highly likely that there would be "further mischief" from that quarter before the question of the "disposal" of the emancipated slaves was finally settled.[2] With the experience of the recent Jamaican revolt to reflect upon, the paper was prepared to accept that there seemed to be "a real danger" of a Negro uprising in America around Christmas time:[3] "The apprehensions of a negro insurrection in the South appear not to have been entirely destitute of foundation, if we are to judge from the fact that the military in Mississippi caught the blacks concealing large quantities of arms".[4]

The fact that no widespread, organized outbreak of violence occurred either at that time or in the months which followed did not, however, dispel the Courant's conviction that the freed Negroes constituted a dangerously

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 28 June, 1865.

2 Ibid., 11 Dec., 1865.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 13 Dec., 1865.

disruptive element within American society. Running constantly parallel to the paper's scathing representations of the Negro race as innately ignorant, idle, and irresponsible, and its blistering attacks upon the allegedly over-indulgent policies framed towards the freedmen by the Congressional Radicals during Reconstruction, was the ancillary theme of the Negroes' bellicose, unruly character.

Thus, in the autumn of 1867, with a deft backhander at the Republican Congressmen who by that time had imposed a military regime upon the white South in order successfully to push through a radical programme of legislation securing a wide measure of civil and political rights for the untutored, un-propertied freedmen, the paper commented that the "turbulent conduct" of the liberated Negroes in the Southern States was bound to be giving only slight encouragement to "advocates of equality". Texas was cited as providing a particularly vivid example of this behaviour, the Courant reporting that the black population of that State had stopped working, had armed, and threatened to administer local laws. Such a mood of discontent and intimidation was seen, however, to exist in greater or lesser degree throughout all the States of the South: "From all over the country, wherever the blacks exist in numbers, there are complaints of their violence and lawlessness".[1] And so far as the November elections of that year were concerned, the political fortunes of every Southern State were depicted as being entirely in the Negroes' hands, the whites having withdrawn their candidates under protest, or having become apathetic in the shadow of "well armed" Negroes, "determined to make the most of their privileges" and prepared to resort to general insurrection.[2]

Implicitly reinforcing its basic contention that the black slaves in America had been granted complete freedom before they were prepared,

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1 Ibid., 14 Sept., 1867.

2 Ibid., 11 Nov., 1867.

intellectually and temperamentally, to receive it, the Edinburgh Courant also sought to suggest that a very real threat to Southern peace and stability was posed by the Negroes' attitude to the natural disasters and setbacks which were inherent and unavoidable in the agricultural economy of the South but which the freedmen were unable to appreciate and to accept as such. In early 1868, readers' attention was accordingly directed, for example, to the serious discontent existing among freed Negroes whose rations and wages had been drastically reduced as a result of a recent failure of crops in the Mississippi basin.[1] Subsequent comment highlighted the apparently alarming increase in disturbance arising from Negro destitution; and any sympathy which might naturally have been felt by Scots for the freedmen in their state of "absolute starvation" was doubtlessly significantly reduced by the Courant's assertion that the gravity of the situation in Virginia was such that the whites had been forced to arm in self-defence.[2]

An uncontrolled and uncontrollable tendency to violence was recognized as a central facet of the Negro race's essentially emotional character, and one which was liable to erupt with disastrous consequences at the slightest provocation or at the contemplation of imagined injustice. Still ready in mid 1868 bitterly to denounce as "negrophilite fanatics" the Jamaica Committee and others who had consistently been "persecuting" Governor Eyre, the Courant carried on that same day a main editorial on the Republican Presidential Convention at Chicago in which it extended its view of the black race's dangerously belligerent nature to suggest that "it may...reasonably be expected that...[the Southern Negro] will cherish no other wish than that for vengeance upon the white man who so lately was his master".[3]

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1 Ibid., 4 Jan., 1868.

2 Ibid., 8 Jan., 1868.

3 Ibid., 6 June., 1868.

A taste of the spontaneous Negro violence which the Courant envisaged would yet further plague the South in Reconstruction was shortly afterwards seen by the paper to have spilled out in connection with the Convention itself: a number of Negroes in Washington, it reported, had attacked a body of whites over some disputed points relating to the proceedings at Chicago and had killed two of them.[1] During that same summer, accounts in American journals of "serious riots" in Texas, and widespread unrest elsewhere in the South strengthened the Courant's focus on the apparent upsurge in ruthless, lawless behaviour on the part of the freedmen, and on their frequent perpetration of full-scale riots.[2]

In other Scottish newspapers somewhat less rabidly hostile to the Negro race, however, there had also been established (similarly with the help of reports from the United States) by this time a fairly firm inclination to believe that the race riots and the general racial tension which was crippling the South were largely the fault of the black population. By way of offering a counterbalance to Northern Republican press accounts (extracts from which had been extensively quoted in the British press) which had designated an affray at New Orleans on 30 July, 1866 a "massacre" of Negroes, the Glasgow Herald, for instance, published a letter from a Glasgow man containing information which he had recently received on the affair from a woman resident in New Orleans. In this communication from the South, the Negroes were, predictably, held exclusively responsible for causing the disturbance. The incitement to the "negro riot" which had ultimately resulted in the deaths of many innocent spectators of both races had come, she wrote, when Negroes guarding the Institute in which was taking place the Convention to enfranchise their race had blindly and irresponsibly obeyed instructions to shoot the first

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1 Ibid., 17 June, 1868.

2 See, for instance, ibid., 6 Aug., 1868.

white man trying to interfere.[1] And in selecting news items from the United States press during Reconstruction, the Herald itself was not slow to draw on Henry J. Raymond's staunchly Johnsonian New York Times for quotes on the "lawlessness" of Negroes at Richmond and elsewhere.[2]

The slow seepage of information from America on the disturbances around this time also prompted Edinburgh's Daily Review to conclude that "The particulars of the riots in the South show that the Negroes are asserting themselves in a way that bodes trouble".[3] Expressing itself yet more forcefully on the Southern situation, the Dundee Courier, in the light of its conviction that the Negroes had instigated the serious riot at Richmond, decided that the freedmen seemed to have entirely taken leave of their senses.[4] Even the Aberdeen Herald, never over-anxious to ascribe an innately unattractive character to the American Negroes, showed in its attitude towards their position regarding Southern lawlessness and violence a distinct tendency to be influenced by adverse reports. Thus, by August, 1867 it was prepared to accept, without even questioning why, that the freedmen had been responsible for inciting serious riots at Democratic political meetings in Tennessee, and that bands of armed Negroes were "perpetrating outrages" in North Carolina.[5] Indeed, as far back as the spring of 1866, the paper had readily enough subscribed to a report that the lawlessness of unruly Negro soldiers was

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1 "Social Life and Politics in New Orleans": extract from a letter by a woman in New Orleans to a friend in Glasgow, contained in a letter from "R.A.", Glasgow, 28 Aug., 1866, in Glasgow Herald, 31 Aug., 1866.

2 See, for instance, Glasgow Herald, 23 May, 1867.
The New York Times, it has been demonstrated, "enjoyed an unofficial status as spokesman for the [Johnson] Administration" and was "[e]ver loyal to the President" - see Cox and Cox, Politics, Principle and Prejudice, p. 163. For further insights into the paper's championship of Johnson and the Conservative Republicans, see ibid., pp. 46, 48, 78-79, 83-85, 164-165.

3 Daily Review, 27 May, 1867.

4 Dundee Courier, 21 May, 1867.

5 Aberdeen Herald, 10 Aug., 1867. See also ibid., 27 July, 1867.

solely to blame for starting the well publicized Memphis riot.[1]

The Aberdeen Herald had been inclined to attribute a considerable measure of the turbulence and disquietude created in the South by members of the black community to the activities of "Radical negroes",[2] and so - much more ironically - did Edinburgh's very consciously "radical" organ of the late 1860s, the Reformer. The attitude of the Reformer (infrequently expressed though it was) to the unrest and violent disturbances which plagued the Southern States during Reconstruction serves to remind us how deep was the gulf which existed between the Radicalism of the post-war United States and the Radicalism of Scotland in the corresponding period. For far from exonerating the Negro race from fomenting violence and strife in the South, or even attempting sympathetically to analyse why it was restless and discontented, the Reformer actually implicated both the Negro character and the influence of radical thinking in stirring up trouble there.

In its very first issue, the paper, giving some consideration to the American approach to the forthcoming Presidential election, lamented the signs that serious disruption and dispute would be features of the electioneering campaigns and probably of the election itself. Significantly, it was particularly disgusted by the way in which South Carolina had almost been subjected to what it surprisingly chose to designate a "Radical riot". In an indictment which might well have caused an old American Radical like Thaddeus Stevens to turn in his newly dug grave, the Reformer squarely pinned the blame for the fracas which had occurred in the state upon "Radical negroes interfering with Democrats at a meeting and striving to precipitate a collision by cries of 'Kill the white monkeys', 'Kill the rebels', by firing off guns, and by other demonstrations".[3]

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1 Ibid., 19 May, 1866.

2 Ibid., 10 Aug., 1867.

3 Reformer, 15 Aug., 1868.

Subsequently, the Reformer generally kept in line with the tenor of this initial opinion in that it tended to carry short reports on Negro culpability for unrest in the South. Thus, slightly later in 1868, for instance, it attributed much of Louisiana's woes to the "general feeling of discontent among the blacks in that section" and to the tangible evidence of this in their practice of arming and holding nightly drills.[1] There remained a distinct readiness (the more striking in that it was manifested by a purportedly "radical" journal) to give full credence to American reports which depicted the freedmen as the fundamental source of most of the South's turbulence, while making virtually no reference to the injustices and illegalities so frequently perpertrated by the forces which the Negroes occasionally felt compelled to react against.[2] Apparently indifferent about gaining and conveying any real insight into the situation in America during Reconstruction, the Reformer was by and large content to record such succinctly sensational information as that contained in the statement that armed bands of Negroes had been "plundering and defying the authorities in Savannah."[3]

Across the country in Glasgow, a yet more venerable "radical" journal, the North British Daily Mail, was following much the same pattern in its assessment of the character and cause of unrest and violence in the Southern States. Here, too, the role of Negroes in stirring up antagonism and armed confrontations with the whites was seen to be instrumental. The paper addressed specific attention to the climate of race relations in the South during the summer of 1867, when its constant concern with the effect on the British economy of significant changes within the structure of the American

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1 Ibid., 12 Sept., 1868.

2 The white Democrats in the Southern States were, however, on occasion charged by the Reformer with exacerbating racial antagonisms, and with contributing to the creation of a riotous atmosphere in the South - see ibid., 19, 26 Sept., 1868.

3 See ibid., 9 Jan., 1869.

economy caused it to comment upon the post-war exodus of white cotton planters from the Southern States to Brazil.

So far as Britain's prosperity was concerned, the Mail was not at all perturbed about the removal of this element to its chosen South American destination. On the contrary, it rejoiced that Brazil had always been one of Britain's best customers, and that "Every expansion of the basis of our cotton supply will secure still more the stability of...the cotton manufactur[ing] industry".[1] What did disturb the paper, however, was the realization that the harsh policy of the North, with its misguided conception of setting the freed slaves above the old master class, had precipitated the mass clearance from United States soil of the "flower of the Southern people". The Mail at this stage foresaw the States of the South becoming the exclusive province of the Negro race, and it viewed the prospect grimly. It believed that the "turbulent character" of the Negroes in many places throughout the South already boded ill for the future, and that a full scale war of races was probably fairly imminent. "Social anarchy, combined with political oppression, is driving out the Southern whites",[2] the editorial declared; and the intolerable anarchical elements were simply unruly, embittered Negroes, spurred on and bolstered up in their violent efforts to oust the white planters by an unscrupulous and self-seeking body of avaricious Northern men.

By November of that year (1867), however, taking cognizance of the resurgence of interest which the Southern whites had shown in the recent State elections and of the new hopes which the Democratic party seemed to be instilling into them, the Mail was relatively less morose in its estimation of the future for the Southern States. Yet, at the same time its condemnation of the continuing "fitful sway of semi-savage negroes" over the Southern

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1 North British Daily Mail, 10 June, 1867.

2 Ibid.

planter class and of the Negroes' alarmingly disruptive conduct remained total. After the Civil War the black population had, it was asserted, discovered a pugnacity and a "power of contrivance" which few had given it credit for. So entrenched did the Mail apparently judge the violent, insurrectionary streak in the American freedmen's character that it was prepared to imply that there existed a liaison among the coloured populations of the United States, the West Indies, and Cuba which could lead to all manner of revolutionary and anarchical upheaval. Clearly, the message put across by the Glasgow paper was that emancipation in the United States had been attended with very grave dangers for the security and wellbeing of both the Southern and Northern States. Two or three years of freedom, it felt, had totally changed the Negro: "hostilities have infused no little fire into his African blood, and he has become rather dangerous to his keepers".[1]

Accordingly, while the North could be censured for its part in early inciting the Southern Negroes to dominate and harass the Southern white population, by late 1867 the Mail believed that the North itself was coming to appreciate the potentially disastrous nature of the policy it had pursued, and to recoil from it. Certainly, this was the interpretation put upon the fall off in support for the Republican party evidenced among Northerners at that time. The spectacle of the Southern elections, it was suggested, had finally shown up to the North the deplorable intimidatory and threatening character of the black freedmen: "armed negro mobs and negro vigilance committees are alarming into opposition the very men who have felt it their duty to protect the blacks from oppression". In the North British Daily Mail's reckoning, the people of the Northern States had ultimately become revolted by the idea of Negroes legislating and administering in the place of disenfranchised whites, having earlier begun to grow increasingly

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1 Ibid., 19 Nov., 1867

disenchanted with the race on account of its turbulence, its peremptory demands for land, and its arrogance and insolence towards the Southern planters.[1]

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the attitudes of both the North British Daily Mail and the Reformer towards the question of Negro discontent and lawlessness in the Reconstruction South was their complete failure as self-styled "radical" journals to make any real, sympathetic effort to understand the peculiar problems and frustrations facing a people recently emancipated and forced to live in the midst of the society which had earlier enslaved them, a society at many turns bitterly hostile to the comprehensive nature of the political and social privileges conferred upon the new freedmen. Little energy was expended in attempting to present the other side of the coin - the factor which was at least as important as "Negro turbulence" in contributing to Southern violence and racial discord - namely, the widespread provocation, resentment, and generally nefarious treatment meted out by a very substantial proportion of the Southern whites to the Negroes during these early Reconstruction years. The easy, the expedient way of explaining the apparently constant nightmare of violence, disaffection and unrest which was wracking the body politic of the South in the post-war era was to blame it on some totally new, hitherto unknown force for disruption, that is, the free Negro population.

Clearly, neither the North British Daily Mail (which had, after all, vigorously supported the Confederacy during the Civil War) nor the newly-founded Reformer espoused a radicalism which involved sincerely championing the American freedmen in their struggle to hang on to some semblance of their social and political liberty in the face of white intimidation. In both journals, the radical commitment as reflected in outlooks towards the United States at this period was displayed in quite another (and perhaps more conventional) direction. Quite simply, it was represented in the

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1 Ibid., 5 Dec., 1867.

paramount desire to see America truly reunited and flourishing, its progress unimpeded by protracted feuding and factiousness in the Southern half of the Union. Far more important for the Mail and the Reformer than the impulse to equate their radicalism with that of the American brand by seeking to attenuate the degree of Negro culpability for Southern riots or by attempting to determine and denounce the cause of Negro unrest was the British radicals' eagerness to see the equilibrium of the United States speedily restored and social, political and economic stability secured in order that the abstract virtues of democracy could once more be seen to parade their strength before the world in the shape of a strong, confident United States of America.[1]

Entirely free from even any token sympathies with transatlantic radicalism and the legislation for Negro rights which it pushed through Congress during Reconstruction, the Scotsman was perhaps even more adamantly convinced of the leading part played by the freedmen in keeping the South in a state of perpetual turmoil and unease. The issue of violence in Southern society was, indeed, one on which Scotland's most influential newspaper was totally and consistently prejudiced against the Negro race. Apparently unable (or at least blindly reluctant) to envisage the chivalrous, civilized Southern whites degrading themselves by fomenting vulgar riots and disorders, the Scotsman invariably charged the emancipated Negroes with starting and prolonging the recurrent skirmishes between the races. In a comment prompted in early 1867 by a serious clash at Mobile, for example, the paper assured its readers that riots in the South following the end of the Civil War had been mainly due to

> the obstreperousness of the negroes in asserting their newly-acquired rights; and as the...telegram [from America] relates that 'the negroes at Richmond and New Orleans are manifesting

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1 Although the North British Daily Mail had certainly been willing to endorse the division of the great American Union by supporting the Southern bid for "independence" during the war, in like manner to Glasgow's other radical journal, the Glasgow Sentinel, it was fully prepared after the defeat of the Confederacy to revert to its old policy of extolling the virtues of democracy and freedom as exhibited in the hallowed American Republic, one and indivisible.

> a disorderly spirit', it may be supposed that the disturbance at Mobile is attributable to the presence there also of a portion of that 'disorderly spirit'.[1]

The Scotsman remained ever ready to relay short American news items the content and bias of which were typified in one account of how a meeting of "Radicals" at Brownsville, Tennessee, had ended in a massive disturbance and three fatalities as the result of a Negro having made a speech in which he had declared that "Every man who has owned slaves ought to have his heart cut out".[2] Nor did the first-hand reports from the paper's United States correspondent seek to encourage any impression other than that the black population in the Southern States was a constant source of agitation and distress. Adding an extra dimension to the paper's already unfavourable view of Negro conduct, he stressed the malign impact of official Northern policy and unscrupulous Northern individuals upon the impressionable mentality of the freedmen. Deeply regretting the inability of President Johnson to realize that his own obstinacy and interference were driving the Congressional Radicals to ever greater extremes, the correspondent in mid 1867 was depicting the South as awaiting in trepidation the next move by Congress. There was, he indicated, tremendous fear and anxiety among the Southern whites, offset by widespread exultation and expectation among the Negroes: "I fear that the latter are beginning to entertain new views as to the righteousness of confiscation. They have had bad advisers among them lately". He foresaw "sad times" ahead for the South should the joint clamour of Negroes and Radicals be successful.[3]

Yet it was perhaps impossible for a reporter who claimed to offer a true picture of the South as it was in the Reconstruction years totally to

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1 Scotsman, 17 May, 1867.

2 Ibid., 29 May, 1867.

3 Ibid., (U.S./c., New Orleans, 8 July, 1867), 27 July, 1867.

ignore or dismiss the importance of white attitudes and behaviour in creating an atmosphere fraught with tension and hostility. And to some degree the Scotsman's correspondent did indeed acknowledge this factor, lamenting over the white Southerners' entrenched "passion, prejudice, and hatred", characteristics which had led them to pursue "the worst possible course" of blind opposition and intransigence rather than the sensible policy of cultivating "cordial unity with the negroes in working out reconstruction".[1]

But the great burden of blame for perpetuating the unhappy state of the South was seen to rest firmly with the Negro population. The correspondent discerned a plain desire on the freedmen's part to make full use of their new powers to "oppress" their former masters, and judged that the "intolerance which has always flourished in the South" had been given life in the post-war era in the form of Negro vigilance committees which, through various methods of intimidation, operated for the eviction of white farmers.[2]

This trend of analysis persisted in the correspondent's subsequent reports throughout the Reconstruction period. By 1871, for example, holding the recently organized State Negro militia largely responsible for the escalation in discontent and violence in South Carolina, he insisted that the Negro militia-men "have become more and more troublesome, and latterly on several plantations they have refused to continue work, but prefer to drill in squads and companies, so as to augment the number of their regiments".[3] Three years later, a particularly serious armed clash between the races at Austin, Arkansas, again inclined him to the conclusion that a full-scale racial war would probably be the ultimate culmination of the drift into

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c., New York, 2 Nov., 1867), 18 Nov., 1867.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid. (U.S./c., New York, 14 March, 1871), 27 March, 1871.

anarchy and upheaval in the post-war South. Once more, a criminal disrespect for law and order on the part of the free Negroes was seen to be the principal cause of the "bloody battles" recently experienced in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi: "In nearly every instance the negroes have been the aggressors. The possession of political power, for the judicious exercise of which they are wholly unfitted, has rendered them insolent and quarrelsome, and the slightest disturbance of the peace brings their guns and pistols into use".[1]

It becomes increasingly clear that the tendency to attribute to the Negro race an over-emotional, unreflective and irresponsibly arrogant character was in the vast majority of cases instrumental in contributing to the ease with which these Scottish commentators pronounced the American freedmen guilty of instigating the bulk of the violent riots which were debilitating the South. This deduction is supported by their repeated readiness to accept the fact of deplorable large-scale Negro unrest and violence while apparently giving no serious consideration to the possible causes of it. There was, in effect, a readiness to believe that the Southern Negroes during Reconstruction were troublesome and riotous for no good, legitimate reason at all but simply because as free men, (and as free men intoxicated with the desire to take a bloody vengeance on their ex-masters[2]) full rein was given to the inherent ruthless bellicosity of their nature. Thus, in a leader published towards the end of the Reconstruction era, the Scotsman was constrained to remark that the content of many American reports on the

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c., New York, 12 Aug., 1874), 25 Aug., 1874. Here again the correspondent was, however, prepared to recognize that the Southern whites were also bent on a course of setting the Negroes at defiance and that both races were becoming increasingly ready for conflict.

2 See, for instance, Glasgow Herald, 23 Oct., 1876, in which the Negroes of South Carolina are represented as "acting on the aggressive" for the express purpose of "strik[ing] off a few old accounts against the white enemy".

South which had reached it over the post-war years suggested that the Negroes had "quite relapsed into that state of savagery in which their forefathers were living when they were imported from Africa".[1]

In the same vein - but in a comment which is the more significant considering the paper's earlier attempts to appreciate the freedmen's difficulties - the Aberdeen Journal also demonstrated at that time its conviction that the savageries and inadequacies of the Negro character were vital forces generating the turbulence of the black race in the Southern States. Condemning as "aggression and insult" the decision of President Grant to disband all white rifle clubs in South Carolina in the period immediately prior to the 1876 Presidential election, and to send troops and militia into the State, the Journal declared that the Negroes would more than hold their own in any race war:

> The rifle clubs of the whites had certainly been called for. The outrages indulged in by negroes, demoralised alike by their slave training and by their too sudden emancipation from control, have been of a kind as brutal as the doings of the Bashi-Bazouks...and the horror to which such outrages have given rise in the breasts of fathers and husbands and brothers... should have some consideration on the part of President Grant and his Cabinet.[2]

The conversion of the Aberdeen Journal to so stern and unfavourable an estimation of the behaviour of the American Negroes after liberty[3] conveys something of the impact which widely held, preconceived notions about the innate savagery of all coloured races, coupled with deep disappointment at the continuing disarray of Southern society, could have upon Scottish observers generally well enough disposed towards the freedmen during the earlier stages of Reconstruction. Even for those who had been among the

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1 Scotsman, 17 Oct., 1876.

2 Aberdeen Journal, 6 Nov., 1876.

3 See also ibid., 2 Dec., 1876, in which the paper declared that the racial collisions which had occurred in the wake of Grant's order for direct military intervention in South Carolina had been "uniformly" caused by Negro aggression.

most sanguine in this respect, the state of the South in 1877 was perhaps hardly such as to encourage wildly enthusiastic eulogies on the unfaltering progress of the Negroes since the end of the Civil War.[1] And as the unsettled conditions remained, the formidable barrage of criticism directed throughout the Reconstruction years towards the former slaves for their alleged failure or desire to appreciate the virtue and necessity of self-reliance, and their apparent contempt for the establishment of an orderly, peaceful community in the South, must inevitably have had at least some small effect in helping to sap away a little of the optimism of those who had early believed in the Negro race's capacity for rapid improvement and elevation.

VI. Favourable assessments of the Negroes' response to freedom.

To imply, however, that Scottish comment - press and otherwise - on the black population's approach to freedom was totally dominated by dismal, unfavourable assessments to the virtual exclusion of confidently hopeful attitudes would be to present an entirely erroneous impression of the general nature of the country's outlook towards this critical aspect of Reconstruction. For within Scotland at that time there also existed a very substantial element which discerned in the responses of the free Negroes a real and earnest desire to get ahead, to make the most of their liberty by gaining an education for themselves and/or their children, and to live in peace and harmony with their Southern white neighbours. And, most especially in the earlier stages of Reconstruction, these views were fully as vigorously and persistently propounded by their advocates as were those which sought to denigrate the behaviour of the freedmen. Nor, as we shall see, can these two camps of opinion be completely separated: for such was the complexity

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1 In this connection, it is worth bearing in mind the disillusioned attitude of the philo-American Aberdeen Free Press, expressed on 17 Sept., 1873 - see above, pp. 194-198.

of Scottish examination of this issue, so wide was the range of facets to be considered that some measure of apparent contradiction can be discovered, with, for example, a newspaper generally committed to a policy of deprecating the Negroes' misuse of freedom occasionally offering a surprisingly complimentary comment on some specific aspect of the black population's conduct.

It will have become evident that the views of the freedmen as irresponsibly idle, dependent and improvident and as a constant source of violent turbulence were for the most part firmly grounded in the belief that the Southern Negroes had been rashly emancipated before being given the necessary preparation for liberty. In something of the same way, however, for those who conversely welcomed the abolition of American slavery as one of the greatest triumphs of the age, it was almost an article of faith that the liberated slaves would prosper and generally prove themselves worthy of the freedom which had been won for them at such high cost. The optimistic confidence which characterized forecasts from such a source was well illustrated in the early autumn following the peace by the strongly evangelical Original Secession Magazine.

Hailing the abolition of slavery in the United States as an act which had brought the world "one step nearer the millenial glory",[1] the magazine declared that the experience of the immediate post-war months had already proven false the predictions that the Negroes were incapable of self-reliance and self-government, and that they would speedily sink into lawlessness and anarchy. It found the degree of tranquillity and peace then existing in the South "remarkable", considering the circumstances, and identified in the situation the power of Divine guidance: "there is much reason to bless God, whose hand is visible in restraining the multitude

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1 "Slavery and its Downfall" in Original Secession Magazine, 1865-1866 New Series, Vol. 7, p. 290.

set free, as well as in working their emancipation".[1] Presumably, then, the future prospects for the free Negroes could only be bright and hopeful, assured (and deserving) as the race seemed to be of the benevolent interest and intervention of The Deity in its cause.

In the daily newspaper press, essentially similar sentiments, shorn of the profound religious foundation and mode of enunciation, were expressed in relation to the freedmen and liberty by the faithfully and avidly pro-emancipationist Dundee Advertiser. On the same day on which it jubilantly announced the fall of Richmond, and extolled the high calibre and integrity of the Northern abolitionists,[2] the Advertiser, in a separate leading article, happily dismissed as "nonsense" the prophesies of the disasters which had been expected to accrue from Negro freedom and enlistment in the Northern army. Even at this early stage - encouraged, perhaps, by euphoria over the Northern victory - it was prepared to assert that one of the most curious features to emerge from the Civil War was the manner in which all the predictions by Southern sympathisers regarding the Negro and slavery had been falsified.[3]

Reinforcing its deliberate editorial policy of sympathetic support for and confidence in the freed Negroes of the United States, the Advertiser sprung to attack implications such as those made in the Times that emancipation in the West Indies had been a failure. Those white Jamaican planters who had perished with abolition were dismissed as having been

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1 Ibid., p. 294

2 Naming over an impressive list of individuals active in the Northern anti-slavery cause, the paper proudly proclaimed that the small abolitionist party in the North comprised "all the highest intelligence, gifts, and genius amongst the Northern people...an array of names to which the South can produce no parallel". It rejoiced that these, "once a small and feeble band", had now become "a great and controlling power" - Dundee Advertiser, 18 April, 1865.

3 Ibid., "Will there be a Guerilla War?", 18 April, 1865.

"indebted" and "enervated"; and it was scathingly remarked that emancipation had after all been undertaken in the interest of the slaves, not of the masters. Moreover, the paper judged that on balance, the results of abolition in the British colony had been indisputably good. There was, to be sure, a careful acknowledgement that emancipation "did not suddenly make them [the West Indian Negroes] wise, or moral, or truthful; but it made them free", and a sophisticated appreciation of the fact that the ex-slaves would naturally want to take a long holiday from labour at the outset. But in the long run, the Advertiser predicted, the liberated Negroes would display new acquisitive goals, new ambitions, and a desire to enjoy the fruits of their own land. Indeed, at the very beginning of the Reconstruction era in America, Leng's journal felt justified in defending the character and capabilities of the Negro race by proclaiming that the condition of the emancipated coloured population in the West Indies had already vastly improved, the Negroes having acquired a commendable love of property and an increasing willingness to work for it.[1]

With regard to the United States itself, general satisfaction with the freedmen's progress in this same direction was in fact maintained throughout the greater part of the Reconstruction period. Distressed, for instance, by the intense, unabating bitterness and antipathy of the Southern planter class towards the black race and towards all Federal measures for social reorganization and integration in the South, the Dundee Advertiser judged that the most hopeful feature of the Southern scene in 1873 was the growing self-reliance of the Negroes. Those in South Carolina were depicted as making the most of the co-operative agricultural system of that State and quickly becoming landowners on their own account. And on a more general level, the steady, independent perseverance of the freedmen throughout the

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1 Ibid., 15 Aug., 1865.

South was even seen to offer the most probable ultimate solution to the "race difficulty" besetting that section:

> The negroes may in course of time gravitate to those States where the climate and surroundings are congenial to their nature, leaving the 'irreconcilables' and the women who refuse to be 'reconstructed' to reconcile themselves to the inevitable as best they may.[1]

It had indeed long been a conviction firmly held by the Dundee Advertiser that in terms of adaptation, reasonableness, co-operation and fortitude, the conduct of the liberated Negroes was far more praiseworthy than that of the Southern whites (and especially the planter class) in the early post-war years. The paper took an overt pride in the fact that it had all along disputed the gloomy prophecies voiced by the ex-slaveowners, and relayed and embellished for the British public by the Times and its minions, on the question of the actions and attitudes of the free black population. Thus, the release from prison of Jefferson Davis became the basis for an editorial which contained a spirited attack on the white South for its prediction that the "native ferocity" and "physical and moral inferiority" of the emancipated Negroes would reduce the Southern States to complete economic ruin and social anarchy: "Taking them as a whole, their behaviour has been a constant lesson in charity and forebearance which might well shame even the haughty Southerners".[2]

The readiness and ability to work responsibly for an approved goal, and the measure of adaptability and restraint exhibited in their general conduct, were twin attributes imputed to the American Negroes not only by the Dundee Advertiser but echoed also by other elements both within and outwith the Scottish newspaper press. Since the threat of chronic instability and even of a possible reversion into full-scale insurrection was seen by

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1 Ibid., 12 Sept., 1873.

2 Ibid., 17 May, 1867.

many (and particularly by pro-Southerners) in Britain to hang constantly over the United States in the immediate post-war period, it was especially reassuring for Scottish admirers of America to be able to point out that no widespread unprovoked acts of aggression and armed violence on the part of the free Negro population had contributed to producing such a possibility at that time.

We have already noted the tributes paid by several Scots to the conduct of the slaves both on the Southern plantations and in the Federal armies during the Civil War itself.[1] Adding his voice to these was one of the foremost Scottish supporters of American democracy and of the recently triumphant Northern cause, W.E. Baxter: and he implicitly extended his comments on this theme to cover the Negroes' behaviour in the months following the end of armed hostilities. Speaking at a freedmen's aid meeting in Dundee in late September, 1865, Baxter followed the city's radical newspaper in rejoicing that the "dire predictions" as to the horrors which would be consequent upon emancipation had not yet been fulfilled. On the contrary, the freedmen had "manifested a patience, kindliness, and forbearance beyond all praise". Nor, he suggested, had they refrained from indulging in revenge, plunder and violence simply because they loved their ex-masters (a point which he in any case found debatable in view of the large numbers which had quickly joined the Northern armies) or because they were ignorant. Rather, their exemplary conduct was seen by him to have its basis in a very positive virtue - the fact that the overwhelming proportion of the Negroes in the Southern States were Christians.[2]

Less than six weeks after Baxter had extolled the black population of the United States in this vein there occurred in Jamaica the uprising which,

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 605-606.

2 Report of speech by W.E. Baxter at a freedmen's aid meeting held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

as we have seen, caused many Scots (not all of whom were usually critical in their judgements) to question whether Christianity would ever have more than an essentially superficial effect upon the mind of the Negro race. Confidence in its basic character and qualities was by no means completely shaken in every quarter, however. Vehemently rejecting the charges of barbarism hurled at the Jamaican Negroes, the Caledonian Mercury, for instance, called up the example provided since emancipation by the American freedmen of the race's capacity for appreciating and respecting good government.[1] With its strong radical attachment to the political institutions of the United States and its tradition of wholehearted support for the Northern and the abolitionist forces during the Civil War, the Mercury was understandably doubly relieved that the Southern Negroes did not exacerbate the difficult process of reuniting the nation by engaging in unruly and disruptive behaviour. It was accordingly with an obvious sense of deep satisfaction that the paper at the beginning of 1866 quoted Governor Jenkins of Georgia on how extremely well the black population had conducted itself since emancipation. Stressing that similar testimony had come from many other sources, the Mercury nevertheless took pleasure in recording that it was "especially encouraging" to learn of such a report by a Southern Governor, at a time "when apprehensions are expressed as to the conduct of the negroes during the holidays".[2]

Once it had become clear that the mass uprising of liberated Negroes in the South, widely prophesied to take place around Christmas, 1865 would not materialise, the Glasgow Sentinel joined its radical Edinburgh contemporary in celebrating what it saw as the remarkably reserved and tranquil mood prevalent among the black community in its difficult period

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 16 Nov., 1865. See above, Chapter V, p. 571.

2 Caledonian Mercury, 6 Jan., 1866.

of transition. Like the Caledonian Mercury, the Sentinel was desperately anxious that America should be restored to her full, unified democratic strength as rapidly as possible, and this sentiment the Glasgow journal repeatedly demonstrated in its editorial columns. Apart, then, from a certain genuine sense of astonished admiration which it apparently felt towards the freedmen for their restraint and moderation, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Sentinel's paramount desire to see the resurgence of a strong United States, unhampered by internal feuding and disorders, caused it the more to appreciate the quiescence of the free Negroes.

The paper fully realized that the normal dangers involved in emancipating at one stroke four millions of slaves had been dramatically compounded by the fact that this feat had been accomplished by war. But considering the temper of the Southern States in early 1866, it was not the liberated slaves but the force of public opinion in the white South, "so tainted by pro-slavery proclivities", which was seen to constitute the real threat to stability and progress in the conquered section. As against the inimical intransigence of Southern statesmen, editors, clergymen, and planters, the freedmen's attitudes and conduct represented a vastly superior example:

> That the negroes will on all occasions conduct themselves properly is more than could be expected. Born in slavery and brought up in ignorance, it is a marvel that their emancipation has not been attended with greater excesses; and their general good behaviour gives the lie to the assertion that the negro is incapable of freedom.[1]

Fears of a Negro rebellion were written off as deriving probably from the guilty consciences of the ex-masters, "who naturally dread retribution from the hands of those whom they formerly treated so badly".[2]

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, "The American Freedmen", 13 Jan., 1866.

2 Ibid.

We have already observed[1] something of the feelings of unease and pessimism regarding the conduct of the freedmen communicated to the Scottish public by members of the old slaveocracy and by others in the South during the early years of Reconstruction. Not all of those with close personal knowledge of the Southern situation at that time were eager, however, unreservedly to condemn the Negroes' response to their new status. Fairly open and lenient in her assessment, for instance, was the lady who wrote in the spring of 1866 from Columbia, South Carolina, to a friend in Glasgow. In common with similar private correspondence from Southern women, her letter was much concerned with relating the cruel outrages perpetrated on Southerners by the Federal troops during the war: and indeed her strongest hatred and abuse was reserved for these. Not only did she sedulously describe the callousness of the soldiers involved in the actual pillaging and stealing but she also stressed the crippling deprivation and poverty which they had left Southern families to face during the ensuing Reconstruction period.

Significantly, the "Yankees" were also condemned for their inhumanly harsh treatment of the freed Negroes. The letter clearly implied that any serious trouble which might emanate from individual Negroes or from the black race in general could with justice be imputed at source to the bad influence, the ill-treatment, and the destitution to which the ex-slaves had been subjected by the Northern victors. Displaying a sympathetic paternalism towards the "poor creatures", the writer judged that the Negroes had generally done "remarkably well", considering the great change involved from slavery to freedom. Especially praiseworthy in her view was the faithfulness demonstrated by many of them towards their old masters.[2]

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1 See above, pp. 164-167.

2 Private letter to a Mr. Taylor of Glasgow from a lady in Columbia, South Carolina, 17 Feb., 1866, printed in Glasgow Herald, 29 March, 1866. It is indicated that the recipient of the letter had himself visited Columbia during the war, leaving around the time when it was burned.

While printing views of this nature, the Glasgow Herald itself remained for the most part stolidly of the opinion that the collective response of the American Negroes to freedom was characterized by lawless disorder and idleness.[1] Occasionally, however, usually in the light of some particularly heartening sign of real Negro progress and effort, the Herald temporarily suspended its criticisms. This tendency was especially marked in relation to the black population's attitude towards the acquisition of education, and the Herald's comments on this aspect of the use of freedom, along with those of other Scottish observers, will be looked at in some detail presently. But by late 1867, in the course of an exceedingly sanguine editorial on the state of freedmen's schools and freedmen's education in general, the paper also allowed itself to be cautiously encouraged by the fact that in their overall behaviour since emancipation the Negroes had certainly falsified the many "evil predictions" made about them. At least at this specific stage in the Reconstruction process, the Herald felt it could validly concede that the freedmen were striving hard to fit themselves to become good citizens.[2]

This essentially ephemeral type of recognition of the Negroes' placidity and desire to succeed as useful members of the Southern community was also reflected in some small measure in the reports of the Scotsman's American correspondent. It has been noted that none was more positive and persistent than he in insisting that the Negro race constituted a dangerous source of lawlessness and disruption within Southern society.[3] Yet, during the earlier phases of Reconstruction, the correspondent was fleetingly prepared to acknowledge a spirit of restraint as existing within the black population. Surveying the political life and structure of America in the spring of 1867 and finding it in an alarming state of flux and disorganization, he concluded,

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1 See above, pp. 260-261, 270.

2 Glasgow Herald, 22 Oct., 1867.

3 See above, pp. 268-270.

for instance, that the fragile post-war peace had been preserved up until that time only by the curbs on the Southern whites' ability to get control of the Negro vote and by the yet more important fact that the Negroes themselves had behaved "pretty well"- even, he admitted "remarkably well".[1]

Although conceding this much, it was not however in the nature of the correspondent's reports to convey a simple, straightforward impression of the freed Negroes' behaviour as essentially responsible and totally reassuring. Accordingly, alongside this brief reference to their good conduct there was contained the less favourable information that the Negroes, having by then grown accustomed to their new position, were becoming increasingly anxious to wield political power, and correspondingly more susceptible to the malicious influence of Northern advisers:

> [T]he teachings of their Northern leaders are having their effect upon them; they begin to assert the practical recognition and exercise of the rights about which they have hitherto only talked; and they give their former masters very clearly to understand that they must not hope for any political affiliation with them.[2]

Yet, if the correspondent detected signs that the freedmen were likely to act less passively and less admirably as they began more and more to "feel the ground firm beneath their feet",[3] he was equally aware at that stage of the serious shortcomings in the approach of the white Southerners to the altered post-war condition of the South. Severely criticizing their preoccupation with the lost cause, with political discussion and with their hatred of the North, he found them painfully slow at adapting to the changed circumstances. In this regard, he was therefore to suggest that "after all, the negroes have shown more good sense lately than the whites". Despite the looming threat that the freedmen, in alliance with unscrupulous Northerners,

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1 Scotsman (U.S./c., New Orleans, 15 May, 1867), 4 June, 1867.

2. Ibid.

3 Ibid.

might soon begin to abuse their newly-won privileges, by late 1867 the Scotsman's correspondent could still assure the critical Edinburgh journal that on the whole, they had "borne well" their rapid rise, and that so far there was no real reason to complain of the way in which they had performed their new functions.[1]

If the United States correspondent was not strictly consistent in his standard line of vilifying the free Negroes as a basically turbulent, aggressive element during Reconstruction, neither was he absolutely committed to portraying them as uniformly idle and worthless. We have earlier observed how, like Robert Somers (commenting, incidentally, a matter of months later), he was very considerably impressed by the deposits lodged in freedmen's savings banks throughout the South during the five years following the Civil War.[2] And while the laudations in this connection were inextricably bound up with the rigorous application of the self-help principle to the struggling American Negroes, the clear declaration that it was possible for the fortunes of the black race substantially to parallel the variable fortunes of the white was in itself an admission of some import. Especially heartening in the correspondent's view was the fact that 70% of the withdrawals from the savings banks had been traced as going to the purchase of land, the building of houses, the establishment of businesses or "mechanical enterprises".[3]

Perhaps the nearest that Glasgow's leading Whig journal ever came to expressing a favourable opinion on the industry displayed by the freedmen was when the Herald announced in the summer of 1866 that while in some districts of the cotton growing South Negro lethargy had created widespread desolation, in other areas the Negroes were "working well" and contributing towards "vigorous and promising crops".[4] Ironically, it was left to a

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1 Ibid. (U.S./c., Richmond, Virginia, 30 Oct., 1867), 16 Nov., 1867.

2 See above, p. 154.

3 Scotsman (U.S./c., New York, 16 Jan., 1870), 31 Jan., 1870.

4 Glasgow Herald, 13 July, 1866.

Southern man, writing to a friend in Glasgow seven years later, to furnish the most generous assessment of the black population's diligence, adaptation, and ability ever to appear in the columns of this particular newspaper.

Having returned in 1872 to live in the South after a lengthy absence, the writer informed his Scottish acquaintance that he considered the new era to be infinitely preferable to the old. Criticizing the vanished hierarchical political system in which the planters had held "as despotic sway as over their plantations", he was even prepared in some measure to extenuate the activities of the Northern carpetbaggers. While admitting their rapacity and costly errors in administration, he judged that they had been necessary, in view of the Southern planters' aloof hostility, to help "the uninitiated negroes"; and he was moreover generous enough to conclude that they had laid the groundwork of the system which would lead his State of South Carolina to prosperity.[1]

His warmest enthusiasm was reserved, however, for the Southern Negroes themselves. With no prevarication, he confidently asserted that "The progress made by the black race in a few years is wonderful, and to-day [,] even [,] they will compare favourably with European populations". In addition to the several "good coloured doctors and lawyers" who were practising in Charleston, he drew attention - more remarkably - to the competence of those freedmen who were high ranking officials or ordinary members of the State Legislature:

> I must say that they give quite as much satisfaction as most of the corresponding officers in the other States. The negro seems to have an instinctive idea, and a correct one at that, of politics.

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1 Extract from a private letter to a Glasgow man from a friend in Charleston, South Carolina, 10 March, 1873, printed under the heading "Reconstruction in South Carolina", in ibid., 4 April, 1873.

He was fully convinced that from every point of view emancipation would be an enormous benefit to the South, considering the "great and unremitting" efforts being made by the liberated Negroes to improve their condition and advance their status. As well as urging their complete fitness for self-government, the Southerner praised their frugality and sound economic sense, and indicated that they were buying lands on a scale which would soon provide some measure of ease and independence for most members of the black community. The Negroes' resources and productivity were greater in his view than at any time in the past, so that all things considered, he pronounced emancipation "an unqualified success". This optimism spilled over into the sphere of race relations, the writer assuring his Glasgow friend that Southern white prejudice would progressively wear away as the freedmen became increasingly refined, educated, and wealthy. Indeed, he identified this process as already being in motion, and jubilantly predicted that "A few years more, and every difference here existing between the white and black races will have disappeared".[1]

This unequivocal, remarkably favourable comment from Charleston serves as a reminder of the way in which forceful reports from the South were frequently accorded a position of some prominence (even, importantly, by influential journals usually disseminating in their editorial columns a totally antithetical view) from which they could conceivably influence Scottish public opinion on the question of the American Negroes' willingness to work and ability to prosper during the immediate post-war era. So far as this issue was concerned, however, there was clearly no dearth of native Scots who were eager, in the context of a generally sympathetic attitude towards the struggles and strivings of the black population, to offer on their own initiative testimony to the conscientiousness, the capability,

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1 Ibid.

and the dogged perseverance of the ex-slaves.

Within the Scottish newspaper press itself, for instance, the radical Caledonian Mercury was already in early 1866 voicing sanguine convictions broadly similar to those communicated much later in the South Carolinian's letter. Without that gentleman's first-hand knowledge of the Southern situation or his lengthened perspective on the Reconstruction years, the Mercury was prepared even at that early stage to assert an extremely optimistic view of the Negroes' future. If the prospects for an early establishment of co-operation and general good relations between the two races seemed bright to a Southern observer in 1873, so only one year after the end of the Civil War the Caledonian Mercury - despite the embittered racial disharmony prevalent in the South at that time - had also believed that once the initial irritation of the white population had worn off, the Negroes would be fairly treated "even by their worst opponents".[1]

And the paper by that point was likewise reassuring in its message that half of the freedmen had since the war found steady employment and were working well and prospering.[2] Reports to this effect contained in the American press were assiduously quoted, extracts from accounts such as the one by a B.C. Truman, writing from Mississippi to the New York Times,[3] studding the general news columns. Nor was the Mercury slow to dispute the common assertion that the Negro race was in essence incorrigibly irresponsible and improvident. In July, 1865, for example, it flung a sarcastic barb at those who charged the American freedmen with these failings when it ran under the heading "A 'Worthless Nigger'" the story of how an ex-slave (by then a barber) had subscribed no less than £4,000

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 17 April, 1866.

2 Ibid.

3 See ibid., 24 Feb., 1866.

towards the building of a church for coloured Methodists in Louisville, Kentucky, and had in addition volunteered to build it himself if his contribution proved insufficient to cover the cost.[1]

Information direct from the United States which illustrated the commendable character of the Negroes' response to free labour and self-reliance was naturally an invaluable - a virtually indispensable - asset for those elements in Scotland which sought to persuade the Scottish people as a whole to offer a little more interest in, a little more sympathy, a little more money for, the plight of the freedmen. For those involved in such endeavour, something of the importance attached to first-hand accounts of this type is demonstrated by the content of the Annual Report of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society for the year ending 15 February, 1866.

Much concerned about the material and spiritual welfare of the ex-slaves, the ELES devoted an important section of its Report to indicating something of the extent of its own practical efforts and those of women elsewhere in Scotland in the freedmen's aid cause, and to stressing the urgent need to provide yet more help in that direction. This latter exercise was undertaken with the stated intention of "excit[ing] substantial sympathy from our readers",[2] and in order to achieve that goal, one of the principal methods employed was the publication of highly encouraging reports from field-workers in the American movement for freedmen's aid.

There accordingly appeared the full quotation of a statement by a chaplain in Mississippi, in which he fulsomely praised the Negroes' capability as industrious and highly productive free labourers.[3] And

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1 Ibid., 26 July, 1865.

2 Annual Report of the ELES for year ending Feb., 15, 1866, p. 8.

3 Ibid., p. 12.

attention was also focussed on the substance of a report by Colonel Eaton, of the Philadelphia-based Western Freedmen's Aid Commission, the predominant message of which was that "the freed people are manifesting a desire and a purpose to do for themselves, to labour for their own support, exceeding the most sanguine hopes of the friends of humanity".[1] Quotations from various accounts furnished by teachers of the black race in the Southern States supported Eaton's testimony, indicating as they did that the proportion of Negroes claiming support from charitable and governmental agencies was very small compared to whites in the same circumstances.[2]

Reiterating their great anxiety to "promote a feeling of sympathy and interest" in the freedmen, the members of the ELES readily acknowledged that these extracts had been cited for the practical purpose of benefiting that cause - to show that, with a little help over the transition period, the Negro would be qualified to become a useful United States citizen, "and a productive member of the great corporate family of nations".[3] The appeal for widespread Scottish support for the cause of the American freedmen was renewed with equal fervency in the Society's Report for the following year. And once again, in the business of proving that the Negroes, given ordinary advantages, were not indolent and were fully deserving of aid from British philanthropists, substantial reliance was placed upon first-hand reports from the United States.[4]

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1 Report by Colonel Eaton, Western Freedmen's Aid Commission, in ibid., p. 13.

2 Ibid., pp. 11-12.

3 Ibid., p. 14.

4 Annual Report of the ELES...during the year ending 4th April, 1867, pp. 13-14. Notable here is a quotation from information communicated by a correspondent in Georgia regarding the increase in deposits at the branches of the National Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company.

So far as attempts made within freedmen's aid circles to explode the stigma of Negro laziness and irresponsibility are concerned, however, a yet greater impact in terms of direct American testimony was surely made by those speakers from the United States who graced the platform of every major Scottish public meeting on behalf of the cause and who delivered from there statements based on close personal knowledge of the black race's character and aspirations. Foremost in impinging his views upon the Scottish populace in this context was almost certainly the Rev. Sella Martin. Himself a former slave, this most popular and eloquent of the American freedmen's aid agants to campaign for funds in Scotland never tired of vigorously assuring his audiences of the Negroes' strong desire to work, and to work in such a manner as to win for themselves a real measure of comfort and prosperity.

Accordingly, in the City Hall, Glasgow, during late September, 1865, at what would appear to have been the earliest public meeting held in Scotland for the freedmen's aid cause, Martin devoted the great bulk of his address to rescuing the Negro character from the adverse traits which were commonly ascribed to it. As a class, the Negroes, he argued, were not lazy. In order to prosper as other men did, they only required funds to give them a decent, reasonable start on the business of supporting themselves in the land of their birth. On this occasion, he also took the opportunity to refute allegations that they were disposed to riot, suggesting that since they had never rioted while enslaved, it was hardly likely that they should wish to do so after the main motive for discontent had been removed. From the frequent warm applause which punctuated his speech, and the "loud and prolonged cheering" which greeted its conclusion,[1] it may

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting held under the auspices of the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society in City Hall, Glasgow, 22 Sept., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865.

be assumed that Martin's urgent message did not fall on stony ground.

In the course of a series of addresses which he subsequently gave under similar circumstances in the larger Scottish towns throughout the autumn and winter of 1865, Martin persistently included references to the basically worthy and industrious nature of the American Negroes. A matter of four days after his appearance at Glasgow's City Hall, he was again expounding on this theme to a crowded public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Ward Chapel, Dundee. Eloquently presenting the case for Britain's involvement in this cause, he again insisted - to appreciative applause - that the Negroes were extremely willing to work where they could get employment with reasonable pay. Interestingly, with that finely pointed sagacity which characterised much of his public utterances, he suggested that to expect the freedmen, with the ignorance and degredation of slavery as their recent background, immediately to work better than the white labourer, would be to make the Negro superior to the white man.[1]

The City Hall, Perth, became, two days later, the next venue for the promulgation of these views. There, Martin assured an enthusiastically receptive audience that if the charges of laziness levelled against the free Negroes were to some extent sound in relation to a small element of the black population, it could certainly be insisted with equal validity that a similar proportion of white Americans were just as indolent. Once again, he strongly emphasized the conviction that the freedmen needed only "an open field, free of oppression" to show that they were capable of sustained

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.
Accompanying Martin at this meeting, as a deputy from the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission, was the Rev. Dr. Storrs, who endorsed the references to the worthiness of the Negro population in the Southern States.

endeavour and substantial achievements.[1]

The specific conception of the Negro character and temperament spread abroad by the Southern planter class was more directly attacked the following evening, when at Aberdeen Martin addressed a public freedmen's aid meeting held under the auspices of the Aberdeen Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. Both in America and Britain, he indicated, objections to movements for freedmen's aid frequently turned on the assumption that the Negroes were inferior and lazy, and basically disposed to be content in a state of slavery. Utterly rejecting this, Martin pointed out that the Negroes had not shown themselves lazy and contented with their lot when they left the security of the plantations for "hard work and the risks of the army". He went on to suggest that the very inconsistencies in the several arguments put forward by the detractors of the black race tended to make nonsense of their asservations regarding intrinsic laziness and irresponsibility:

> It is the old slaveholding argument - to say at one moment that the slave if free would not work, and in the next breath declare that if free he would take the bread out of the poor Irishman's mouth (laughter). Well, if able to take bread out of any body's mouth, [it is] ...likely he [will] ...be able to put it into his own.[2]

That Sella Martin's earnest strivings to convince his audiences of the American Negroes' desire to work and of their ability to do so on their own account did have some positive impact at least on the minds of those actively concerned to further the cause of freedmen's aid in Scotland is

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in City Hall, Perth, 28 Sept., 1865, in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held under the auspices of the Aberdeen Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, in Belmont Congregational Church, Aberdeen, 29 Sept., 1865, in Aberdeen Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865.
It may be relevant here to recall that roughly two months earlier, Martin had implicitly denounced the Irish element in America for its hostility to the Negroes and its desire to see them removed from the country altogether - see his veiled reference to "the foreigners in America" (original emphasis), in Chapter V, p. 669, above.

perhaps indicated by the attitudes later publicly demonstrated by one individual who had played a prominent part at the meeting in Aberdeen. Occupying the chair on that occasion was one Alexander Brand, an accountant in the city. In his opening address, he referred to the "high honour" which he found it both to preside over such a gathering and to take part in "a cause so worthy of sympathy and support".[1] Later that autumn, he was again afforded the opportunity to indulge this enthusiasm when he delivered a short address to a public meeting for the freedmen's cause at Peterhead.[2]

Unfortunately, the text of Brand's speech at the Peterhead meeting was not published in the local press; but it seems likely that it would have assumed broadly the same pattern as the one subsequently given by him to a similar gathering at Banff. On this latter occasion, Brand appeared as the principal speaker, describing in some detail the existing condition, mood and prospects of the freed Negroes and urging upon the audience the pressing need for increased Scottish support for the cause. The fact that he and others who accompanied him were designated "a deputation from Aberdeen"[3] suggests that the organizers of the Banff public meeting expected the visitors to enlighten the gathering by communicating the information on the freedmen's state and requirements given by the American speakers to the Aberdeen meeting two months previously. And certainly, in the business of seeking to dispel the notion that the black population were idle and worthless, Brand admirably transmitted to the Banff audience the strength and spirit of Sella Martin's convictions. Thus, his stirring

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1 Speech by Alexander Brand at the freedmen's aid meeting in Aberdeen, in Aberdeen Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865. For further reference to Brand, see below, Chapter VIII, p.450; Chapter IX, pp. 147, 161.

2 Report of a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held at Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, 27 Oct., 1865, in ibid., 3 Nov., 1865.

3 Report of a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held at Banff, 11 Dec., 1865, in Banffshire Journal, 12 Dec., 1865.

appeal on behalf of the freedmen was largely moulded around a forceful emphasis on the Negroes' willingness to work and their great desire to acquire education. As Martin had done, so he too stated that the freedmen, if helped in the initial stages of liberty, would rapidly become able to support themselves. And he furthermore pronounced them capable of favourably influencing American politics in the near future.[1]

The permeation of this favourable outlook throughout the ranks of Scottish workers in the freedmen's aid cause was undoubtedly encouraged and intensified by the sympathetic utterances occasionally voiced on this issue by so prestigious a personage as the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie. The tremendous popular appeal and ability to draw a crowd which Guthrie retained into old age (indeed, after his retirement in 1863 his platform drawing power on any one occasion was probably increased from the fact that he spoke so seldom in public) must have been an invaluable asset to the freedmen's aid cause, on which he was prepared to expend his energies: and the peculiar value for this movement of his attachment to it is well brought out in the nature of his defence of the Negro character against the charge of laziness.

Guthrie's approach to the proposition that the Negro would not work was simply to pour humorous scorn over the whole idea. Addressing a public meeting for freedmen's aid in Edinburgh in early December, 1865, he told a huge gathering that if he were a newly emancipated slave, he would certainly not be prepared immediately to apply himself to work. Far from censuring the Jamaican Negroes for having after freedom worked only five to six hours instead of twelve, he declared, to laughter and cheers from the audience, that he would have been like them. The whites in Italy, he remarked, took a siesta when it became too hot, and he found it to the Negroes' credit

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1 Report of speech by Alexander Brand at Banff, in ibid.

that they also had enough sense not to work in the blazing heat.[1]

Sella Martin was not present at that particular freedmen's aid meeting, and the task of enlightening the Edinburgh public by means of first-hand knowledge on the condition and needs of the Negro population fell to another American Missionary Association delegate, the Rev. Dr. J.C. Holbrook of New York. Holbrook concentrated his talk exclusively on the urgency and magnitude of the labours confronting America in aiding and elevating the emancipated slaves; and in seeking to convey the formidable scale of the operation, he even tended, if anything, to stress that the new freedmen were improvident (because as slaves they had had no need to look to the future) and indolent (because slavery had provided no reasonable motive to work).[2] It had therefore devolved upon Guthrie to provide on that occasion the blunt assertion that the American Negroes were not inherently lazy and that their actions since liberty had given no valid cause to deduce that they would prove so. How far his own firm convictions on this matter were shaped by the persuasions of Sella Martin - with whom he must certainly have been on terms of fairly close personal acquaintance by that time, Guthrie having publicly declared his support for Martin during the summer of 1865 - is not clear. But that he <u>was</u> receptive to the influence of others whose knowledge of the Negro race was infinitely greater than his own is evidenced by his reference at the Edinburgh meeting to the conclusions of Livingstone on the attitude of the Negroes towards free labour. Focussing attention on Livingstone's most recent book, Guthrie offered as his ultimate argument against adverse judgements on the black race's

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in <u>Scotsman</u>, 6 Dec., 1865.

2 See report of speech by the Rev. Dr. J.C. Holbrook at Edinburgh, in <u>ibid</u>.

performance as voluntary workers the explorer's statement that wherever the Negro received a fair day's wage for a fair day's work he laboured as readily, efficiently and cheerfully as any man.[1]

Clearly, those Scots who channelled an earlier abolitionist zeal into the field of attempting to involve an ever increasing proportion of the Scottish public in the business of aiding the ex-slaves had a very real, tangible purpose in convincing others (and in being themselves thoroughly reassured) of the American Negroes' desire and ability to work steadily and well, and to become successful, self-reliant citizens. Yet, as the case of the Scotsman's United States correspondent demonstrates, the attribution to the black population of such qualities as industry, thrift and good management was by no means confined merely to those who were thus pre-disposed to portray the freedmen in as favourable a light as possible. Not all Scottish travellers to the United States during Reconstruction shared Robert Somers' essentially gloomy view of the Negro character and capabilities, for instance. And from accounts of certain other contemporary visits it is clear that personal insight into the condition of the post-war South could equally well produce favourable conclusions on the perseverance, progress, achievements and general outlook of the black population.

Conveniently bridging the gap between the traveller who merely recorded his findings in a more or less objective manner and the zealous propagandist in the Negroes' cause was David Macrae. Macrae had undertaken his trip to the United States is 1868 simply in order to see the post-war state of the nation and to learn more about the country. He was to return an official spokesman for the American Missionary Association, a position which he had obviously been prepared to assume largely on the basis of his favourable

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1 Report of speech by Guthrie at Edinburgh, in ibid. This statement was greeted with "loud cheers".

impressions of the Negroes' response to freedom in the years following the Civil War.

Drawing on his general experience of the state of the black community in the South, he tersely but revealingly stated that "I was glad to find the condition and prospects of the emancipated slaves better than the reports circulated in this country had led me to expect."[1] The essentially encouraging and optimistic view which he thus formed from personal investigation of the Negroes' progress accordingly called forth his spirited refutation of the standard charges of idleness and thriftlessness so commonly made against the black race.

The argument that the Negroes were, and always would be, utterly incapable of responsible economic management was dismissed with conspicuous ease. Suggesting that freedom, "which compels self-support and offers powerful motives to thrift", gave the Negro "just the training he needs" to overcome any innate tendency to improvidence,[2] Macrae marshalled an impressive array of facts and statistics to prove that since emancipation, the freedmen had amply demonstrated their desire and their ability to save and spend wisely. Before travelling South, he had come across "many thrifty, prosperous, and even wealthy blacks in the North,"[3] and he was at pains to stress that "Amongst the better class of emancipated slaves in the South I found similar provident habits rapidly forming".[4]

Central to this promising aspect, he judged, was the mass of well-patronized savings banks, friendly societies and building associations springing up to cater for the freedmen, and the extent to which the purchase of houses and land was being carried on amongst them. Especially in the States of Georgia and South Carolina, he was tremendously struck, both during and after

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1 Macrae, The Americans at Home, pp. 252-253.

2 Ibid., p. 257.

3 These included the members of the 18,000 strong Negro population of Philadelphia who, Macrae related, had as early as 1837 acquired $550,000 worth of real estate and $800,000 worth of personal property - ibid p. 257

4 Ibid., p. 257.

his sojourn there, by the Negroes' drive and competence in the sphere of personal economy and finances, and by the degree of prosperity so early enjoyed by a substantial proportion of them. At the time of his visit in 1868, he had been cheered to discover that in the single town of Macon, Georgia, no less than two hundred buildings had already been purchased by members of the black community, and further impressed by the fact that during the month he was in Savannah, the freedmen - despite a bad season - had paid $5,679 into the savings bank. The scale of this latter achievement had been equalled elsewhere, so that in a mere three years after the close of the Civil War, $1,500,000 had been deposited in freedmen's savings banks throughout the South.[1]

Retaining as he did in the years following his journey to the United States a close interest and concern in the condition of the ex-slaves, Macrae subsequently discerned no slackening off in the rate of their advancement. On the contrary, he judged that in the period from the late 1860s to mid 1870s their progress had been even more rapid than that displayed in the immediate post-war era. Thus, when the popular revised edition of The Americans at Home appeared in 1874, it contained an up-to-date eulogy on the continuing successes and achievements of the Negroes in the Southern States:

> During this last year 180 negroes have bought places around Augusta; 220 have built houses in Atlanta; at Columbia, where one black mechanic has already amassed a fortune of $50,000, forty heads of families have purchased city property for homes, at from $500 to $1,200 each, within six months; and on the islands near Charleston, 2,000 freedmen's families have located themselves, built their houses and cabins, and paid for their little farms...The South Carolina Legislature in 1869 appropriated $200,000 for the purchase of large estates, cut them up into farms, and offered them for sale to the freedmen and the poor of all colours. Forty thousand acres of this land were sold within a twelve-month...The Freedmen's deposits in their Savings Banks have rolled up now to an aggregate of

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1 Ibid., pp. 257 - 258.

> $12,000,000; and...[it is authoritatively stated that] sums are withdrawn...in a large proportion of cases...for the purchase of lands and houses. The deposited savings of the past year exceed those of the year before...[by] $558,000. And yet we are told that the negroes are incurably thriftless![1]

While Macrae was therefore deeply concerned to disabuse the Scottish public of the idea that the American freedmen were reckless and incorrigible spendthrifts, he was equally intent upon demolishing the twin allegation that they were inherently lazy. Acknowledging that he had heard in the South a great many complaints about Negro indolence and "the impossibility of getting the blacks to work without some kind of compulsion", he did concede that "I certainly saw a great number of them idle, especially in the towns".[2] Having once stated this, however, Macrae went on to examine the root causes of Negro idleness during Reconstruction, and hence to understand and largely to excuse it.

With regard to the important accusation against the freedmen of failure consistently to undertake paid labour, for instance, Macrae's enquiries served to convince him that a critical factor in creating the reluctance of many Negroes to accept work on cotton plantations was the unsatisfactory system of payment by share-cropping. Like Robert Somers at a later date, Macrae protested that the black labourers could not fully appreciate the inevitable vicissitudes of fortune experienced under such a scheme; but unlike the later observer, he was much more sympathetic towards the Negroes as the uncomprehending victims of the system; "It can scarcely be wondered at if compulsion would have been needed to make the negroes work under such circumstances".[3]

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1 Ibid., p. 258.

2 Ibid., p. 254

3 Ibid., p. 255.

On the question of the freedmen's perplexing tendency to forsake the country districts where the labour was needed and to swarm into the towns, Macrae showed similar eagerness to extenuate the Negro action by drawing attention to the normally undisclosed motivations behind it. Thus, while acknowledging that a certain section of the Negroes had indeed moved from the rural areas simply "to eat the bread of idleness", he asserted that many more had done so for reasons of safety, to get their children to school, or "to seek for work that would be paid for".[1]

Even with reference to blatant cases of indolence for which no real excuse or explanation could validly be offered, Macrae was predisposed to adopt a remarkably considerate attitude. Rather than condemning outright all instances of extreme, inexcusable Negro laziness, he carefully stressed that in passing judgement upon the incidence of such conduct among the American freedmen it was absolutely vital to bear in mind two facts. The first was that slavery had been partially to blame: "It was part of the teaching of slavery that a gentleman was one who lived without working. Is it wonderful that some of the negroes, who want now to be gentlemen, should have thought of trying this as the easiest way?" The second fact was yet more basic, embracing the contention that so far as idleness was concerned, the Negroes of the Southern States were not exceptional people: "I found more activity and more desire for work amongst the poor negroes than amongst the poor whites".[2]

Essentially, in his desire to introduce a rational vein of thinking into popular outlooks on the alleged laziness of the Negro character, and to consider the American freedmen's attitude to labour in the broader perspective of the attitudes of other races, Macrae shared common ground

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1 Ibid., p. 255.

2 Ibid., p. 255.

with such successful orators as Sella Martin and Thomas Guthrie. The affinity of his reasoning with that of Guthrie was perhaps especially close. Certainly, the core of Guthrie's message to the public meeting for freedmen's aid in Edinburgh was substantially reflected in the subsequent conclusions of Macrae:

> I suppose it is natural for many, especially in a hot climate, to be idle when they can afford to be; and the question is, whether a black man, if he can afford it, has not just as much right to be idle as a white man has? Why should more love of work, for work's sake, be expected of the black man than of the white man?[1]

Having in this explanatory manner recognized that a proportion of Southern Negroes no less than a proportion of Southern whites were inclined to idleness, Macrae, however, sedulously emphasized that such behaviour was by no means the general rule. In support of his conviction that the majority of the freedmen were industrious and willingly applying themselves during the Reconstruction years to gainful employment, he cited the satisfactory extent of the marketable cotton crop for 1868 (2,700,000 bales, 500,000 more than the total produced in 1865, and "within 30% of the amount produced in the golden days before the war"[2]), and the highly favourable testimonies of whites who were devoting constant close attention to the conduct of the emancipated Negroes.

Wherever he had gone throughout the South in 1868 he had been assured by officers of the Freedmen's Bureau that the Negroes were finding work, and that the number requiring Government aid was "rapidly diminishing". His own observations helping him to accept this, he was two years later equally ready to accept a still more rosy report prepared by an American acquaintance who annually investigated conditions in the Southern States. This account for 1870 was particularly glowing, recording more "unmistakable

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1 Ibid., pp. 255-256.

2 Ibid., p. 256.

signs of improvement" than ever "in every aspect of life, in material comfort, in education, in morals...On every hand there are tokens of steady progress".[1] During his own visits to public works and so forth, Macrae had also learned from Bureau agents that black labour had been found to be altogether more satisfactory than that offered by poor whites.[2]

Praise for the quality of free Negro labour and for the general conduct of the ex-slaves was not gathered by Macrae exclusively from the ranks of those whose peculiar form of involvement with the race tended to encourage a sympathetic attitude, however. Amongst the Southern planters and employers whose opinions he also gauged, he was clearly impressed by the number who readily asserted that the freedmen had measured up well to the obligations and responsibilities of liberty. Macrae himself decided that those employers "who were able to pay" had no difficulty in getting the Negroes to work. A "Northern capitalist" settled in North Carolina who paid his workers regularly, informed him that he had had far more freedmen applying for work than he had been able to hire. From a leading rice planter in Georgia, who was a native Southerner, he got the assurance that the Negroes were actually working better than they had ever done as slaves. The same man also declared that he had found through personal experience that both in terms of strength and endurance, and the amount of work done, the black labourers were far superior to the white.[3] Further evidence that this particular outlook was popular among influential Southern men was afforded Macrae in the content of The Land we Love, a Southern magazine edited by a former Confederate General, "and therefore not likely", as Macrae observed, "to be biased in favour of the negro versus the white man".[4]

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1 Ibid., pp. 253-254.

2 Ibid., pp. 256-257.

3 Ibid., p. 256

4 Ibid., p. 257. The magazine was specifically concerned in stressing the superiority, for Southern purposes, of Negro labour as against Irish labour.

The emanation of these opinions from such quarters naturally increased very significantly Macrae's hopes that a bright future stretched out before the black race in the Southern States. He became, indeed, fully convinced that "in some occupations, the very ones for which there is the largest and most constant demand, the negro is quite able to hold his own [against white competition]".[1] Almost certainly, similar favourable Southern testimony on the Negroes' response to freedom was even more directly responsible for inducing the Marquis of Lorne likewise to conclude that the position of the free Negro was secure in the South. Assessing the situation nearly two years earlier than Macrae, Lorne was already prepared in 1866 to assume that the Negroes would continue to form "the labouring part of the [Southern] population" with no need to fear white competition; and that, furthermore, "there will be many who will rent land, or own it themselves, and cultivate it as farmers".[2] Instrumental in bringing this critic of the black race to the opinion that "it will be very long before the negro is forced, by competition, to abandon the soil on which he now promises to be a tolerably steady labourer"[3] were the good reports on the freedmen's industry which he received from a substantial element within the white community of the South.

Lorne discovered that there existed among the Southern planters a "universal" desire to "get the old servants back to their work again", and the willingness to pay them fair wages. Given these incentives, Negro labour, he noted, although still tending to be "unsettled", was beginning to return to the plantations.[4] Even in sectors of society with no direct involvement in closely monitoring the attitudes and progress of

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1 Ibid., p. 257.

2 Marquis of Lorne, A Trip to the Tropics, p. 253. See also ibid., p. 265.

3 Ibid., p. 336

4 Ibid., pp. 336, 337.

the freedmen, he also detected a predominant urge to express satisfaction with the conduct of the Negroes in the immediate post-war period. Thus, at the University of Virginia, he found that among the academic staff

> The friendly feeling of the whites to their late slaves was very strongly insisted on, and...[the professors said that the Southerners] remarked with justice that there was at present no reason for any grudge against them.

The dons with whom Lorne spoke also assured him that it was only when they were "incited to be bumptious by the Yankees" that the Negroes made themselves at all "obnoxious", and they declared that the black race was "now working surprisingly well".[1]

The vital importance of Southern white commendation of Negro behaviour after emancipation was that for those Scottish travellers to whom it must have come as something of an unexpected revelation, no less than for those (like David Macrae) who heartily rejoiced in it, such testimony was by its very nature virtually unchallengeable. Hence the Marquis of Lorne, despite his natural inclination to brand the Negro race innately idle and worthless, was forced, as a result of the sanguine views which he frequently encountered in the South, to add a new dimension to his outlook or else arrogantly to reject the conclusions of those who were much more experienced and knowledgeable on the freedmen's conduct than he - and who were, in addition, the very backbone of that Southern society and ethos which he had so admired both before and during the Civil War, and for which he retained the highest regard. And so far as Macrae was concerned, the favourable pronouncements of Southern employers on this issue clearly confirmed him in his own personal belief that the freed Negroes were by their own efforts prospering, and (perhaps still more importantly) gave him increased confidence firmly to declare this belief.

While it was obviously to the advantage of those wishing to extol the character, endeavour and abilities of the black race after freedom to set

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1 Ibid., pp. 306-307.

great store by the encouraging evidence of white Southerners, such evidence was also a valuable asset to others whose prime objective it was to demonstrate how the mighty American republic had in every respect been positively strengthened by the abolition of slavery. One interesting illustration of the manner in which information from the South could be employed in the service of this latter aim was afforded by no less a personage than Andrew Carnegie.

In a panegyric on the United States written almost ten years after the end of Reconstruction, Carnegie triumphantly emphasized how all the early gloomy predictions by the Southern slaveholders that the Negroes would abuse their freedom had been totally falsified, and he depicted the examplary conduct and progress of the emancipated slaves in terms of another glorious stride forward by the great American nation. And putting the seal of indisputability on the basic assumption that the freedmen had adapted extremely well to their changed status and had shown a marked interest in improving their condition was the testimony which the white South no less than the rest of the country gave to this:

> Under the reign of freedom the material resources of the South have increased faster than ever before... The universal testimony is that the former slaves rapidly develop the qualities of freemen and exhibit, in a surprising degree, the capacity to manage their own affairs... They are now quite orderly and well-behaved, and much more industrious than before. 1

In a far less tendentious assessment, Sir George Campbell, writing less than a decade before Carnegie, had arrived at broadly the same belief with regard to Southern opinion on the performance of the Negroes as free labourers.

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1 Andrew Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy or Fifty Years' March of the Republic (London, 1886), pp. 41-42. During the Civil War, Carnegie had been an exceptionally staunch supporter of the North - see Wall, Andrew Carnegie pp. 153-154, 182. And in his glowing tribute to the institutions of his adopted country he made it clear that he believed slavery had "threatened the Republic's life" - see Carnegie, Triumphant Democracy, p.17.

Campbell's investigatory tour in 1878 had revealed to him the existence of a general consensus within the South that the freedmen made "admirable labourers" when under adequate supervision. The Southern employers, he found, considered their labour exceedingly effective in "all undertakings carried on under professional superintendence", and were consequently quick to pronounce them "quite ready to do a good day's work for a moderate day's pay, provided it is fairly and regularly paid". [1] Recognizing, as David Macrae and Lorne had done before him, that leading Southerners strongly preferred a Negro work force to a white one, Campbell significantly brought to bear the perspective of the late 1870s - the period of nascent turbulence and antagonisms in labour relations within the Northern States - in seeking to explain this preference. Among Southern proprietors and influential employers already accustomed to black labour and unfamiliar with white workers there was, he suggested, a distinct, deliberate tendency to rely greatly on Negro labour as a safe conservative element which would not create the pattern of difficulties and violence which emanated from the organised combinations of white labourers in the North. [2]

While according due attention and importance to the views of prominent Southern whites, however, it was the essence of Campbell's purpose in investigating conditions in the South at that time to form his own independent conclusions on the nature of the black population's response and adaptation to free labour. As a long-serving, able, and dedicated colonial administrator, Sir George was clearly not an observer of the kind who was largely content to rest fully assured even by the general opinion of the white South, but rather an observer who instinctively sought to bring his own personally related knowledge and experience to bear on the examination of this issue.

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1 Campbell, White and Black, p. 142.

2 Ibid., p. 143.

In so doing, he did in fact similarly arrive at a basically favourable assessment of the Negroes' conduct as free labourers. Substantiating the claims of the South's leading men, he stated that the allegation of chronic idleness commonly made against the Negro character "seems to me quite disproved by experience". He felt that the worst which could be said of the black workers on this score was that they were somewhat undependable and prone to take themselves off for a while after labouring some time. Only, he decided, in "quite rare and exceptional" cases - and only then as a result of no work being readily available and little assistance or guidance being given - had the Negroes sunk into a degraded condition; and he was at pains to point out that he personally had come across none in such a state, "though I have heard it asserted that there are such". [1] From his own observations, he concluded that the freedmen were acquitting themselves excellently when labouring in small numbers in company with, and under the immediate control of, employers on small farms, and when working on their own account. Apparently endorsing the Southern employers' proviso that adequate supervision was necessary in order to secure the best results from Negro workers, Campbell judged that it was only when such supervision was lacking, as in the case, for instance, of Negroes working in large numbers on very big farms, that they were apt to take things easy and idle away the time. Looking at the situation with the eye of the colonial administrator, he indicated that this set of circumstances was the rule "with most such races". [2]

As against their creditable showing as free labourers, Campbell was less impressed with the Negroes' progress in the sphere of domestic economy and thrift. Since in terms of wages he judged the freedmen to be "very well off",

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1 Ibid., p. 143.

2 Ibid., p. 143.

on the question of saving he felt that the balance of evidence was decidedly against them: "It seems pretty clear that providence is as yet the exception, and that the rule is a light-hearted way of spending their money as they get it". [1] He was nevertheless optimistic about the future development of a more responsible attitude in this regard, believing that the Negroes, "like other races", would become prudent concerning their resources as they acquired desires and ambitions which necessitated saving. His mild strictures on the American freedmen for their persistence in a reckless, thoughtless attitude towards their earnings were therefore in no wise based in an inflexible assumption that the Negro race was innately thriftless and wasteful. Rather, he was concerned to convey his sincere regret that in the exuberance of freedom, a large proportion of the first generation of black wage earners in the South had tended to live "too freely and generously" and as a result had failed, during the Reconstruction years, to save sufficient money to buy land and thereby to increase their independence as, with greater foresight, they might have done. [2]

Yet even this realization made but little inroads upon Campbell's essentially sanguine view of Negro progress since emancipation. Even his disappointment over the fact that fewer Negroes than he had hoped had graduated to the position of fully independent landowners was qualified by an emphatic acknowledgement that there nevertheless <u>were</u> by that time a substantial number of Negro families throughout the South cultivating their own farms, and very many more who had acquired their own houses and small patches of land. [3] He was especially heartened by the spirit of self-help and desire to work for the betterment of their material condition which he found among the Negroes who rented lands, with a view to buying, on the Sea Islands

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1 <u>Ibid</u>., p. 144.

2 <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 145-146.

3 <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 152-153, 155.

of South Carolina. Tremendously impressed during his visit with the way in which these "low country negroes" who had been "less civilised by white contacts" then most American slaves, had enthusiasticly set about the cultivation of lands which had been in a decadent state, Campbell affirmed that

> The fact that the men readily avail themselves of the opportunity of hard and remunerative work and make most admirable labourers at it - as good, I am told, as any in the world - is of itself a practical answer to any suggestion that they are unwilling to work. [1]

Part of Sir George Campbell's delight with the Sea Islands project was derived from the conviction that the Negroes were doing well there because there had been instilled into them "that craving for land which of all things leads to thrift". [2] In this connection, he was full of praise for the enlightened proprietors of South Carolina for realizing (as British colonists, he averred, too often did not) that the best method for fixing a permanent population from which to draw the necessary work force was to encourage the settlement of Negroes on small holdings as owners. The practice of apportioning small lots of land to freedmen who would ultimately purchase it was seen by Campbell to be highly conducive both to the improvement of race relations and to the stimulation among the black population of habits of frugality, good independent management, and self-reliance. With this as a contributory factor, he was on the whole "very agreeably surprised" to find the position of the emancipated slaves so good, and extremely optimistic about the current situation, seeing it as a very good ground on which to base hopes for a bright, prosperous future for the Southern Negroes.

He clearly considered also that to a large extent the freedmen themselves were adequately playing their part in laying the foundations for this promising future for their race. The great majority having so far proven themselves

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1 Ibid., p. 156; see also ibid., p. 358.

2 Ibid., p. 157.

"well inclined and well-doing", he predicted that the Negroes would certainly do well under favourable circumstances and settle down into an excellent peasantry:

> All that is now wanted to make the Negro a fixed and conservative element in American society is to give him encouragement to, and facilities for, making himself, by his own exertions, a small landowner; to do, in fact, for him what we have sought to do for the Irish farmer.[1]

It would appear, indeed, to have been Campbell's idea to see established as a principal stabilising factor in Southern society a large bloc of solid, thrifty, conservative and proudly independent Negro smallholders. And he was confident that provided outstanding difficulties "settle[d] down peaceably", his ideal could be fully realized:

> [T]he American blacks are in a fair way of becoming a comfortable, well-to-do population to a degree found in very few countries; a condition which may compare very favourably not only with the Indian ryot, the Russian serf, or the Irish tenant-farmer, but also with the Dorsetshire labourer. I doubt whether, on the whole, a better labouring population, more suited to the climate and country in which they find themselves (sic), is anywhere to be found.[2]

Campbell's hopes that the freed Negroes would come to constitute a major beneficial pillar of the economy of the Southern States were certainly based primarily in his highly favourable impression of the manner in which they had adapted themselves to free labour. But it would seem that at least one other important facet of the race's response to freedom also influenced

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1 Ibid., p. 160. In the spring and again in the autumn of 1869 Campbell had visited Ireland to study the land question there. He subsequently published his findings in a work entitled The Irish Land (London and Dublin, 1869). The book amply reflected its author's basic conviction that the Irish land problem was "the question of the day", presenting as it did a thorough investigation into all varieties of tenure in North and South Ireland and offering critical assessments of various contemporary proposals for remedying the situation as well as Campbell's personal suggestions (arrived at by comparing systems of land-tenure in Ireland with those in other countries).

2 Campbell, White and Black, p. 160.

him in forming his conclusion that it could play a vital and responsible role in ensuring the future security and prosperity of the South. This parallel source of confidence and satisfaction for Campbell was provided by what he judged to be the very appreciable degree of political acumen and sophistication which the Negroes had attained in the twelve years following the end of the Civil War. During the Reconstruction period, the freedmen had, he indicated, absorbed an overwhelming amount of political education, but this, although desirable in its own right, had not, he implied, necessarily been offered in the most salutary or edifying manner:

> Considering the troubles and the ups and downs that they have gone through, it is, I think, wonderful how beneficial this education has been to them, and how much these people, so lately in the debased condition of slavery, have acquired independent ideas, and, far from lapsing into anarchy, have become citizens with ideas of law and property and order.[1]

The Negroes, he suggested, had in twelve years risen to a level of political knowledge and understanding which it had taken the white serfs of Europe centuries to achieve.

A full decade earlier, however, David Macrae had already recorded the wisdom and responsibility displayed by the freedmen in their assumption of political power. We have observed in the preceding chapter the nature of Macrae's support for Negro enfranchisement and his conviction that the black race generally exercised its new power "quietly, considerately, and well".[2] His attendance at the constitutional conventions of several Southern States had had the effect of convincing him that "no men speak more earnestly against repudiating the public debt, and maintaining the honour of the State than Negro members, although that debt had been contracted by their masters, not by them; and would, if recognized, involve a tax upon themselves".

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1 Ibid., p. 131.

2 See above, Chapter VI, pp. 56-58.

And at the same period - just three years after the war - he had discerned similar good sense manifested by Negro juries in courts of justice.[1]

Macrae's delight at the way in which the Negroes were discharging their civic and political responsibilities was naturally tied to his enthusiasm for the decision to extend political rights to the black race. This enthusiasm was itself partially born of the belief that Negro suffrage would prove an exceedingly strong incentive for the white South to educate the emancipated slaves.[2] The question of education, indeed, loomed large in the considerations of all Scots who directed attention towards the condition of the American Negroes during reconstruction; and it was consistently studied not only in terms of the provision being made by Federal and State authorities and charitable organizations, but also in terms of the freedmen's attitudes towards the acquisition of knowledge. It was, in fact, in relation to this latter point that the majority of Scottish observers perhaps bestowed their most forthright, generous, and unqualified praise on the Negro population.

The views of Macrae himself illustrate well both the general importance attached to the question of the Negroes approach to learning and the extremely favourable impression of that approach formed in many quarters. Of all the several aspects of the ex-slaves' adjustment to freedom which he found praiseworthy, Macrae felt able to state quite plainly and unequivocably that "the most amazing and hopeful feature of all is the widespread desire which is found amongst them for education",[3] Identifying evidence of the existence even during slavery times of this desire within the Negro race,[4] he asserted that it had been one of the first things to become obvious as the slaves began to gain their freedom during the Civil War. With an obvious pleasure in the task, he related numerous examples of the tremendous enthusiasm

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1 Macrae, The Americans at Home, p. 267.

2 Ibid., p. 267.

3 Ibid., p. 258.

4 Ibid., pp. 258-259.

with which the Negroes had welcomed the establishment by the Federal army and the missions (such as the American Missionary Association) accompanying it of black schools in the areas brought under Northern command.[1] And he stated that the same eagerness for education had earlier been shown by the fugitive slaves who had comprised the Negro regiments in the war.[2]

These pre-war and wartime desires and strivings were clearly accepted by Macrae as direct pointers to what he judged to be a remarkable clamour for education made by the freed Negroes during Reconstruction:

> When the war closed in 1865, and the gates of the South were thrown open, the extraordinary spectacle was beheld of an ignorant and enslaved race springing to its feet after a bondage of two hundred years, and with its first free breath crying for the means of education.[3]

In catering for this demand with a remarkable immediacy and competence, the Freedmen's Bureau, the Quakers, and the various missionary societies, which opened schools and "scattered their teachers over the vast area of the South", earned his unbounded praise. Giving some rough indication of the scale of instruction which had been achieved up until the early 1870s, he observed that "It may be doubted if history furnishes a parallel to the extraordinary progress which has been made in the education of these people within the short period that has elapsed since their emancipation".[4]

From his own personal experience of the situation in 1868 he was able to maintain that the Negro population was making full use of the new educational facilities afforded it. Visits to a large number of freedmen's

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1 Ibid., pp 259-260.

2 Ibid., p. 260. In elaborating upon this particular statement, Macrae depicted the Negro soldiers as using every spare minute to prepare their lessons, and conjured up a picture of them "gathered round the bivouac fires at night eager over their spelling-books".

3 Ibid., p. 260.

4 Ibid., p. 261.

schools had left him "amazed and delighted" by the overwhelming spirit of interest and endeavour manifested by the black race. He had found the day-schools "crowded for the most part with black boys and girls, who were wonderfully eager over their lessons, and seemed to have a real delight in school-work".[1] Equally impressive, if a somewhat quaint feature to him, had been the presence in these same classes of adult Negroes - generally old or infirm members of the community or those temporarily unemployed. Their determination to gain a measure of education was duly honoured by Macrae; but so far as the instruction of older Negroes was concerned, he was most forcefully struck by the attendance rates notched up by this element at the night-schools provided for their benefit.

That Macrae was immensely cheered, and encouraged to form a warmly favourable attitude towards the basic character of the Negro race as a result of his observations at these night-schools, is evidenced by his detailed and compassionate portrayals of cases which exemplified the general spirit of perseverance encountered there. Predictably, he was especially impressed by the constant use of the Bible as a source of instruction, and by the Negroes' extra eagerness to be able to read that particular text for themselves: encounters such as that with the woman who at ninety years of age (and after having been a slave all her life) began to learn the alphabet and was able within three months to spell out several verses of the Bible clearly had a considerable effect upon him.[2]

The sheer unrestrained delight shown by the freedmen over the opportunity to acquire knowledge almost certainly had a profound influence in convincing him that the Negroes had a genuine and incredibly strong wish to make a positive personal effort towards improving their condition by raising themselves

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1 Ibid., p. 261

2 See ibid., p. 263.

up from the enforced ignorance of slave days. "Nothing is more interesting", he declared, "than to see the joy of these people when they have got their first lesson, and feel that one step to "larnin'" has actually been taken".[1] In their appreciation of the critical importance of education to their general advancement and prosperity as free individuals, and in their eager desire and determination to gain this necessary learning, the American Negroes were, in Macrae's view, perhaps more than the equals of contemporary white races:

> It is a habit amongst white people to look down upon the blacks; but it would be interesting to know how many uneducated adults in England, Scotland and Ireland - white people though they be - are striving, as the negroes in those night-schools are doing, to make up for the educational deficiencies of early years! Amongst the lower class of whites in the South, who are almost as illiterate as the negroes, I wish I could have seen a tithe of the same desire for self-improvement...[In 1868] 40,000 black men and women were attending these schools...There is surely hope for a people who, freshly out of slavery, are found pressing with such eagerness through the gates of knowledge...[2]

Although describing the mood and situation at greater length and in a particularly engaging manner, in writing two years later of the extremely favourable impressions which he had formed in 1868 of the freedmen's attitude towards education David Macrae was nevertheless echoing sentiments already expressed by others who had either themselves earlier visited the South during Reconstruction or who were prepared publicly to endorse sanguine reports on this question. Thus, the relatively more neglected feature of the great desire for learning shown by escaping slaves which he highlighted had already been drawn attention to in late 1867 by the prominent American carpet-manufacturer resident in Glasgow, A.F. Stoddard. Speaking in that city at a meeting of "gentlemen interested in the condition of the freed negroes in America", Stoddard, indicating that he had been in Washington shortly after the start of the Civil War, testified not only to the tremendous

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1 Ibid., p. 263.

2 Ibid., p. 264.

craving for education on the part of the fugitive Negroes but also to their marked facility for acquiring it.[1]

Present on the same occasion was the Rev. James Wells, minister of Barony Free Church, Glasgow. Wells addressed the company immediately after Stoddard, and spoke in similar vein. Explaining that he had accompanied the Rev. Dr. Patrick Fairbairn on a recent visit to freedmen's schools in the Southern States, he described the extremely satisfactory and encouraging measure of widespread, deep-rooted enthusiasm for learning which they had discovered there.[2] Himself actually presiding over the meeting, Fairbairn did not, on his own account, refer at this juncture to the reassuring manner in which the Negroes were pursuing knowledge. Subsequently, however, at the full public meeting for freedmen's aid held in Glasgow City Hall in January, 1868, he followed up his motion for a resolution of sympathy with the American Missionary Association by a speech which included references to the great interest in scholastic work and to the progress shown by Negro children, which he had personally observed. All reports correctly stated, he remarked, that the Negroes were "immensely keen" to get education.[3]

Principal Fairbairn and the Rev. James Wells had been afforded their opportunity to see at first-hand the aspect of Negro education in the South when in the summer of 1867 they had comprised a deputation appointed by the

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1 Report of speech by A.F. Stoddard at a meeting of "gentlemen interested in the condition of the freed negroes in America" in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, 7 Nov., 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 8 Nov., 1867.
This meeting had been called to hear a statement from the Rev. James A. Thome of the AMA, and, it would appear, to appoint a committee to arrange a public meeting for freedmen's aid in the City Hall.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. James Wells, in ibid.

3 Report of speech by Principal Patrick Fairbairn at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in City Hall, Glasgow, 27 Jan., 1868, in ibid., 28 Jan., 1868.
Fairbairn had been, since November, 1856, Principal of the Free Church college of Glasgow.

Free Church to visit the presbyterian churches of the United States. Their ultimate findings had in fact been anticipated at the Free Church General Assembly at Edinburgh in May of that year, when specific reference had been made (by the seconder of the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish's motion that the Free Church support the aims of the AMA) to the "thirst for knowledge" exhibited by the freedmen.[1] While the Free Church was thus becoming adequately convinced at this fairly early stage of Reconstruction that the American Negroes were proving themselves well worthy of the efforts made on both sides of the Atlantic to provide them with education (and simultaneously, of course, with evangelization), it would appear that the Church of Scotland, although less demonstrably so, was also by that time alive to the creditable nature of the freedmen's approach to learning.

An indication of this was provided by the inclusion in the March, 1867 issue of the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod's Good Words of a short article containing a tribute to the standard of education already attained by the ex-slaves. Signing himself "G.W.S.", the writer intimated that he had lived in the South-West of the United States during the last year of the Civil War. His piece was primarily concerned with comment upon and extracts from contemporary Negro sermons; but in suggesting that the quality of black recruits to the American pulpit would certainly soon improve as a consequence of the widespread educational facilities spread throughout the South, "G.W.S." praised both the dedication of the Northern teachers and the perseverance and courage of their pupils in acknowledging as remarkable the progress made by the black race:

> A nation has been born in a day - a people has been brought to light who will shortly be prepared to exercise the right of suffrage...That people which (sic) was pronounced too

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1 See report of speech by Mr. Walker, Carnwath, at Free Church General Assembly, May, 1867, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867, pp. 77-78.

> deep in ignorance, too deep in slavery, too destitute of the qualities and faculties which go to make up man, to ever rise - ...has risen to a social rank which the most sanguine did not expect.[1]

By early 1867, too, a similar sense of satisfaction and a similar confidence in the Negroes' ability and desire for further advancement was predictably shared by the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. The Society realistically emphasized that it could not reasonably be expected that the black population should in two years have established a self-supporting community.[2] But it was at the same time eager to express admiration for the vast numbers who had by then become fully independent, and for the "thousands...flocking to schools".[3] The eagerness for learning, it was felt, gave ample proof of the race's natural energy and perseverance. And the particular enthusiasm which the freedmen reportedly had for studying the Bible ("which they consider the charter of their freedom"[4]) was interpretated by the ELES as evidence of the inherent "strong religiosity" within the Negro character. With customary reliance on the accounts of white workers among the Southern Negroes, the Society's Report quoted the letter of a female teacher at Petersburg, Virginia, in which it was stressed that the Negroes had quickly gained a better knowledge of "truth taught in the word of God" than the general run of people in the Northern States.[5]

To contemporary Scottish observers, for whom religious instruction and enlightenment, secular education, and material prosperity tended to be inextricably inter-connected, obviously one of the most hopeful features with regard to the quality of the freedmen's future must have been the avid manner in which they sought out and absorbed the teachings of the

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1 "G.W.S.", "Negro Sermons" in Good Words, March, 1867, p. 186.

2 Annual Report of the ELES...during the year ending 4th April, 1867, p. 7.

3 Ibid., p. 7.

4 Ibid., p. 7.

5 Ibid., pp. 13-14.

Bible. As the ELES highlighted this aspect, so David Macrae, as we have seen, was immensely cheered by it during his trip in 1868. Nor did the impact of the "religiosity" in the educative process of the Negroes during Reconstruction lessen with the ensuing years. Travelling in the South three years after Macrae, James Macaulay, the ex-patriate Scot who edited in London the weekly periodicals Leisure Hour and Sunday at Home, was greatly uplifted by the strong religious ethos which, he discovered, permeated the crowded preparatory and normal schools for the Negroes. Of one school established by the Freedmen's Bureau, he commented:

> I never saw an array of more attentive, intelligent faces, and never heard sweeter and heartier voices than in that school, when the hymns were sung, after reading the Holy Scriptures, and prayer. It was one of the brightest scenes, altogether, that I witnessed in America...[1]

At the very end of the Reconstruction era, indeed, it became possible to look to the eagerness for learning and the religious bent of the freed American Negroes as the base from whence would arise a new embodiment of religious zeal and sincerity on the American continent. This concept was publicized during 1877 in The Sunday Magazine, the periodical edited from 1864 to 1875 by, successively, the famous Free Church stalwarts the Rev. Drs. Thomas Guthrie and W.G. Blaikie. Although by that late stage the popular dynamism behind the earlier British freedmen's aid movement had almost completely vanished, a current part-editor of the magazine, Scotsman Alexander Hay Japp, nevertheless took it upon himself to pen an article extolling the past achievements of the British and American Societies which had been concerned in this work, and implicitly appealing for continued

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1 Macaulay, Across the Ferry, p. 293.

public support for the cause.[1] Writing under the pseudonym "H. A. Page" Japp particularly stressed the role which the freedmen's aid societies had played in establishing a network of schools throughout the South. Through the medium of these institutions, the capacity of the Negro for education had quickly been demonstrated after emancipation, he maintained. The race's great enthusiasm for learning had been "directed and utilised" by the Societies so that in the schools and colleges over the land old people were studying earnestly alongside the young.

Japp identified as a vital basis for the good progress achieved by the Negroes in this sphere the "patient Christian character" found in many of them during slavery times. From this assumption, he went on to agree with the suggestion of Dr. White, the then secretary of the British Freedmen's Aid Society, that in the educated American Negro there was the promise of "a new type of Christian character". The qualities defined by Japp himself as the

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1 H. A. Page (pseudonym of A. H. Japp), "America and her Freedmen" in Sunday Magazine, 1877, pp. 621-624.

Alexander Hay Japp, the son of a carpenter, was born at Dun, near Montrose, in 1837. He spent his childhood in the town of Montrose itself, and became at the age of seventeen book-keeper with an Edinburgh firm. Three years later he moved to London and was employed for two years in the East India department of Smith, Elder and Co. Returning to Scotland for health reasons, he worked for a firm of Edinburgh hatters and in his leisure time attended during 1860-61 university classes in metaphysics, logic and moral philosophy. Although never graduating, he emerged as a scholar of some distinction. Taking up journalism, he edited for a time the Inverness Courier and the Montrose Review. He settled in London in 1864 and joined the Daily Telegraph for a period. Subsequently, he acted as general literary adviser to the publishing firm of Strahan and over the years 1869-79, aided in editing their periodicals Good Words and Sunday Magazine, as well as the Contemporary Review (1866-72). He also assisted Robert Carruthers (editor of the Inverness Courier) with the third edition of Chambers' Cyclopaedia of English Literature. In 1879, he was made an LL.D. by Glasgow University, and was elected F.R.S. of Edinburgh a year later. A publishing company which he started in 1880 was handed over to T. Fisher Unwin two years later, and from 1882-88 he was literary adviser to the firm of Hurst and Blackett. An acquaintance of R. L. Stevenson, he was a versatile and prolific writer, his works including a memoir of Nathaniel Hawthorne (1872). As well as "H. A. Page", he wrote under the ingeniously exotic pseudonyms of "A. F. Scot"; "E. Conder Gray"; and "A. N. Mount Rose". He died in 1905. See DNB, Vol. 2, Second supplement, pp. 362-363.

essential components of this new character smacked strongly, however, of the old familiar stereotypes which, although with the best will in the world, very many Scottish champions of the freed Negro had rather condescendingly used throughout the Reconstruction years to portray the race as intrinsically steadfast, innocently unassuming, and deeply religious. Thus he believed that the emergent Christianized freedmen would stand out "strong in intuition, simple, and full of large-hearted practicality and hopeful faith".[1] There emerges the indication that those Scots who delightedly enthused over the Negroes' attitude towards learning and the extent of the opportunities offered them to gain knowledge in the post-war South were on the whole not looking to find a form of teaching which instilled any real measure of sophistication into the character of the ex-slaves. Instead, they were content enough to lavish praise upon a general educational pattern which, in concentrating (albeit necessarily) upon the acquisition of rudimentary skills and a simple religious faith, tended to render it an attractive likelihood that the freedmen's new literacy, knowledge, and independence could simply be painlessly superimposed upon the proven simplicity, docility and native intuition of the former Negro slaves.

This tendency to accept that even while the freedmen were pursuing and absorbing education the Negro character would always remain essentially the same in terms of spontaneous childlike delight and emotion, a simplistic concept of Christianity, and so forth was nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in the columns of the Glasgow Herald. Displaying at best but a confused attitude throughout the Reconstruction period towards the inherent capabilities of the black race,[2] the Herald early tied its acknowledgement of the freedmen's great desire for education to a patronising line of comment which implicitly

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1 Page, "America and her Freedmen", p. 623.

2 See above, Chapter V, p. 622-623.

suggested that the character traits commonly recognized as applicable to the Negro in slavery would still survive during freedom.

In doing its part to support increased involvement in the freedmen's aid cause in Britain, the Herald was perfectly sincere in drawing attention during the autumn of 1866 to the "unique" craving of the freed American Negroes for knowledge.[1] It duly recorded how the schools throughout the South were crowded, with all ages attending; and it quoted the testimony of teachers on the eagerness of the adults to read the Bible, and of the children simply to attend school. No attempt was made to minimize or depreciate what it judged to be the evidently deep and genuine cry of the Negroes for education, missionaries, and the word of God:

> For these, even in the dark long night of their bondage, they [the Negroes] seem to have been yearning; and now, when slavery is at an end and the gates are thrown open for education and knowledge, they are eager beyond precedent to avail themselves of this privilege and guarantee of their new born freedom.[2]

Condescension began to creep into the paper's account, however, when in recording that many scholars brought little gifts to the teachers it declared that "parents and children are all deeply grateful for the blessings of education, and show their gratitude in many little touching ways". And in similar vein, the image of the innately religiously inclined Negro with his practical, simple brand of faith, was dragged up as a means of elucidating the great desire on the part of the freedmen to read the Bible: "Ignorant as these poor creatures are, they exhibit in many cases a simple, direct, and childlike faith in God, which might put many more highly favoured Christians to the blush".[3]

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1 Glasgow Herald, "The Emancipated Slaves of America", 7 Sept., 1866. In this editorial it was stressed that the information about the Negroes' condition and quest for education was given to show the "great and precious" opportunity of doing good which this missionary enterprise offered to the British people, and to persuade "those who have not responded liberally or not at all to the appeal by the churches" to do so "before the golden opportunity is past".

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

VII. Views on factors determining the character of race relations in the post-war South.

By late 1867, however, the Glasgow Herald, continuing to be impressed by the constant "astounding" increase in the number of schools being established throughout the South and by the enrolment figures, had apparently come to recognize that more than a mere wish to be literate and to bolster their simple faith by personal consultations of the Bible was prompting the Negroes in their urge to secure education: "The negro, indeed, seems animated by a strong desire to be alongside of the white man in his ability to act independently, and he feels that he cannot reach that position so long as he remains ignorant".[1] This said, however, it is clear that the Herald itself never did become prepared to accept that the American Negroes were in practice capable of successfully conducting their affairs on a basis of complete independence, far less of emulating white abilities in this respect. An indication of the paper's unshakeable scepticism in this connection was afforded two years later when in late 1869 an editorial was devoted to consideration of the eighth semi-annual report of the Freedmen's Bureau on the schools for freedmen in the South.

As usual - despite some feeling that the reports "doubtlessly invariably take the most hopeful view" of the situation - the paper recorded its admiration for the scale of the educational achievement of the Bureau. At the same time, however, the editorial went out of its way in seeking to make it clear that the education by that time gained by the Negroes could have comparatively little effect in easing the difficulties which faced them in the post-war South or - a related factor - in compensating for the innate character defects which hampered the black race. Thus it was argued that despite the efforts of the freedmen's Bureau, the Negro population would

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1 Ibid., 22 Oct., 1867.

countinue to find the period of social and economic reorganization in the South particularly hard and distressing. At the bottom of this conviction was the simple belief in the Negroes' general inability to cope satisfactorily with the trials and obligations imposed by independence. Hence it was asserted that an obvious solution to the freedmen's problems - the establishment of them as industrious "peasant proprietors" - had been proven unworkable because of an ineradicable flaw in the Negro character

> The negro needs a master, and even when he has one, now that he is free, he is far from being a steady and industrious workman. While this state of things lasts there will always be painful and insurmountable obstacles to the education of the blacks. [1]

Alongside glowing reports of the Negroes' desire for education and their encouraging progress in this sphere could be placed, it was suggested, the harsh fact that even where the freedmen were partially settled and working for masters, in very many cases they were allowing themselves to become "systematically degraded by intemperance, shamefully encouraged by their employers, who truck with them in bad whisky for their labour". But surely the most incisive of the Herald's cautions against adopting too roseate an impression of the power of education in the post-war South to cure Negro weakness and irresponsibility, and, indeed, against adopting too sanguine a view of the very nature and extent of the freedmen's absorption of knowledge, was the observation that in schools throughout the South, half of the adult Negro night-class often turned up drunk. [2] For the Glasgow Herald, it was not enough that the freedmen should be seen to be clamouring for learning and increased religious knowledge. Of more signal importance was the notion that this education was prevented from having the full beneficial and elevating influence which it could have had by the persistence into the years of freedom of the unattractive as well as the attractive character traits which had been displayed by the Negro race in slavery times.

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1 Ibid., 26 Nov., 1869.

2 Ibid.

The Glasgow Herald's fundamental conviction that in virtually every respect the Negroes were turning liberty into licence brought it to the conclusion that "the vices...[which] are the negro's own" were not only posing "formidable obstacles" to the spread of real education but were also disastrously delaying the proper consolidation of the black race into the body politic. Simultaneously, however, the paper was analytical enough to recognize that in this latter connection the intense hostility and prejudice of many white Southerners, and of the "lower whites" in particular, was also a factor of major importance. Hence it perceived that while even the better educated classes of Southern whites looked upon the work of the Freedmen's Bureau with disgust, the "mean whites" hated the Negroes "with something more than the intensity of race hatred".[1]

This observation was, in fact, but one of very many on the theme of Negro integration and race relations which filled the editorial columns of the Glasgow Herald during the years of Reconstruction in America. For while such issues as the Negroes' abilities as free labourers and the nature of their attitude to education certainly held the interest of Scottish observers both within and without the newspaper press, at least as much attention was naturally directed towards what was perhaps felt by many to be the most vital issues of all - the basic mood and temper of the two races towards each other, and the prospects which were thereby offered for an early smooth assimilation of the Negro population into the mainstream of Southern society. And so far as the views of the Glasgow Herald are concerned, a central feature in the overall pattern of Southern race relations was the immense strength of the white South's bitter animosity towards the Negroes.

By the early summer of 1865 the paper had already set about focussing attention on the severe stresses and strains between the two races which seemed

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1 Ibid.

destined to plague the post-war South. Considering current reports from the United States, it commented at the beginning of July that relations between blacks and whites, both civil and military, were evidently still "fiercely antagonistic". Giving some indication of the various disturbances and serious clashes which had occurred, the Herald remarked that among the Southern whites there "naturally...exists a deep disinclination to admit...[the Negroes'] social and political equality with the white community".[1] Throughout the succeeding months, it assiduously reiterated the proposition that the hostile attitude of the white Southerners was a major factor in exacerbating the serious difficulties facing the United States government over the "Negro question". The whites - and especially the influential planter and proprietor element - were seen to look upon the freed Negro as the cause of all their troubles. Emancipation, "the offspring of force and the result of subjugation", had impoverished thousands who as a result could not find it within themselves to summon up sympathy or respect for those whom they identified as the original cause of their ruin.[2] In judging their frame of mind towards the freed Negroes as an "almost insurmountable" difficulty in dealing with the Southern people, acknowledgement was made of the apparently startling change in sentiment from that which had obtained during slavery times:

> If poor Sambo was, as we have been often told, petted, humoured, and tenderly cared for by the Southern planters, as they themselves allege, there can be no doubt that he is cordially hated and abused by the same people now.[3]

Although the Glasgow Herald was to become an outspoken critic of the "military regimes" imposed upon the South by the Reconstruction Acts of the Congressional Radicals,[4] it nevertheless recognized at this early stage the need for some measure of Federal safeguards for the freedmen in consequence of the

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1 Ibid., 8 July, 1865.

2 Ibid., 3 Aug., 1865.

3 Ibid., 22 Aug., 1865.

4 See above, Chapter IV, p. 435.

widespread animosity of the white population. The already unenviable position of the Negro would, it was felt, be even worse were he not guaranteed Northern military protection, and his freedom would be "worse than a sham".[1] That it was essential to have Federal military officers interfering on the Negroes' behalf throughout the South was demonstrated by the fact that the Freedmen's Bureau's greatest task was not finding work for the Negroes but making the Southern whites understand that the freedmen must be treated as such.[2]

For its part, the Glasgow Herald was however ready enough - and none the less so with the passage of time - to accept as virtually inevitable the bitterness and antagonism injected into race relations by the white Southerners during Reconstruction. The paper's basic premise was simply that while it was obviously unreasonable to expect the freed slaves immediately to become sober-living, intelligent citizens, it was also unreasonable to hope that "the haughty slaveowners" would look complacently on the loss of their slave "'property'".[3] And at the bottom of the whole problem, gravely confounding even the best efforts of the freedmen to conduct themselves in a manner which might resonably have been expected to thaw out the frozen hostility of the Southern whites, was seen to lie the ineradicable prejudice against the black race.[4]

While the Glasgow Herald was thus prepared to declare that in perpetuating lack of harmony between the races and in prolonging the general agonies of the post-war South the unfortunate attitudes of biassed whites were probably just as much to blame as the Negroes' own failure satisfactorily to adapt to social and economic freedom, the city's much more radical organ, the Glasgow Sentinel

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1 Glasgow Herald, 22 Aug., 1865.
2 Ibid., 12 Sept., 1865.
3 Ibid., 10 Oct., 1868.
4 Ibid., 20 Oct., 1869.

(eschewing, as we have seen, its impeccable wartime support of the Southerners and concentrating during the Reconstruction years on cultivating a more fittingly radical stance on United States affairs), went still further in seeking to suggest that Southern white antagonism towards the freedmen, springing visibly from race prejudice, was the prime factor retarding progress in the South.

Like the Herald, the Sentinel did also consider the opposition of the planters to their former slaves as largely inevitable under the circumstances. In the early months after the war, however, the paper made it clear that in demonstrating their contempt and their continuing belief in the inferiority of the race by paying the Negroes a wage which was scarcely enough for subsistence, the employers were grievously hindering the recovery of the Southern economy as well as oppressing the black population. That the Southern States were prostrate far more as a result of white animosity and intransigence than as a result of Negro apathy and incompetence in the sphere of free labour was strongly suggested by the Sentinel's firm confidence that the freedmen would constitute the work force of the future in the South. Once they had overcome their feelings of humiliation and sheer vindictiveness, the planters, it was maintained, would recognize that it was in their own and in their State's best interests to employ Negro labour rather than white.[1]

Having duly identified the employers as the villains of the piece (as was its wont in relation to controversies within the realm of British labour relations), the Glasgow Sentinel was free to argue that the "Negro question" was not insoluble provided that the essential prerequisite of a fair deal for the black race was met. Most crippling were the great prejudices which

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, "The Future of the Negro Race", 5 Aug., 1865. These opinions were advanced, it should be noted, well before the Glasgow Sentinel came to view the cheap rates and basic attitude of coloured labour in the United States as a real threat to native and emigrant white labour - see above pp. 252-253.

continued to exist against the Negro worker. While the Southern planters still saw him as a child, the white labourers treated him as a competitive threat, and the white population in general "hold aloof from him as a disagreeably smelling specimen of humanity in ebony".[1] We have already observed the way in which the Sentinel was prepared to assert that the conduct of the emancipated Negroes in fact afforded a greater basis of hope for a peaceful Southern society than did the behaviour of the embittered whites.[2] A natural corollary of this was the conviction that it would be in vain to look for the co-operation of even influential white Southerners in providing for the initial wants which the freedmen required to give them a reasonable opportunity to prove themselves capable of industry and self-reliance:

> Southern statesmen, editors, and clergymen have so often asserted that the negro was destined for slavery that it would be expecting too much to hope that they would assist in proving themselves liars.[3]

Far from believing that the Negroes were being allowed a free field in which to show their energies and abilities and to cultivate their skills and responsibilities as free citizens, the Sentinel, praising the Freedmen's Bureau, declared that "unless the Federal Government is vigilant there are strong reasons for fearing that slavery under another name will be established in the South, and that the black man...will lapse again into bondage as hopeless as before".[4]

Adopting precisely the same attitude towards the Southern whites in this regard (and with much greater claim sincerely to do so in view of its fervent support of the North and the Negro cause during the Civil War) was

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, "The Irrepressible Negro", 18 Nov., 1865; see also ibid., 28 Oct., 1865.

2 See above, p. 279.

3 Glasgow Sentinel, "The American Freedmen", 13 Jan., 1866.

4 Ibid.

John Leng's Dundee Advertiser. In its columns, too, a fundamental belief in the freedmen's sincere desire to make good was maintained alongside an equally strong belief that this desire was being systematically frustrated by the ill-will of the white South:

> The men who have so long been accustomed to tyrannise over the coloured population are reluctant to suit themselves to the new order of things: and hence we read of hundreds of negroes being murdered in cold blood by their former masters.[1]

Again, the presence of Federal vigilantes was seen to be absolutely essential to prevent "the gross ill-usage inflicted upon the negroes by the 'Chivalry of the South'".[2] And the Glasgow Sentinel's suggestion that a formidably deep-seated race prejudice was the root cause of distressingly successful Southern efforts to hamper Negro advancement was forcefully echoed by the Advertiser several years later.[3]

By 1873, indeed, Leng's paper had come to adopt a morose attitude towards the persistently bleak aspect of race relations in the Southern States. Within Scottish channels of comment which had never in the first place harboured the idealism early disseminated by the Dundee Advertiser regarding the rapid assimilation of the free black population in the South, however, a yet more positive recognition of racial prejudice as an immovable force separating the two communities had still earlier been voiced - and with some degree of equanimity. For such observers as the staid Alexander Russel and his staff on the Scotsman, for instance, it was something of a foregone conclusion, an irreversible fact of life, that white attitudes of that nature would persist in the United States, and that ultimate failure would in practice attach to all legislation which "attempts to set aside a custom that is stronger than law, and to root up or crush out a prejudice that is

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1 Dundee Advertiser, 19 Sept., 1865.

2 Ibid., 22 Sept., 1865.

3 Ibid., 12 Sept., 1873.

engrained in the very nature of the Americans".[1]

The Scotsman judged that through Constitutional Amendments, Bills of Right, and elaborate Congressional statutes, the law had done pretty much all it could to secure "the eradication of that unwillingness to fully recognize a negro as a man and brother which naturally existed during the days of slavery". Yet, these enactments had swiftly become "a dead letter and a laughing-stock", the "ambitious" freedman wishing to enjoy any of his rights and privileges under them being "baffled and defeated in a hundred ways". The only two places in America, it was suggested, where the Negro stood on a footing of real equality with the white were in the Federal and State Legislatures and in the Roman Catholic churches: whenever he emerged from either of these, "he steps upon an inclined plane, down which he slides to a depth beneath the meanest white scoundrel of the streets".[2]

The reports of the paper's United States correspondent effectively confirmed this editorial outlook. By the mid 1870s, deploring alike what he saw as the undue arrogance and bellicosity of the Negroes and the dangerously inflammatory activities of the "White Man's Party", the writer placed much of the blame for the grave state of Southern race relations on the imperious and tragically short-sighted policies imposed on the white South by the Congressional Radicals. Old prejudices and aversions among the whites, however cruel and unchristian, could not, he insisted, be miraculously extirpated by Federal laws and orders, and their continued existence was a fact which should not be ignored by anyone wishing intelligently to judge the ominous occurrences being reported from the South at that period. Republican Congressmen had sought to trample down these sentiments in a manner which had succeeded only in intensifying them: "Genuine statesmanship recognizes the practical in its pursuit of the perfect: and the only way of averting danger in this country is that which shall deal

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1 Scotsman, 9 June, 1870.

2 Ibid., 3 Sept., 1872.

with the South as it is, not as theorists would have it to be".[1]

It becomes evident that even in the Scotsman, a journal by no means disposed to reflect a particularly favourable light on the freed Negro, the vehement antagonism shown by white Southerners towards the black population tended to be looked upon almost as much in terms of a natural extension and (as a result of abhorrent measures of Reconstruction) intensification of prejudices held in slavery times as in terms of a direct consequence of flagrant, widespread abuse of their liberty by the Negroes. The allegedly arbitrary Reconstruction policies framed by the Federal Congress and the utterly inimical interference of Northerners in the political and social life of the South were indeed seen as critical factors in the creation of an atmosphere charged with the mutual hostility of the black and white races towards each other.

As early as the winter of 1867, the Scotsman's American correspondent indicated that constant preparations were being made on both sides for a war between the races in the South. He clearly did not feel, however, that given an uninterrupted chance to sort things out for itself, the post-war South would have inevitably found itself heading towards so disastrous a confrontation. While the Negroes' own conduct as free men was identified as having significantly precipitated the descent into hostile racial communities, on the other hand, it was also felt that if they had been left to themselves during the early post-war period, the Negroes and Southern whites would soon have formed a harmonious and peaceful relationship based on their common interest. The great element of discord had been an extraneous one, namely, the implementation of a plan of Reconstruction which doubly embittered the white Southerners against the black population by excluding the former from

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1 Ibid., (U.S./c., New York, 12 Aug., 1874), 25 Aug., 1874.

participation in political life and by attempting to elevate the Negroes (with the scurrilous aid of Northern "adventurers") into a position of political dominance.[1] Emboldened by these advisers, prompted to retaliate against white animosity, and exasperated by widespread destitution, the Negroes, for their part, had become increasingly insolent and aggressive.[2]

As the bitterness and violence between the races dragged on throughout the 1870s, the Scotsman's correspondent returned again and again to the theme of the North's responsibility in bringing about the South's miserable condition. Thus in the spring of 1871, for example, he judged "the incipient war of races" in South Carolina to have been "fed by the too sudden granting of civil rights to the large negro population of the State".[3] Three years later, he was still bothered by the Federal government's handling of this same issue, still convinced that, as part of a broader misguided policy for Negro welfare and advancement, the enforcement of an excessive measure of civil rights for the ex-slaves in the restless South could only have adverse repercussions. Hence he deplored the Republicans' latest moves to secure the passage of the Civil Rights Act as a capitulation to Negro pressure in the face of the forthcoming autumn Congressional elections:

> [T]he Southern Negro, who has been told that he is the ward of the nation until he really seems to consider himself a privileged character, entitled to cry everlastingly for more, is to be conciliated by the adoption of Senator Sumner's legacy - a Civil Rights Bill, so-called, the execution of which will intensify the strife between the races in the South.[4]

Even when events led him to conclude that several entire Southern States were "galloping into anarchy", with "millions" of whites and blacks becoming more and more antagonistic as Negro legislators and leaders ran the gamut

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1 Ibid., (U.S./c., New York, 18 Dec., 1867), 2 Jan., 1868.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., (U.S./c., New York, 14 March, 1871), 27 March, 1871.

4 Ibid., (U.S./C., New York, 9 June, 1874), 22 June, 1874.

of graft and peculation and incited the black population to violence, the American correspondent was nevertheless still prepared to suggest that the mass of Negroes, if left to themselves, would show a strong desire for the restoration of friendly relations with their old masters. The root of the continuing alienation of the two races lay simply in two unfortunate facts. Most immediately, the rank and file of the freedmen were easily influenced by white and black demagogues who were thriving on the conflict. And secondly, the theoretical basis of the Congressional Reconstruction policy had been wrong:

> [T]he blacks were made absolute masters, and the whites were placed under their heels. Governments were set up and were kept up with the help of Federal bayonets, and the general course of these Governments has been disgraced by rascality and corruption in divers forms.[1]

Contemporaneous editorial comment took the same course. Deeply discouraged by the fading of hopes for an early restoration of peace and good feeling in the South, the Scotsman was at pains to demonstrate that the great danger of race war existed exclusively in those States where the Negroes formed the majority of the population and were kept in political power by ruthless, mercenary Northerners. Peace, prosperity, and "tolerable harmony" prevailed, it was asserted, with "very trifling exceptions" in all the States where the Southern whites predominated.[2] At the very end of the Reconstruction era, it was the paper's considered judgement that the understandable distrust which had existed between the freed slaves and their former masters immediately after the Civil War had been perpetuated and intensified out of all natural proportion by "partisan Federal legislators and acts of unscrupulous Northern adventurers who have never ceased during the past twelve years to teach the emancipated blacks that the Southern whites are their natural enemies".[3]

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1 Ibid., (U.S./c., New York, 29 Aug., 1874), 10 Sept., 1874.

2 Ibid. (editorial), 12 Sept., 1874.

3 Ibid., 7 March, 1877.

It was a fitting assessment by a British Whig journal which had throughout the post-war period and before it identified the Northern States as the seat of all that was corrupt, unprincipled, crudely materialistic and overbearing in American politics and society.

In its recognition of the part which the hostile attitude of the Southern whites played in delaying the Negro race's adjustment (so necessary to the future prosperity of the South) to free labour and responsible independence, the Glasgow Herald also cited as an instrumental factor contributing to this attitude the inimical policies of the Federal government, and the direct Northern interference in Southern affairs. The strong antipathy between North and South was apparently seen to be given a practical outlet during Reconstruction in the responses of the two sections towards "the Negro question", the inevitable result being a worsening of relations between white and black in the South. Thus, in the early post-war years at least, the paper frequently pinpointed such "extreme measures" as the occupation of Southern cities and military posts by coloured soldiers and the allocation of an undue share of political power to the Negroes as part of a deliberately vindictive Radical policy the natural consequence of which was increased feelings of jealousy, distrust and apprehension between the two races in the South.[1]

As the Reconstruction era wore on, the Herald's basically unfavourable view of the freedmen's own efforts to improve their condition and add to the material prosperity and stability of the post-war South continued to be significantly supported by the conviction that Southern race relations (and hence, of course, Southern wellbeing and security) were further damaged

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1 Glasgow Herald, 14 March, 1867; see also ibid., 5 Jan., 5 Sept., 1866; 24 Sept., 1867, in which W. Greenlees (the "Glasgow Artist") wrote vividly on the depth of hatred felt by Southerners - and especially women - towards the "Yankees" which he had personally observed during a recent American trip, and the attempts of Northerners to stir up trouble by misrepresenting the treatment meted out at all times by the Southern whites to the black race.

through the Negroes having allowed themselves to become the pawns of unscrupulous Northerners, bent on keeping the South in a state of subjection. By the mid 1870s, the paper had come to share the Scotsman's belief that a war of races was imminent in the Southern states, precipitated largely by the policy pursued in Washington of "playing black off against white for party purposes".[1]

The critical source of the bitter race hatred which, it believed, threatened to plunge the South into total anarchy, was the carpetbaggers' exertions to place the Negroes on a political level with, or actually above, the whites. Inability on the freedmen's part - untutored in such matters as they naturally were - to appreciate their responsibilities and limitations as free citizens had made them an easy prey to such tempting Northern pressures. The Negroes were seen as never having had a proper chance to divest themselves of the mentality of dependence; accustomed to being owned, they had no sooner ceased to be the tools of the slaveowners than they had become the tools of carpetbaggers and scalawags. Viewing the deterioration of relations between Southern whites and blacks, and the rate of the freedmen's progress up until then, the Glasgow Herald in 1874 could see no easy way forward for either race in the South, and was forced back into regrets that Negro emancipation seemed to have been followed by an era of moves and counter-moves which had seriously restricted the possibility that the freedmen might rapidly prove themselves worthy citizens: "What a pity those paternal relations - the loss of which Mr. Jefferson Davis deplored - cannot be restored. They passed away with slavery.[2]

Nowhere in the Scottish press, however, were the two concepts of the Negroes' innate inability to conduct themselves in a responsible, self-reliant fashion

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1 Ibid., 18 Aug., 1874; see also ibid., 8 Aug., 1874.

2 Ibid., 17 Sept., 1874.

and the role played by Northerners in exacerbating this circumstance more vigorously expounded than in the Edinburgh Courant. We have already frequently had occasion to note how extremely intense was this ultra-Conservative journal's dislike and distrust of American democracy as represented at its most brash and blatant by the Northern States. To an even greater extent than the Whig Scotsman and Glasgow Herald, therefore, it was eager to draw public attention to the North's part in poisoning Southern race relations in order to show up once again the heinousness and despotic tendencies which lay at the foundations of the Northern democratic society.

No aspect of Northern intervention in the affairs of the South during Reconstruction was exempted from the Courant's blistering charges of malicious interference undertaken for the specific purpose of keeping the Southern States severely oppressed. Accordingly, the Freedmen's Bureau was denounced, as we have seen,[1] as an agency which, far from seeking to inculcate an appreciation of the virtues of work, self-support and self-improvement into the freed Negroes, had actually encouraged them to adopt habits of idleness and an arrogant attitude towards Southern whites, as as agency, indeed, which had originally been conceived simply as a means of punishing the white South.[2] Equally scathing was the denunciation of "Yankee evangelists" whose mission, it was declared, was "to teach the blacks that the planters were their natural enemies, defrauding them of their social and political rights, and keeping them out of their property in the soil". The kernel of their message was that the interests of the black and white races were antagonistic, and that the Negroes could become the governing power.[3]

But attracting the Edinburgh Courant's most bitter condemnation as the

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1 See above, p. 184.

2 Edinburgh Courant, 6 March, 1866

3 Ibid., 19 Sept., 1874.

elements best equipped to exert the strongest practical influence on bringing the Negroes into a position which would ensure racial conflict in the South were, of course, the Radical Republican Congressmen and the allegedly self-interested authorities of the North. It was repeatedly asserted that the Northern Republican politicians, in seeking for their own selfish purposes and out of a spirit of sheer vindictiveness to make the Negro dominant in the Southern States, were creating an unnatural situation of outrageous injustice which the white South would not long tolerate.[1] Forseeing the very real possibility of a "miserable war of races" issuing from the bitter antagonism of black and white, the paper laid direct responsibility for such a calamity firmly at the door of the Northern Radicals,[2] the tyrannical nature of whom it had already warned might be mirrored in Britain in the actions of John Bright and his colleagues, were these to be given enough scope.[3]

Although the Edinburgh Courant was amongst the most consistent of Scottish commentators to pronounce the American freedmen unfit satisfactorily to cope with th e freedom so suddenly thrust upon them, it becomes clear that ultimately this journal, too, was prepared to ascribe proportionately more blame to the malicious intent and practice of Northern politicians and carpetbaggers than to the actual conduct of the freed Negroes themselves in creating conditions conducive to a war of races in the post-war South. That the Courant was disposed to view the situation in these terms was fairly well brought out in an editorial commenting upon the New Orleans riot and other contemporary disturbances in the South during the summer of 1874. Here, as well as voicing the familiar conviction that the violence and

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1 See, for instance, ibid., 17 Oct., 1866; 15, 31 July, 1867; 15 Sept., 1871.

2 Ibid., 12 Dec., 1868

3 See ibid., 28 Dec., 1866; and above Chapter III, pp. 260-261.

bloodshed in the Southern States had been brought about by the deliberate actions of the North to keep that section of the Union down, the paper also argued that not only had the South been willing during Reconstruction to accept defeat and to hire free Negro labour, but that furthermore the Negroes had never really been alienated from their former masters and, left to themselves, would gladly have hired to them. The bright prospects for the return to peace and prosperity which these sentiments had offered had, it was significantly stated, only been shattered by the North's determination not to allow the South to flourish and to compete with it in industrial output for the markets of Europe: "[The North] cast about for a means of keeping the South down, vexing its peace, and condemning it to poverty and inaction".[1]

It was not only in Conservative and Whig circles, however, that there flourished the conviction that conflict approaching the dimensions of a race war would ultimately engulf the South as a consequence of the disastrous post-war interaction of Negro incompetence and impressionability, harmful Northern influences, the bitterness and hatred of Southern whites towards the black race, and the reciprocal hostility of at least a portion of the freedmen towards their former masters. We have already observed,[2] for example, how even the Aberdeen Free Press, one of Scotland's leading ultra-Liberal journals and one which, even more importantly, had extended vigorous wartime support for the Federal cause into sympathetic concern for the emancipated Negroes during the early years of Reconstruction, had by the mid 1870s become sadly disillusioned with the continued unhealthy state of affairs in the South and increasingly inclined to believe that matters would not, indeed could not, substantially improve without a

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1 Ibid., 19 Sept., 1874.

2 See above, pp. 194-197.

complete restructuring of the fabric of Southern society. The self-interested intervention of Northern forces had, it was felt, upset the natural order of things in the South; and these forces had used the weaknesses of the newly freed Negro community in a manner which had done immeasurable harm to Southern race relations:

> The place which the white merchants and planters of the South should have been allowed to take was filled by unprincipled adventurers from the North who found in the lazy and ignorant negroes facile instruments for the accomplishment of their corrupt and rascally ends.[1]

Along with a certain degree of Southern exasperation at the nature of the freedmen's response to liberty, the "execrable" State governments, manipulated by the Northern carpetbaggers, had greatly increased tension between blacks and whites in the reconstructed South, and had served to perpetuate and sharpen among the whites that feeling of "the absolute and unalterable inferiority of the black population which dominated the South previous to the War, which led directly to the War, and which it was supposed had been completely extinguished by the War".[2] Hence all the elements necessary to produce a war of races were judged to exist within the South by the later years of Reconstruction.

From the very outset, the radical North British Daily Mail had recognized the potentially dangerous effect which the emancipation of the slaves would have on race relations in the South - irrespective, to a large extent, of the way in which the Negroes conducted themselves after freedom. By the autumn of 1865, the Mail, citing de Tocqueville's conclusions, was insisting that abolition would seriously increase the "repugnance" felt by white towards black in the Southern States. The white South, it was asserted, would never forgive the Negro for being

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, "Misgovernment in the Southern States of America", 1 Aug., 1876.

2 Ibid., "The Conflict in the Southern States", 7 Sept., 1874.

the cause and to some degree the instrument of its recent defeat, and the likelihood was that strife would intensify between the races.[1]

This prediction was seen to be confirmed as the South in the ensuing years presented the picture of a community debilitated by deep and bitter internal divisions and animosities. In the months immediately prior to the 1868 Presidential election, the Mail had come to the conclusion that the course of events in this section of the Republic was set for a headlong descent into a race war[2] - a possibility already mooted in its editorial columns well over a year before.[3] And once again, the viscious interplay of Southern hostility, Negro ignorance, and Northern malevolence was judged to have brought about this dire prospect. Here, also, much blame was attached to the machinations of Republican politicians; it was the antagonism of the central government towards the defeated South which in the Mail's view was taking practical shape in the constant strife and physical fighting between blacks and whites in these States. The Federal government was simultaneously criticized for having encouraged the Negroes in their misguided and ignorant beliefs that they could immediately attain the social importance and educational level of white men. The freedmen had thus been influenced to neglect the cultivation of habits of self-reliance and industry and to assume instead that the central government would act as the agency for their rapid elevation to prosperity and social standing:

> The notion of enforcing social equality is one of the growing tenets of negro politics. They [the Negroes] are not sufficiently intelligent to comprehend the prudence of expectancy for what time may work in their favour...It is the common error of ignorant minds to believe that Government and law can do for them what, in a free country more

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1 North British Daily Mail, 25 Oct., 1865.

2 Ibid., 28 Oct., 1868.

3 See ibid., 10 June, 1867.

> especially, they must do for themselves...To a simple-minded creature like the negro the omnipotence of government to all the ends that he dreams of is...a matter of faith...[1]

Thus the Negroes' custom of dependence had not, it was implied, vanished with the demise of slavery. On the other hand, a new dependence - this time on the Northern government and authorities - had sprung up, the fruits of which threatened to plunge the South into a fresh agony of armed conflict during the Reconstruction years. Not Negro emancipation merely but also the persistence beyond abolition among the black population of the ignorance, the irresponsibility, and the dependence of the slave, was seen by many home-based Scottish commentators to constitute a serious, if not an insurmountable, obstacle to the resurgence of the Southern States to even a shadow of their former power and glory.

VIII. Conclusions

From the ravel of conflicting and converging, and frequently equivocal, views voiced by individuals and by the press on the conduct of the former slaves during Reconstruction, it is at least possible to suggest that Scottish attitudes to the American Negroes' use of freedom were predominantly moulded and governed by the influence of two background considerations, or, more precisely, by consideration of the requirements which were seen to be necessary for the good of society in the Southern States and in contemporary Britain. So far as the British side of the Atlantic was concerned, the Victorian mentality of the time dictated that the individual should show an enthusiastic appreciation of the principle of self-help and of the virtues of work and the urge to increase personal prosperity in order that he might benefit both himself and the community at large. The wholehearted and largely unquestioning acceptance of this doctrine in relation to British society tended to make it a doctrine which was automatically extended by very many Scottish commentators to embrace individuals in situations and circumstances which were far from conducive to smooth, unimpeded ascent up the economic and social ladder simply

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1 Ibid., 2 Aug., 1867.

by means of personal industry and general self-help. As we have seen, this tendency repeatedly occurred with regard to the American Negroes during Reconstruction, although it has also been noted that in especially sympathetic quarters there was some recognition of the freedmen's exceptional position in this respect.

Looking across the Atlantic to the peculiar issues and requirements of post-was America, Scotsmen imperatively stressed the primacy of the need for a rapid establishment of some measure of real economic prosperity in the Southern States. Closely related to this, and seen to be of equal urgency, was the stabilization and settling down of Southern society - the ending of turbulence and upheaval, the emergence of harmonious race relations, and general obedience to law and order by all Southerners. There was a strong feeling within Scotland that unless these things were speedily accomplished, the vast natural resources of the Southern States would be atrophied. Understandably, neither Scottish supporters not Scottish critics of the old Confederacy wished to see this happen. The former, retaining their sympathies and admiration for the South, hoped to see it again a social, political and economic force within the Union, while the critics of the old slaveocracy who admired United States democracy did not wish to see any section of the Americal Republic in a languid, depressed state, capable of being pointed to by declaimers of American democracy as a palpable illustration of the failure of the United States to live up to its reputation as a vigorous, flourishing country.

In helping to secure the essential economic and social wellbeing of the South, the conduct of the freed Negroes was seen to be of major importance, especially in respect of the importance of free black labour and the race's attitude towards cultivating a peaceable relationship with the Southern whites. But as well as the urgent needs of the Southern States which of themselves brought the freedmen's behaviour up for close and persistent scrutiny, there

were obligations on the other side, in the sphere of guiding, aiding and encouraging the Negroes to adjust in the best way possible to their freedom, which were also considered by some to be a positive, critical need which had to be met within the post-war South. This factor involved emphasis upon the fulfilment of America's responsibilities towards the freed race in such matters as providing adequate material aid, education, and protection from intimidation, and emphasis also upon the efforts which ought to be made by Southern whites to accept gracefully and responsibly the changed circumstances in the economy and society of the South, and the new status of the Negro population.

These considerations, then, were the basic framework on which Scottish commentators built up their pictures of the manner in which the Negroes appeared to be responding to freedom. In most cases, the final overall pattern usually tended to be one composed of an amalgamation of several broad features. These features can be loosely defined as:

1) pre-existing views and prejudices about the qualities and abilities of the Negro race, buttressed by new evidence;
2) some attempt either sincerely to offer, or at least to be seen to offer, objective assessments of the freedmen's progress after emancipation;
3) conclusions based either on direct personal observation of the condition and conduct of the Negroes in the post-war South or on reported information supplied by correspondents with first-hand knowledge of this issue;
4) a general appreciation (this varying in extent and character according to the degree of sympathy felt for the defeated white South) of the tremendous obstacles, both practical and psychological, within Southern society which were hindering and frustrating the progress of the Negroes towards an early and successful adaptation to their new role as self-reliant responsible, beneficial free citizens of the United States.

It would seem clear that to a very large proportion of Scottish observers, the Negroes' conduct during Reconstruction was doubly important because it was looked upon not only as the key to the immediate stability and prosperity of the South but also because it was seen as a pointer to the manner in which the Negro race would establish itself as a distinct sector of the free population of the Southern States. For it is notable that despite a considerable widespread Scottish belief in the possibility of a war of races during that period, there was virtually no totally inflexible conviction that the Negroes were destined in the immediate future to perish or to be swept from the soil of the South. On the contrary, there was a strong persistent acceptance of the apparent fact that the black population was not only an immovable, but also an indispensable, element of the Southern community. Those Scottish observers who tended instinctively to look upon the Negro race as inherently inferior and unable to deal satisfactorily with the responsibilities of freedom, and those who had no great desire to see the Northern victory and Northern democracy seemingly vindicated by a healthy, promising rate of social and economic progress by the freed Negroes, were eager enough to insist upon the essentially unfavourable nature of the freedmen's conduct. But among those whose estimation of the Negro character was considerably higher, and who admired the United States (the more for the act of emancipation), there existed not only a great wish to see the Negroes prosper during Reconstruction but also a steadfast confidence that - largely by their own laudable willingness and determination - they were doing so, and an eager desire to help them in the struggle.

Thus in a very real sense, Scottish attitudes towards the Negroes' use of freedom were in the vast majority of cases totally predictable. Depending largely on the pre-existing views and predilections of the observer, the American Negro as a freedman was represented either as a typically indolent, improvident, irresponsible individual, characteristic of his race, or as an

industrious, persevering, able citizen who, with his tremendous thirst for education and religion, provided along with the other millions of Negroes in the Southern States a wonderfully rich field for instruction and evangelization.

CHAPTER VIII

Freedmen's Aid: motives and stimuli for Scottish involvement in the cause.

In the Reconstruction years, it becomes clear, the recently acquired free status of the American Negroes greatly widened the scope for Scottish discussion and speculation on the basic character and capabilities of the black race and on its future social and political position in the United States while at the same time not appreciably lessening the controversies which flourished within Scotland on these issues. And similar controversies continued to rage, of course, in post-war America itself. What emancipation had positively determined, however, was the existence in the war-torn, economically shattered and socially hostile Southern States of four millions of ex-slaves - a virtually destitute population, with relatively little immediate collective ability to cope with the many problems of survival on a new totally independent, self-reliant basis in a land where the ruin inflicted by war and the overthrow of the old economic order made it difficult for even the experienced white ex-planter class to keep itself above a penurious existence.

We have already noted[1] that at the time, interested Scots of varying political persuasions displayed an exceedingly keen awareness of the great difficulties which faced America, alike in its task of reconstructing the nation in a manner which would satisfactorily settle the social and political standing of the Negro population, and of adequately providing for the immediate, desperately essential material, educational and spiritual needs of the newly liberated race. With regard to this latter consideration, the magnitude of the problem which had to be tackled - and tackled with all possible haste - was by none more fully appreciated and more forcefully emphasized than by those Scots who sought to bring home to their fellow countrymen the intrinsic

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 486-488.

worthiness of the campaign then in progress among them to gather financial and other charitable contributions in aid of the American freedmen.

I. Appreciation of the extent of the freedmen's distress and sympathetic recognition of American responsibilities

At national British level, before the freedmen's aid movement had properly got under way in Scotland itself, it was in fact a prominent Scotsman who in an extremely well received and widely publicised speech [1] early set the pattern for squarely focussing upon the gravity and extent of the black population's plight in the Southern States. Addressing in mid-May, 1865 the inaugural meeting of the newly formed National Committee of British Freedmen's Aid Associations, [2] the Duke of Argyll began by heavily stressing that although it could be assumed that the happy result of the Civil War would be the abolition of slavery, the immediate post-war period was also unfortunately bound to be one of immense difficulty for the United States government and people, and of tremendous distress and suffering for a large proportion of the ex-slaves. It was on the basis of these sobering facts that he went on to state the essential purpose of the new organization on whose behalf he spoke, and, indeed, simultaneously to define the essential function of all the various Societies for freedmen's aid already in independent operation in different parts of the country.

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1 Over one thousand copies of the Duke of Argyll's speech to the initial meeting of the national committee of British Freedmen's Aid Associations were printed, at a total expenditure of £51 : 5 : 6 - see memorandum in A-sl. P., C117/64.

At the actual meeting, the audience frequently showed its hearty approval of the Duke's statements.

2 The National Committee of the British Freedmen's Aid Associations was formed on 17 May, 1865 to promote increased communication and cooperation between the various freedmen's aid Societies which were functioning in Britain by that stage, and to establish firm contacts with American freedmens aid Societies and receive delegates from these. Although constituted as a force which would serve to increase the centralization of administration within the British freedmen's aid movement, the National Committee did not in fact represent a supreme ruling, decision-making body which swept away all the local autonomy of the district Societies. The new organizational structure did not involve a full amalgamation of the separate bodies, but rather a new closer, more interdependent working relationship between them. For details on the formation and operation of the National Committee, see Vaughan, The British Freedmen's Aid Movement, pp. 69-90.

In existing to co-ordinate the efforts of these autonomous British Societies, the National Committee's fundamental object, as Argyll saw it, was simply further to assist the people of the United States in dealing with their gigantic problem of feeding, clothing and educating the emancipated Negroes. The formidable scale of the work was in itself persuasive evidence of the need for British help; and clearly the Duke believed that there could be no sounder manner of establishing the claims of the new National Committee of British Freed-men's Aid Associations, no more effective way of eliciting a respectable measure of widespread public support, than by resting the general campaign for freedmen's aid firmly on the basis of comprehensive information depicting the extent of the Negroes' trials and privations and of the American nation's problems in alleviating them. "It appears to me", he declared at the outset of his speech, "that this simple statement of the facts of the case and of the objects which we propose to ourselves, ought to be sufficient to recommend it [the freedmen's aid cause and the work of the National Committee in that regard] to the reason, and the feeling, and the conscience of the British public".[1]

Among those who subsequently made an effort to generate a specifically Scottish response to the movement, the importance and expedience of placing particular stress on the great dimension of the task of providing for the immediate requirements of the ex-slaves was similarly well recognized. Impressively thorough in its emphasis upon this vital aspect was, for instance, the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. The Society having itself already become active in support of the Freedmen's aid cause well before the beginning of 1866,[2] its Annual Report published at that time was, as we have already

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1 Speech by the Duke of Argyll at a meeting held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, 17 May, 1865, at the formation of the National Committee of British Freed-men's Aid Associations (microfilm), pp. 3 - 4.

2 The ELES was in fact already expending energy in this direction by mid-January, 1865 - see below, Chapter IX, pp. 114-116.

observed, strongly directed towards commending the appeal to the sympathies of those who took an interest in the Society's work. In pursuing this line, the Report did not only concentrate attention upon the very widespread, praiseworthy desire manifested by the freed Negroes to become self-reliant and to acquire education, but also took pains to communicate the full extent of the suffering which they were contemporaneously obliged to endure.

The South, it was emphasized, had been completely "devastated" by the Civil War, leaving the able-bodied freedmen with little opportunity substantially and permanently to relieve their grievous destitution, and inflicting yet more serious hardship upon the children and orphans, the aged and the sick.[1] Furnishing some detail of the miserable plight of the most badly hit elements within the black population, the ELES' members demonstrated that in offering aid to people in such pressing need, there could be no question of pauperizing them or of checking the desirable growth amongst them of a spirit of self-help and independence. For inasmuch as chronic poverty and distress had been brought upon the emancipated slaves of America by extraneous forces over which they had had absolutely no control, the freedmen's aid cause could confidently be advanced as a truly and worthily philanthropic one with "strong claims" alike on the benevolent and on those who had made known their hatred of slavery. The "cry of distress", the Society asserted, had been "nobly responded to by Northern philanthropists"; and "British Christians" having already taken positive steps to help them in meeting "the fearful exigency" by supplying money and clothing,[2] were urged to contribute still more generously to what was essentially a movement to alleviate an incidence of widespread human misery - misery unrelieved for the most part by the consolation afforded by the Bible and the Christian's knowledge of God.

The zeal of the ELES' attempt to stir up Scottish financial support remained unabated throughout 1866, and in the Annual Report which appeared

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1 Annual Report of the ELES for year ending February 15, 1866, p. 10

2 IBID., pp. 9-10.

in the spring of 1867, it was intimated that the condition of the American freedmen should continue to claim the interest and sympathy of the British people, not merely because "their progress in these early days of freedom is of great importance to the world's history", but more fundamently because very many were still in a seriously indigent and distressed state. Much suffering, it was explained had been occasioned in the winter of 1866, mainly as a result of failure of crops, the insecure basis on which the Negro labourers occupied their homes, and the violations of contracts by the employers.[1] To some slight extent, the Society was prepared to accept that a measure of suffering among the freedmen was largely inevitable in the early Reconstruction period: it could not reasonably be expected that in two years the Negroes would be established as a self-supporting community.[2] But at this stage, as earlier, the troubles which were continuing to afflict the black population were seen to be predominantly the unhappy consequence of the greatest military encounter of modern times - a war which in emancipating the slaves had left four millions ("more than the whole of Scotland") of uneducated, dependent free Negroes, a sizeable proportion of whom were women, children and old and infirm persons, to fend for themselves for the very first time in a country sadly dislocated by the experience of war.[3] In both the 1866 and the 1867 Reports, the Society strove to make it plain that the massive achievement which abolition represented for the United States had brought in its wake an equally massive problem which the nation - with the vitally necessary help of Britain - must honourably and satisfactorily solve in order to ensure a worthwhile freedom for the ex-slaves.

In choosing to highlight the magnitude of the trials and sufferings under

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1 Annual Report of the ELES...during the year ending 4th April, 1867, p.6.

2 Ibid., p. 7.

3 Ibid., p. 7.

which the black population, although free, still laboured, the ELES was able to employ all its traditional skills in pleading for support for the amelioration of the American Negroes' condition. Essentially the same tone of sentiments and the same manner of emphasis which characterized its 1866 and 1867 Reports had, however, earlier (if less elaborately) been voiced by other Scottish elements concerned to arouse popular enthusiasm for the freedmen's aid cause. Even within sections of the provincial press not accustomed to devoting more than occasional, cursory attention to the state of affairs in the transatlantic Republic, there were positive attempts to educate the public into a benevolent recognition of the extreme need in which the liberated Negroes found themselves. Notable in this respect was, for instance, the Perthshire Courier.

Drawing its readers' attention to a notice which it carried relating to a forthcoming public meeting to be held in Perth in late September, 1865 for the purpose of raising funds for the freedmen, the Perthshire Courier warmly recommended the objective of the proposed gathering. And the recommendation was accompanied and, of course, simultaneously justified by an apposite reference to the daunting extent of the difficulties with which both the Negroes themselves and the American nation as a whole were faced as a natural consequence of abolition. Thus, while rejoicing that "within that great nation, so long the Egypt of the poor sons of Africa, there are now no such persons as slaves", the paper also sounded a deliberately cautionary note with regard to Scottish exultations over the millions freed from bondage. Scotsmen living in a land with a population of only three millions could not, it suggested, easily conceive the actual numbers of human beings involved in constituting the sum of four millions. Yet, it was nothing short of that massive figure which had benefited from Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation but which had also, the Courier informed its readership, subsequently been precipitated into a general

condition of abject poverty and distress.

Having furnished a vivid picture of the grievous plight common to the majority of the Negroes, the journal went on to stress that slavery had "largely incapacitated them for emerging without help at once into the duties and responsibilities of liberty...Hitherto, in a large majority of cases, they have been treated as beasts of burden rather than as human beings".[1] They could scarcely, therefore, fail to be other than "miserably degraded", totally unprepared as they were for "the glorious possession of freedom". In tackling the immense problem which this unique situation presented, the citizens of the United States were credited with exerting every effort, but the Courier was also ready to recognize that the dimensions of the work involved were such as to make it justifiably necessary for the Americans to ask all "friends of humanity" in Europe to help them to achieve quickly a tolerable measure of relief for the Negroes. The case for British assistance on urgent humanitarian grounds was accordingly forcefully argued.[2]

After the local public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause had taken place, the Courier backed up its earlier exhortations by urging that the formal appeal to the people of Perth should meet with a generous response. Once again, a strong reminder was issued that because of the circumstances under which the much-desired emancipation of the American slaves had taken place, the freedmen were being forced to endure great privation and distress, "and it is for those who sympathise with suffering, especially those who rejoice in the emancipation, to do what they may be able to relieve so great destitution and want".[3] And at the public meeting

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1 Perthshire Courier, 26 Sept., 1865.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 3 Oct., 1865.

itself, one of the town's eminent men had spoken to the same effect. In his opening address from the Chair, Bailie John Pullar, founder of the famous Pullar's dyeworks of Perth,[1] assured the gathering that prior to emancipation, no provision had been made for the freedmen's welfare, although they would clearly be - as indeed it had proved - "wholly unfitted to guide themselves in any way whatever". Outlining the excessive pressures under which the American freedmen's aid Societies were functioning, he particularly stressed that in addition to caring for the Negroes, the Societies also had to contend with their "great ignorance", since the black population during slavery times had been deprived of all educational facilities. The extent of the Negroes' tribulations and of America's problem in easing them having thus been brought home to the audience before the actual appeals were made by the United States delegates, Pullar concluded by personally requesting that those present would "unite as one man" in supplying aid to so worthy and so necessary a cause.[2]

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1 John Pullar, the founder of the Perth firm, was born in 1803 and apprenticed at a very early age to a small local dyeworks. He established his own works in 1824, but the growth of the business was extremely slow until the 1850s when the advent of the power-loom led to a demand for the dyeing and cleaning of manufactured goods - a service which replaced the declining trade of yarn dyeing. The firm would appear to have expanded on a modest scale by the late 1850s but its business was adversely affected by the crisis in the cotton trade brought about by the American Civil War, and it was not until 1865 that it had enough work to justify substantial extension of plant and premises. John Pullar was a Baptist, but none of his nine children followed his religious creed. His brother Laurence carried on part of a cloth-manufacturing business established by their grandfather. See Laurence Pullar, Lengthening Shadows: Random notes of a family History Written in Old Age (printed for private circulation, 1910), pp. 34-38, 81, 88-89. Pullar entered Perth Town Council in 1850, and over many years gave valuable civic service. He eventually became a Bailie, and although at one stage forced to relinquish that position because of the pressures of business, he nevertheless accepted the duties of Lord Provost when elected to that office in 1867. A staunch Liberal in politics, he was a generous contributor to charitable causes - see Perth Pamphlets L040, pp. 91-92, Perth Public Library.

2 Report of speech by Bailie John Pullar at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in the City Hall, Perth, 28 Sept., 1865, in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865.

To this vital, basic theme of the vast proportions of the difficulties confronting America in alleviating and elevating the condition of the ex-slaves, other Scottish speakers more experienced than Pullar in pleading for the freedmen's aid cause also took occasion to resort. It has already been indicated that one of the most consistent and effective platform speakers in this sphere was the Free Church's renowned orator, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie. In providing his audiences with reasons for supporting a movement directed towards helping the Americans to help the free Negroes, Guthrie in effect adopted something approaching a standard text which he propounded wherever he spoke, and which involved weighty emphasis upon strengthening friendship and goodwill towards a kindred country and upon the advancement of America's and Britain's mutual role of spreading christian enlightenment throughout the world.[1] At the same time, however, being so shrewd and exceptionally successful a preacher and public speaker, he naturally appreciated also the critical importance of impressing upon his listeners the full, formidable scale of the work required of the United States on behalf of the freedmen. And this aspect he duly highlighted, investing it, however, with a hint of his own predominant personal outlook.

Accordingly, presiding in July, 1866 at a public meeting for the freedmen's cause held in accordance with a resolution passed at the recent Free Church General Assembly, Guthrie informed a crowded gathering in Edinburgh's Free Church Assembly Hall that America had a very great task still to do, a task almost as gigantic as that of the Civil War itself. With regard to providing for the material, spiritual and educational wellbeing of the emancipated slaves, as well as securing for them freedmen with justice, the "misdeeds of two centuries" would not, he asserted, be ended in a day, or

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1 Guthrie's concentration on these aspects of Scottish participation in the freedmen's aid movement is considered in some detail below, pp. 464, 493-495.

maybe even in a century. The tenor of his own views, as an individual deeply imbued with the tenets of the evangelical Free Church, as to what constituted the real substance of America's difficulties in this regard was displayed in his intimation that the people of the United States were "now endeavouring to raise the fallen, to make the negro fit for the freedom they have bestowed on him, to educate him, to train him to habits of voluntary and remunerative industry, to make him a Christian, to make him a man!" It was for that endeavour, he suggested, that the support of Scotland was desperately needed. And indicating (to sympathetic applause) that America had "in many respects done nobly...With all her faults, I have ever admired, esteemed and loved her", Guthrie did not hesitate to recommend to "the Christians of Scotland" the scheme for raising funds to improve the lot of the Negro population there.[1]

Following Guthrie as platform speakers on that occasion were the Rev. Sella Martin and the Rev. Dr. W. Patton, delegates from the American Missionary Association who in voicing their appeals to the Edinburgh audience both provided details of the nature and dimensions of the sufferings currently being borne by the people on whose behalf they campaigned.[2] In so doing, Martin and Patton were in fact abiding by what tended, understandably, to be standard procedure among visiting representatives of the various American freedmen's aid organizations. The obvious main priority in arousing the interest and sympathy of the British people on behalf of these Societies' labours was, after all, effectively to hammer

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held under the auspices of the Free Church in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 2 July, 1866, in Scotsman, 3 July, 1866.

2 See report of speeches by the Rev. Sella Martin and the Rev. Dr. W. Patton in ibid.

home to them the immensity of the difficulties which existed in relation to the liberated Negroes. This priority was fully acknowledged and assiduously acted upon by the several United States speakers who made their claims for support at the annual General Assemblies and in front of large gatherings at public meetings throughout Scotland. There can, indeed, be little question but that these American delegates were the main agency in fostering Scottish appreciation (both at the level of audience receptivity and at the level of native Scottish advocacy of the cause) of the extent of the problem created by Negro emancipation.

A convenient illustration of the manner in which an agent from a United States freedmen's aid Society could stimulate and increase Scottish awareness of the gravity of the American Negroes' post-war situation was afforded by the proceedings at a public meeting for the cause held in Edinburgh during early December, 1865. At that gathering, it fell to the Rev. Dr. William Lindsay Alexander, minister at the North College Street Congregational Church, Edinburgh since 1835,[1] to offer the formal recommendation of the appeal which had been made by the Rev. Dr. J.C. Holbrook of the American Missionary Association. Clearly impressed by the content of Holbrook's address,

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1 The Rev. Dr. William Lindsay Alexander was born at Leith in 1808, the son of Baptist parents. He graduated from Edinburgh University in 1825, and from then until 1827 studied on a literature course at St. Andrews, where he became a close acquaintance of Thomas Chalmers. In 1826 he joined the Congregational Church at Leith, and the following year became a theological student at Glasgow Theological Academy, being appointed at the end of 1827 classical tutor in Blackburn Theological Academy. He taught there until 1831, and after an abortive attempt to study medicine, became for two years (1832-1834) minister of Newington Independent Church, Liverpool. Travel and some literary work in London was followed by his ordination at North College Street Congregational Church, Edinburgh in 1835. Remaining there for forty years, he was a powerful preacher and enjoyed a high reputation. A D.D. of St. Andrews (1846) and LL.D. of Edinburgh (1884), he was a member of most of Edinburgh's learned societies, and held several distinguished posts, including a place on the committee for revising the Old Testament (1870), assessor of Edinburgh University Court (1871), and Principal of the Theological Hall (1877-1881). He died in 1884. See James Ross, W. Lindsay Alexander D.D., LL.D.: His Life and Work (London, 1887); E.T. McLaren, Dr. Lindsay Alexander (London, n.d.).

Alexander added a personal statement emphasising the strong claims on humanitarian action presented by the plight of America's ex-slaves. Whatever the views held by the individual on American questions, the distressed condition of the emancipated Negroes had claim, Alexander maintained, on universal sympathy and support. That sentiment - and the impetus which it had received from the foregoing speech - were reflected in the resolution proposed by Alexander: "That the condition of the freedmen in America, as represented by the Rev. Dr. Holbrook this evening, entitles them to the sympathies and benevolent aid of Christians and philanthropists in this country as well as in the United States".[1]

Holbrook had certainly spared no effort in enlightening his audience on the great scale of the misery, the destitution and the general mood of hopelessness afflicting the new freedmen in the Southern States. Having begun his address by rejoicing that "the chains have been stricken from the hands of four millions of human beings", he immediately reminded the assembled company that this did also involve a population one-third larger than that of Scotland being thrown upon the resources of the Federal government. Nor could there be any immediate prospect of a significant proportion of the Negroes being able to ease the burden on the Federal authorities by successfully beginning to fend for themselves: the widespread "extreme backwardness", the tendency to improvidence, and the initial inability to appreciate the need for consistent labour - all the diabolical legacy of slavery - effectively ruled out such a possibility. Furthermore, the

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1 Report of proposed resolution and statements by the Rev. Dr. W.L. Alexander at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in the Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in Scotsman, 6th Dec., 1865.

emancipated slaves had been cast helpless into "a country devastated by war", where the whole economic system had been deranged and the employers of labour so impoverished that they were unable to offer work.

Yet, even these daunting facts, Holbrook implied, represented only a fraction of the total problem surrounding the welfare of the Negroes. The difficulty did not, he emphasized, resolve itself into a question of teaching and generally helping four million strong, able-bodied freedmen to grapple with the challenges of their new style of life. Much less straightforward than that, the urgent task of relieving the general condition of the Negroes was complicated by the fact that approximately one-fifth of them were children (and included in their number were probably around 100,000 orphans), while the aged and infirm accounted for another large section of the black community. Thousands, he indicated, were liable to perish in the coming winter if no aid were speedily offered.[1]

Having gone on to read to the audience first-hand reports of the great destitution prevalent among the liberated slaves, Holbrook described some of the means taken by the government to ameliorate their condition, dwelling at especial length on the role of the Freedmen's Bureau. In addition to the efforts of that institution, the charitable societies which had been formed "all through the North" had by late 1865, he stated, already raised £5 million, a response which demonstrated that the people of America were doing as much as they could to help alleviate the suffering. But none of that was enough, Holbrook insisted. The Edinburgh gathering was reminded that the freedmen required much more than simply food and clothing; that in order to prevent their becoming paupers, they needed to be taught ways of providing for themselves, and to acquire at least a rudimentary education. Towards achieving all of these vitally essential objectives the tangible support offered by "Christians and philanthropists" in Scotland would be directed.[2]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. J.C. Holbrook in ibid.

2 Ibid.

The pattern of this forceful address by Holbrook, with its extremely detailed, harrowing descriptions of the miserable, helpless condition of the freed Negroes, was then, typical of that followed by all the itinerant American agents of freedmen's aid Societies in their public appeals to the Scottish people. Thus, while the activities of Holbrook himself in Scotland would seem to have been limited to the single appearance at the Edinburgh meeting in late 1865, other United States delegates whose Scottish labours were more prolonged adopted basically the same approach and the same order of emphases when addressing their audiences. As we have observed, Holbrook's fellow-worker within the American Missionary Association, Sella Martin, was careful to employ his powerful oratory in impressing upon his Scottish listeners the depth of his race's suffering in the post-war South. At what proved to be an extremely successful public meeting held in Dundee in late September, 1865, Martin had, for instance, issued an eloquent and exceedingly well received appeal which conveyed the message that simply in order to preserve life - to aid the desperate privations of a people who had gone "up from slavery with nothing" - the goodwill and financial support of the Scottish public was vitally necessary.[1]

Nor, in the cause of bringing home to his audience the great urgency and seriousness of the freedmen's plight, did Martin hesitate openly to acknowledge that in their current state they were totally incapable of substantially helping themselves. Hence, speaking at a meeting in Aberdeen, he vividly depicted the Negroes' destitution, their needs, and the crippling hostility of the ex-planters and then proceeded to stress that the difficulties were multiplied by the fact that lives passed in slavery had rendered the freedmen deficient in physical fitness and in intellectual, moral and spiritual training.[2]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Belmont Congregational Church, Aberdeen, 29 Sept., 1865, in Aberdeem Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865. See also his speech at Perth in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865

This theme was reiterated by Martin when in the following year (in the early summer of 1866) he spoke before the General Assemblies of both the Church of Scotland and the Free Church. On both occasions, information on the condition of the emancipated Negroes was accompanied by the intimation that one of the greatest difficulties which they had to face during the transition stage was the shedding of habits instilled into them by their status as slaves. [1]

Speaking alongside Martin at Dundee and Aberdeen in the early autumn of 1865 had been an agent from the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission, the Rev. Dr. A.M. Storrs, and in delivering his appeals for Scottish support, he too relied heavily upon the impact which might be expected to be made by acquaintance with the full unhappy facts relative to the freedmen's general condition. As an inevitable consequence of this, the graphic illustrations and sentiments which he communicated to his listeners tended to be for the most part repeats of those already voiced by Martin in his fortunate position as the first speaker. This duplication was especially marked at the Aberdeen meeting; but it was nevertheless there, also, that Storrs sought to convinve the audience that America's massive problem of providing for, and doing justice by, her four million ex-slaves was one which transcended the sphere of mere practical necessity to involve the fundamental character of the country's future development. Urging that the Negroes must be helped to acquire material wealth, personal property, education and social standing, he declared that

> It is a pivotal hour in the destiny of America; the Nemesis that never falters has so bound up the interests of race with race, that the interests of one race cannot be destroyed without destroying the interests of the other.[2]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at the Free Church General Assembly, 2 June, 1866, in Procs. Free Church G.A., 1866, p. 321; report of speech by Martin at the Church of Scotland General Assembly, 4 June, 1866, in Proceedings at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in reference to America: 1866 (pamphlet), p.7,

2 Report of speech by Rev. Dr. A.M. Storrs at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Belmont Congregational Chapel, Aberdeen, 29 Sept., 1865, in Aberdeen Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865.

At Dundee a few evenings earlier, Storrs had also fashioned his appeal around a comprehensive description of the freedmen's sufferings.[1] And as in the case of Holbrook at Edinburgh, it is clear that his address there, along with that of Sella Martin, had at least some measure of positive success in further implanting the grim realities about the American Negroes' condition upon the consciousness of some of the city's most prominent men. Thus, in moving the resolution thanking the American deputies and recommending their cause to "the sympathy and charity of British Christians", the Rev. Dr. James R. McGavin, minister at Tay Square United Presbyterian Church, Dundee,[2] felt obliged to offer a personal comment on the immense importance and extent of what he designated "the crisis" then facing America. To applause from the body of the hall, he suggested that there had never been so loud an appeal to principles as that represented by the freedmen's aid cause, and he confidently anticipated a generous Christian response to the emergency.[3] Seconding the resolution, H.B. Fergusson, a family member of one of Dundee's wealthy powerloom linen manufacturing firms, a leading public speaker,[4] and one of those appointed

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1 See report of speech by the Rev. Dr. A.M. Storrs at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

2 The Rev. Dr. James R. McGavin was ordained minister of Tay Square U.P. Church, Dundee in 1833. A new church opened there the following year, and he soon gathered a large congregation to it, being in his early days exceptionally popular within the local community and a popular preacher who chose entertaining themes for his sermons. In 1858 he received a D.D. from Princeton University. He retired in 1878. See Small, History of the...United Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, pp. 303-304.

3 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. James R. McGavin at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

4 John Leng, editor of the Dundee Advertiser, was to remember H.B. Fergusson as one of the most popular speakers in Dundee over a period of many years, a "cultured and polished orator" who was "a great public attraction" - see John Leng, Reminiscences of Sir John Leng, M.P. (supplement to the Dundee Year Book, 1901), p.11.

It is interesting to speculate on whether H.B. Fergusson was in any way related to one "Henry Ferguson", a Dundee merchant and church elder who in 1843 accompanied the Rev. Dr. William Cunningham on his celebrated trip to the United States to raise money for the Free Church. The variation in the spelling of the surname suggests no connection, but it is yet worth noting that the Rev. Dr. J.W. Alexander of New York found Henry Ferguson possessed of a "penetrating and transporting" eloquence and an oratorical passion which he had seldom seen equalled - see the Rev. Thomas Brown (ed.), Annals of the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1881), Part III, pp. 137-139.

that very evening to serve on a committee to collect contributions for the freedmen, embellished McGavin's remarks on the Herculean nature of the task confronting the United States. While employing a customary eloquence to declare that emancipation and the ending of the Civil War had cleared the way for "the trump of jubilee proclaiming a new sunrise of light and liberty in America", Fergusson was at the same time fully prepared to endorse the claims that British support was needed at the outset to ensure for the United States an admirable regeneration and a noble career.[1]

Substantially aided, therefore, by the amply informative descriptions supplied by the American freedmen's aid Society deputies, Scots sympathetic to the cause possessed a keen appreciation of the tremendous difficulties posed by the task of providing for the freed Negroes; and this knowledgeable awareness was naturally sedulously put to use by those Scots who were themselves actively involved in recommending the miserable, destitute plight of the ex-slaves to the charitable benevolence of their fellow Scotsmen. Always closely and sensitively attuned to the situation in the United States immediately after the Civil War, the Dundee Advertiser had predictably sought in advance to arouse local sympathy and enthusiasm for the public meeting held in the city in late September, 1865, suggesting to its readers that the transatlantic Republic was in the most critical of positions and that the "great [American] people", in struggling with vast political and social problems, needed care and attention in the same way as an individual getting over a bad illness. Britain could not easily estimate, it declared, the magnitude of the task still to be done "before the work of liberation is fully accomplished".[2]

But although thus characteristically and predominantly sympathetic to

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1 Report of speech by H.B. Fergusson at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

2 Ibid., "Aid for Freedmen in America", 22 Sept., 1865.

the United States in its predicament, the Advertiser's editorial contained also at this stage undertones of a somewhat different form of sentiment - what was, in fact, a recognition that however great the difficulties involved, America nevertheless did have a very real and inescapable responsibility towards the race which for generations it had enslaved. Hence Leng's paper stated that while it was impossible to forsee the outcome of a labour greater, almost, than any that had ever fallen to a nation, the "transition period" of Reconstruction did afford Americans a chance "to undo the shame and ignorance" which had for so long been imposed upon the Negroes, and to raise them up socially, intellectually and spiritually:

> It is this which demands our sympathy, in order that the Americans may be strengthened to complete the great work they have begun. It is this that demands our active co-operation,...for our own sakes, but far more for the sake of humanity...Rightly discharged, [the Americans' task of providing for the freedmen] ...will be to their lasting honour; failure will cover the American people with perpetual disgrace; and if we stand coldly aside, the shadow of their failure will rest on us.[1]

The Dundee Advertiser was not alone in suggesting that by supplying financial aid and general support, Britain might play a constructive role in encouraging the United States to fulfill its duty in respect of its liberated slaves. We have already observed that immediately the Civil War terminated, the small Presbyterian sect known as the Original Seceders issued a stern warning to America not to conclude too confidently that all its troubles were over, nor to glory unduly in an emancipation edict which had granted the Negroes no more than their basic natural rights.[2] This cautionary reminder was accompanied in the May, 1865 issue of the Original Secession Magazine by a firm assertion that as a nation, the

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1 Ibid. See also ibid., 30 Nov., 1866, in which the Advertiser indicated how the religious denominations in America were then vying with one another to be foremost in making amends for their former neglect of the Negro population.

2 See above, Chapter V, p. 524.

United States was bound by "the claims of eternal justice" to try to compensate to the utmost "the deeply-wronged African race".

As well as meeting its obligations in this direction by suitable, effective Legislative enactments and by large charitable donations, America, the Magazine suggested, should - and could with ease - assign to each freedman a plot of ground, and establish a far-reaching scheme of intensive moral and religious training. The onus of responsibility for the quality of the Negroes' future was clearly seen to rest with the Americans who had in the recent past so shamelessly tolerated the institution of slavery within their country. But even the Original Seceders' unyieldingly strict insistence upon the necessity for a full measure of recompense as atonement for the nation's earlier misdeeds did not stop them from expressing a sympathetic urge to ease the burdens of the United States (a land which, with its enviably egalitarian religious and social framework, did after all represent for them an admirable experiment). On the contrary, an extremely generous sum of British aid was advocated: "would it not be an honourable and noble act, on the part of Britain, to contribute some three or four millions to assist the United States in making such compensation to the freed slaves for the deep wrongs done them by white men claiming the Christian name?".[1]

Also inclined to instill a religious fervour, although of a more subdued brand, into his references to American responsibility towards the ex-slaves was Thomas Guthrie. By early 1868, speaking in Dundee at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen, Guthrie certainly did feel able fulsomely to praise the United States for the great efforts which it had made following the Civil War to "build up the ruin of many generations" through the establishment of the Freedmen's Bureau, education schemes, and many other

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1 Original Secession Magazine, "The Civil War in the United States: A Divine Judgement and a Beacon of Warning", May, 1865, pp. 474-475.

Christian projects. But the achievements notwithstanding, he remained ready to insist that America still had a heavy debt to pay to the Negro race:

> [I]t will take long years of kind usage and Christian kindness, and patient forbearance before she can pay for the scorn and oppression - for the slave breeding and the slave-market - and the torn ties, and blood, and unutterable wrongs of centuries.[1]

In view of his appreciation of the onerous nature of the duty which faced America, in view of his personal fond regard for the country as well as of his sincere desire as a Christian to see the speedy amelioration of the Negroes' condition, Guthrie rejoiced that the American freedmen's aid Societies had elected to ask for British support: "The cause is worthy of it! America is worthy of it! The negro is worthy of it!"[2]

Clearly, then, a ready, open recognition of the obligations which America itself was bound to meet in regard to the black race did not in every case necessarily preclude the willingness to assist that country in coping with its formidable difficulties. On the contrary, those elements within Scotland (such as John Leng and his staff on the Dundee Advertiser and the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie) who basically admired and respected the United States were anxious to do all that they possibly could to stimulate a Scottish concern and response which would help America the better to discharge its acknowledged responsibilities towards the freedmen. Conversely, however, those who looked with suspicious disfavour upon American democracy and on most aspects of society in the Republic found it expedient to seize on the indisputable reality of American responsibility in this

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting for the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 7 Jan., 1868.

2 Ibid.

sphere in order to criticize the United States for partially shirking its duties regarding the freedmen.

A veiled and relatively mild charge against the victorious North on that count was made by the Dundee Courier as early as mid-June, 1865, when the paper chose to focus editorial attention on the speech delivered by the Duke of Argyll at the inaugural meeting of the National Committee of British Freed-Men's Aid Associations in London the previous month. Referring to Argyll's endeavour to advance the objectives of the British freedmen's aid Societies, the Courier was fully prepared to concede that great suffering was prevalent among the Negroes in the Southern states, that "the poor creatures" were definitely in urgent need: "Thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, have been emancipated into their graves, and more are likely to follow into the liberty of death". And echoing Argyll's sentiments, the paper stressed that the appeal for the freedmen, if properly conducted on a basis of common humanity rather than on a basis of North/South partisanship, could validly draw support from erstwhile Scottish supporters of both the Federal and Confederate causes.[1]

At the same time, however, the Dundee Courier, in an assessment of the development of the miserable plight of the Negroes, was itself unable to sink its pre-existing bias against the North sufficiently to adopt a clear view of the post-war efforts being made by that section to alleviate the freedmen's distress. In levelling the central charge that the North had readily shared in the profits of slavery but did not want, after emancipation, to bear its burdens, the Courier utterly denied that the acute suffering and destitution of the ex-slaves was the inevitable consequence of the change from slavery to liberty. All that had been required, it suggested, for the avoidance of such a situation was to have abolished

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1 Dundee Courier, "Aid for Freed Men", 14 June, 1865.

slavery by compensating the slaveowners rather than by resorting to Civil War. But the North, selfishly bent on confiscation instead of compensation, had totally neglected to consider the consequences of its actions upon the freedmen, and had pursued a course which could not fail to leave them in an abject condition.

With the North ultimately obliged, as a result, to pay out more than would have been necessary had it adopted a more generous policy earlier in the century, "Northern partizans", the paper declared, had begun to request help at least partly on the grounds of sympathy - past and present - for the North. Probably because of antipathy towards the North, Southern partisans had therefore understandably taken virtually no part in supporting the freedmen's aid campaign: "We may infer he [the Southern partisan] would have the Federals to struggle with the difficulties they have done so much to create".[1] Given its strong indictment of the Northern approach to emancipation, and its obvious contempt for the North's efforts to cast itself in the role of charitable benefactors to the destitute Negroes, the Dundee Courier's own attitude may well have been substantially reflected in this latter statement.

A more direct accusation against America of failing adequately to respond to the needs of the situation in relation to the Negro population was, however, voiced very much later in the Reconstruction era by that most virulently anti-American of Scottish journals, the Edinburgh Courant. During the course of 1873, the paper took occasion to publicize the claims of the Jubilee Singers, the Negro choir who at that time were giving stage appearances in Scotland to raise money for extensions to Fisk University.[2]

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1 Ibid.

2 For a more detailed consideration of the Jubilee Singers and their fund raising activities in Scotland, see below, Chapter X, pp. 279-304.

Warmly recommending their endeavours to its readers, the Edinburgh Courant stressed that "People may feel assured that in patronising them they are not contributing to individual enterprise, but are really helping a long oppressed nation to the great means of moral culture and Christian enlightenment". Yet, despite what was therefore clearly an eminently praiseworthy objective, the efforts of the Jubilee Singers had in the Courant's estimation met with an essentially tardy American response. While they had been very well received by United States audiences, they still required to raise £6,000 in Britain in order to attain the necessary amount. Drawing attention to this fact, the paper acidly observed that "it may be doubted if America should not have raised a larger proportion of the required sum than £8,000".[1]

But while the Edinburgh Courant took satisfaction in pinpointing America's apparently insubstantial concern, a mere decade after emancipation, to assist the earnest strivings of the free Negroes, easily the most vehement insistence that providing for the freedmen was, and ought to remain, more or less exclusively the task of the United States had much earlier been mooted by the Scotsman. We have already seen that by the close of 1866, Scotland's leading newspaper had unambiguously announced its opposition to any further organized Scottish involvement in the freedmen's aid movement.[2] While the principal reason for the adoption of that attitude was certainly the rooted conviction that an excess of philanthropic aid would disastrously arrest the growth of a vital self-reliance among the emancipated slaves, an almost equally strong assumption inclining the Scotsman towards the uncompassionate point of view was the considered belief that the care and welfare of the American Negroes was overwhelmingly the responsibility of the

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 19 Aug., 1873.

2 See above, Chapter VII, pp. 150-155.

United States itself.

Indicative of the significant influence which this opinion had on the formation of the Scotsman's outlook was the fact that, simultaneously, the paper was not prepared to make an objection to Scottish appeals on behalf of the Jamaican Negroes. Thus with regard to the efforts of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society to relieve the condition of "the blacks in Jamaica", the Scotsman, conceding that Britain might have been "partially responsible" for any calamities which had taken place there, confirmed that Britain did have a duty to ensure that no suffering existed in her colonies that could be alleviated by public aid or private charity. While there was thus legitimate scope for the philanthropy of the ELES - and of all Scots - in that direction, the paper maintained that there was "very strong ground" for doubting whether so much could be said for the claim made for the American freedmen.[1]

These, it was asserted, were the special protegés of the United States government, the "wards of the nation". For their protection and defence there existed the Freedmen's Bureau, an institution which had "many millions of dollars at its command and Congress at its back". The reference to the financial resources and powerful support enjoyed by the Freedmen's Bureau represented a central theme of the editorial. For the kernel of the Scotsman's argument was not only that provision for the freedmen was America's responsibility but that America was well able to discharge that responsibility alone. Citing the evidence in official statements, the paper suggested that Britain's "Yankee cousins" seemed by that time to be in "a condition of unexampled pecuniary prosperity", with their public debt decreasing at the rate of £1 million a day and a surplus of £100 million in gold in their

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1 Scotsman, 7 Dec., 1866.

Treasury. There was therefore absolutely no reason to fear that the freedmen might be in danger of starving to death during the winter, and positively no need for Britain to send contributions of money or of clothing, "either new or partially worn".[1] To do so would simply be to encourage the United States to relax its own efforts on behalf of the Negro population, and in view of its healthy financial state there was nothing to hinder America adequately to fulfill its obligations towards that section of the community.

Within the Scotsman's reminder to the Scottish people of America's duty with regard to her emancipated slaves and of the complete lack of necessity for British contributions on behalf of the freedmen there hovered the implication that the United States itself was not exerting to the full its great energies nor applying in sufficient measure its vast resources to the demands validly made upon it by this particular post-war issue. Yet, it had been to meet the American responsibility in this connection by seeking to marshall the nation's compassion for the plight of the Southern Negroes that the American freedmen's aid Societies had early set to work in the years following emancipation. And when these organizations extended their activities into Britain, they were emphatic in regarding British contributions as a welcome (if necessary) adjunct to, rather than substitute for, the efforts contemporaneously being made by the American people and government. Deputies from the United States Societies carefully impressed upon their Scottish audiences that both at the level of Federal legislation and of private philanthropic donation America was doing as much as it possibly could to ameliorate the general condition of the liberated slaves. And since this assurance was usually given in conjunction with detailed information illustrative of the massive dimensions of America's task, a significant number of Scots were not, it would seem, over-disposed to dispute it. Indeed, the

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1 Ibid.

Scotsman's conviction that British involvement in helping the American Negroes was both highly undesirable and uncalled for, and its declaration that the United States should face up to its own responsibilities by itself, were not, it might be suggested, sentiments which would readily have found total endorsement among a large proportion of the Scottish people.

Certainly, once it had become clear that America was more than eager to accept British assistance in easing the immediate sufferings and bringing spiritual and intellectual enlightenment to the uneducated Negro race, Scotland played a respectable part in advancing the freedmen's aid cause. The character and extent of the Scottish participation in the campaign will be looked at in some detail in a subsequent chapter, but it may be noted here that at one level or another, public interest and involvement was maintained from at least the winter of 1864 until the summer of 1877. Especially, of course, during the earlier years of the Reconstruction era there was a marked readiness to arrange on behalf of the cause public meetings addressed by American speakers. And while it seems probable that within Scotland the incidence of organized activity in the shape of formally constituted "freedmen's aid Societies" was negligible (the one prominent, positively identifiable association of this nature being the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society), a very definite and important role in recommending and publicizing the appeals for America's ex-slaves was assumed by the ELES, by Scottish individuals both clerical and lay who clearly possessed a deep personal commitment to the cause, and by the corporate structures of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches.

But it might be suggested that the most important factor in assessing Scottish sympathy for the freedmen's aid movement must be the extent to which it drew an active, practical response from the general public. The full dimensions of this support as well, for instance, as the basic attitudes of the Scottish working class as a whole towards the cause are virtually impossible to gauge accurately. But viewed simply in terms of solid financial returns,

there is some evidence to suggest that at least a fairly substantial element of the population was prepared to take a compassionate interest in the unhappy lot of the American freedmen, and to translate this sentiment into charitable contributions for their benefit.

II. Continuation of the old Scottish anti-slavery impulse and recognition of the Federal wartime struggle as a crusade.

It is obvious, however, that in addition to the widespread appreciation of the immediate, tragically destitute conditions of the emancipated Negroes and the effects of American deputies in reinforcing it, several key factors contributed towards providing an impetus for active Scottish participation in that philanthropic movement. And of these, one of the most basic and significant was the continuation of the old anti-slavery impulse. Something has already been said of the intensity of the abolitionist feeling which manifested itself within Scotland earlier in the century.[1] In view of that tradition of spirited concentration upon the Negro race in America and especially upon the diabolical wrong and injustice to which it was subjected, it was perhaps largely inevitable that following the Civil War there would be not only a concern for the position of the freedmen but also a concern of a character strongly fashioned and influenced by the preceding force of the Scottish agitation for the abolition of slavery.

Certainly, Scotland's inclination to record its abhorrence of the "peculiar institution" died hard: even after emancipation and the Northern victory which consolidated it, there was still a pronounced tendency in many quarters to dwell upon the evils of the vanished slave system and to issue vehement condemnations of it. For those who had either seen, or heard at first-hand of, the atrocities perpertrated during slavery times, scope still remained

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1 See above, Chapters I, pp. 12-13; III, pp. 312, 314-318. The most thorough exposition of this is in Rice, The Scottish Factor, passim.

publicly to relate their grim information. Thus in early 1866, for example, there appeared in the Glasgow Sentinel the account of a trip to Missouri undertaken in 1855, in which the anonymous writer forcefully described the utter revulsion for slavery aroused in him as a result of his experiences. Indicating that Missouri had at that time been a slave breeding state which sent gangs of Negroes chained together to the South-West plantations, he recalled how he had once encountered a gang "consisting chiefly of able-bodied men, with a sprinkling of females, all chained together, trudging along with bleeding feet, followed by two men on horseback with hickory whips, and two savage-looking bloodhounds". Subsequently, he had endured the "sickening" experience of finding himself " in an obscure corner of...[a] bar room, listening to accounts of negro hunting and captures, and similar exploits".[1] In somewhat similar vein, the Scotsman's American correspondent, actually reporting from the Southern states at a comparatively early stage in Reconstruction, considered it worthwhile to mention that he had heard stories of slave times "which made my blood run cold". And in thanking God for the end of slavery, he revived for his Scottish readership some old visions of the horrors of the system through his descriptions of the "whipping post" and such devices as the iron pronged collar.[2]

In the editorial columns of the Scottish press, too, there persisted a desire to reaffirm the great strength of hostile feeling which had existed within the country towards Negro slavery in America. The Scotsman itself was conspicuously caught up in this trend, and its leading articles during Reconstruction were not infrequently spiced with denunciations of slavery as "that monstrous iniquity"[3] or some such equivalent appellation. At the end

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1 "Wayside Jottings of a Ramble in America: Slavery in Missouri" by an unidentified contributor, in Glasgow Sentinel, 27 Jan., 1866.

2 Scotsman (U.S./c., New Orleans, 24 May, 1867), 14 June, 1867.

3 See ibid., 4 Sept., 1866; also ibid., 11 Sept., 1867.

of 1869, the paper ventured beyond the general declarations of its own stance on slaveholding to offer a specific statement on what it believed to have been the attitude of an overwhelming proportion of Britons towards the issue. Devoting attention in late December to the revival of the "violently exaggerated" 'Alabama' claims, it castigated the American Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish, for his contention that during the Civil War, Britain had completely surprised the Federal government by according its sympathies to insurgents who aimed to establish a slaveholding republic. The Scotsman, in sharply attacking his statement as "either a distortion of theory or a misrepresentation of fact", seized the opportunity to present a broad estimation of the depth and extent of the hatred of slavery which was being registered in Britain by the 1860s:

> No British government ever pronounced or acted upon any opinion regarding slavery in the United States. It only adds to the force of that fact that, beyond doubt, almost all the individual members of the British governments, for at least the last generation, have concurred with the vast majority of the British people in condemning slavery as an odious institution.[1]

The heinous crime which constituted the practice of keeping one's fellow human beings in absolute bondage had of course been looked upon with especial opprobrium by ministers of the dissenting religious denominations in Scotland, denominations which placed a strong emphasis on the fundamental equality of all races of men, and on a generous measure of liberty for the individual. With regard to active participation by ordained churchmen in the Scottish anti-slavery movement there had, indeed, been a massive predominance of ministers from the two main dissenting bodies (the Free and U.P. Churches) and from the lesser sects.[2] Retaining something of the intensity of

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1 Ibid., 28 Dec., 1869.
For post-war condemnations of slavery in other Scottish journals, see, for instance, Glasgow Sentinel, 26 Aug., 11 Nov., 1865; North British Daily Mail, 6 Jan., 1866; Daily Review, 28 Dec., 1868; Aberdeen Herald, 30 Dec., 1865.

2 For the very substantial and significant involvement of the Free and U.P. Churches in the Scottish anti-slavery campaign (the "Send Back the Money" controversy and the embarrassment over U.P. missions in Old Calabar notwithstanding), see Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 70-76, 280-283 and passim.

feeling which had dictated their involvement in the Scottish abolitionist Societies, these elements still occasionally tended, after slavery had been finally abolished in the United States, to recall the immense triumph over evil which emancipation had represented.

Accordingly, in recording that denomination's extreme satisfaction with the outcome of the Civil War, a committee report presented before the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in May, 1865 concluded with a scathing denunciation of slavery, and one which did not spare the vanquished South; "The many noble features displayed by... [the Southerners] in the pursuit both of their political and military ends could never hide from us the essential rottenness of a system based on the vile and abominable institution of slavery".[1] And almost a whole decade later, the presence of the Jubilee Singers in Scotland was sufficient to reactivate the vigorous United Presbyterian strain of hostility towards the concept of slaveholding. Praising the choir's songs for a "plaintive" and "thrilling" quality which admirably evoked "the harshness of slavery", an article published in the Church's magazine in the spring of 1874 went on to give the life stories of several members of the company (remarking in passing that these were a commentary on Uncle Tom's Cabin - "that wonderful book") and to condemn slavery as "the darkest and most dreadful blot in history". The removal of that blot from the American scene had happily ensured that "in theory at least, the black man stands on a level with his white brother".[2] And if in the mid 1870s in America the disparity between the real and theoretical extent of the Negroes' social and political equality remained great, the huge sums which the United Presbyterians had by that time raised on behalf

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1 Report of the committee on the "Signs of the Times" in a report of the proceedings at the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, meeting in Glasgow on 9 May, 1865, in Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, June, 1865, p. 197.

2 United Presbyterian Magazine, April, 1874, pp. 174-175.

of the freedmen[1] demonstrate that within the U.P. Church itself, the desire to help the Negro to achieve a greater degree of real freedom and equality was clearly not wanting.

The lingering Scottish preoccupation during Reconstruction with illustrating the evils of slavery and celebrating its end was also in some measure displayed at the popular level in poetry on this theme written and re-published at that period. We have already observed[2] how the Caledonian Mercury considered it highly apposite in mid-August, 1865 to publish as an obituary on an obscure Dalkeith poet, William Millar, his sonnet welcoming Frederick Douglass to a land "where freeborn man can wander unrestrained", and hailing his escape from "the scourge of slavery". Somewhat earlier in the same year, when the Confederate cause was rapidly approaching the point of expiry, the Sunday Magazine under the editorship of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie had carried a poem by one "G.M." entitled "Capture of the Slave-Ship", which in a vigorous, if rather remarkable, manner brought back into attention the atrocity and cruelties of slave transportation.[3]

A yet more noteworthy attempt to convey in verse a reminder for the public of the intolerable inhumanities of the slave system was, however, subsequently to appear in Guthrie's monthly periodical. In the June, 1865 issue of the Sunday Magazine there was included "The Song of the Freed Woman", a lengthy poem by Isa Craig. A Scotswoman, Isa Craig (or Isa Craig Knox as she became known after her marriage in 1866) was a minor

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1 For an examination of the U.P. effort in this regard, see below, Chapter IX, pp. 207-221.

2 See above, Chapter V. p. 578.

3 See "Capture of the Slave-Ship" by "G.M.", in Sunday Magazine, 1865, pp. 288-290.

literary personality of the time.[1] Her contribution to the Sunday Magazine did not represent an initial literary involvement with American slavery and allied issues: during the Civil War she had edited a volume of poetry entitled Poems: An Offering to Lancashire, one thousand copies of which were published in 1863, each containing the information that the proceeds from the sale of the book would go to the fund for the relief of distress in the Lancashire cotton districts.[2] And she also had published in 1863 a prose work, The Essence of Slavery, which summarised Fanny A. Kemble's Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation.[3]

In "The Song of the Freed Woman", the feelings of a newly liberated slave girl whose father had been a Southern plantation owner formed the

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1 Isa Craig, the daughter of John Craig, a hosier and glover, was born in Edinburgh in 1831. Orphaned in childhood, she was brought up with her grandmother and left school at the age of ten. She developed literary tastes through close study of the standard English authors, and began to contribute verses to the Scotsman, eventually securing regular employment on that paper in 1853. In 1857 she moved to London and took up an appointment as secretary to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, a position which she held until her marriage in 1866 to her cousin, John Knox, an iron merchant in London. Having continued to pursue her literary interests after her removal to the capital, she won in 1858 a £50 prize at Crystal Palace for a centenary poem on Burns, beating, in the process, no less than 621 other candidates, some of whom were distinguished literary names. After her marriage, she contributed occasionally to Fraser's Magazine, Good Words, and the Quiver. She edited the Argosy for a short time and published some volumes of poems and juvenile histories. She died on 23 December, 1903. See DNB, Second Supplement, Vol. 2, p. 409.
In the early 1860s, she served as assistant secretary in Edinburgh to the Social Science Association - see Macdougall (ed.), The Minutes of Edinburgh Trades Council, pp. 130, 133, 134.

2 See Isa Craig (ed.), Poems: An Offering to Lancashire (printed and published free by Emily Faithful, London, 1863). The compositors of the Victoria Press gave their services free of charge, and paper was supplied gratis by Herring and Co. A decade later, Emily Faithful, who supervised the publication of the book, delivered a talk on America to the Edinburgh Literary Institute - see a brief intimation of the occasion in Scotsman, 18 Dec., 1873.
The poetry volume included a contribution by Christina Rossetti and one by D. G. Rosetti. But perhaps the most interesting poem was that by R. Monckton Milnes entitled "England and America, 1863" which connected "The Bondsman's penance and the freedman's loom", and accepted British complicity in the guilt of perpetuating American slavery.

3 See DNB., Second Supplement, Vol. 2, p. 409.

medium through which Isa Craig invited her readers once more to share with her their deep-seated hatred of the iniquitous institution and their jubilant hopes for the future of the emancipated race:

The end was near:

> The crowning victory, and the city's fall,
> And freedom - all the gifts of God in one -
> Life, love, free labour, and its happy fruits;
> Knowledge, and peace, and plenty, all in one,
> All purchased with the awful price of blood...[1]

In view of its continued prevalence within Scotland, then, it was but natural that the spirit which had animated the Scottish anti-slavery impulse would be forcefully brought to bear upon the Scottish campaign on behalf of the American freedmen. By way of indicating the dependence on the appeal to anti-slavery sentiment which still existed in this context at the very end of the Reconstruction era, it is worth noticing the tone of remarks made at an activity which might be described as having been on the periphery of the freedmen's aid movement proper.

Reference has already been made to the visit in the spring of 1877 of Josiah Henson ("Uncle Tom") to Scotland for the purpose of raising money to ease financial difficulties incurred over a Negro college in Canada.[2] Scottish response to his appeal was exceptionally good,[3] and at Glasgow a huge company attended a "farewell meeting" in late April, where the city's very substantial donation was handed over to Henson. Occupying the chair on that occasion was one Alexander Allan, and in his opening address he recorded with pride the particularly enthusiastic reception which Scotland

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1 "The Song of the Freed Woman" by Isa Craig, in Sunday Magazine, June, 1865, pp. 672-673. For the full text of the poem, see Appendix IV.

2 See above, Chapter III, pp. 316-318.

3 Henson's reception in Scotland is considered in more detail below, Chapter X, pp. 304-312.

and, most specifically, Glasgow had given the hero of Uncle Tom's Cabin. From that point, he proceeded to deliver a speech which, in temper and substance, could as appropriately have been made on behalf of the anti-slavery cause thirty years before. Thus, obviously finding it unnecessary to offer the assembled benefactors detailed information on the worthy endeavours, triumphs and trials of Henson after gaining his liberty, Allan confidently declared that Henson's experiences in surmounting the "horrors of slavery" to become a freedman and minister were "of themselves sufficient to awaken the sympathy and interest of every right-thinking man in this country". But beyond that, the chairman asservated, "Uncle Tom's " hearty reception had another base. In welcoming him, the people of Scotland - and of Britain as a whole - were showing their deep detestation of slavery and their determination never to rest until it had been swept away all over the globe. Africa, Allan reminded his audience, was still suffering the evils of the nefarious system, but there was good reason to hope that there, too, it would soon be ended.[1]

When he rose to convey his thanks to the people of Scotland for their "liberality and kindness", Henson himself also concentrated his speech upon acknowledging the proven, enduring strength of their hostility towards slavery. Indicating that the manner of his treatment had been "so far beyond expectations" that he had been induced to extend his stay in Scotland beyond the fortnight originally planned, he maintained that the country had always been "sound on the slavery question". And the ethos of the abolitionist era, the old anti-slavery spirit, was still more forcefully brought back to life when Henson went on to state that he had had particular reason for wanting to visit Scotland because on having reached Lake Erie, after escaping from slavery "through the wilderness" with his wife and family, God had sent a Scotsman to lead them to

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1 Report of a speech by Alexander Allan at the farewell meeting and presentation ceremony to Josiah Henson in the City Hall, Glasgow, 20 April, 1877, in Glasgow Herald, 21 April, 1877.

a free land.[1]

It becomes clear, therefore, that although Josiah Henson went to Scotland as an American Negro freedman seeking to raise funds for an activity which belonged exclusively to those years of his life after the achievement of liberty, his appearance before a sympathetic audience had relatively less effect in recalling to the popular mind the recent plight of, and the Scottish efforts on behalf of, the mass of emancipated slaves than in proving an occasion for recalling and reasserting the Scottish hatred of slavery. In view of Henson's singular connection with Uncle Tom's Cabin, that incredibly influencial and revered work, perhaps special allowance should be made in this particulr case for an especially heavy concentration upon the evils of the slave system and the right-minded attitude which most Scots had displayed towards it. The fact nevertheless remains, however, that amongst others who earlier in the Reconstruction era sought to recommend the cause of the American freedmen to the charity of their fellow countrymen, there was a common tendency to attempt to increase interest and participation in the movement by issuing renewed denunciations of the institution which had been the original cause of the Negroes' distress.

An indication of the manner in which a revived focus on the evils of slavery could be tied to a plea on behalf of the freed Negroes was provided in at least one element of the Scottish press during the first year of Reconstruction. At the beginning of October, 1865, Edinburgh's Daily Review drew its readers' attention to the meetings then being held throughout Scotland

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1 Report of a speech by Josiah Henson in ibid.
In Josiah Henson, "Uncle Tom's Story" of his Life: from 1789 to 1883: The Autobiography of the Rev. Josiah Henson (London, 1890), pp. 89-93, Henson records how at Lake Erie in 1830 he had got work loading corn bags into a schooner and had subsequently been taken by the Scottish captain to Buffalo. At Buffalo, the Scot had pointed to the land across the river, told Henson he would be free when he got there, said "I want to see you go and be a freeman", and then given him a dollar to help ferry him across the river.

to augment the funds of the American freedmen's aid Societies, and strongly endorsed the appeals being put forward at them. Relating the condition of the emancipated slaves as illustrated at the meeting held in Glasgow on 3 October, the paper went on to explain the aims of the freedmen's aid Societies and to emphasize that their object was one in which all, regardless of partisan opinions on the late Civil War, could co-operate. The work, it asserted, was one of "Christian charity", involving the relief of those in misery through no fault of their own:

> [The Negroes'] position was not of their own choosing, and they had little or no power to shape their own destinies. Yet on these poor creatures, whom all must concur in regarding as passive, blameless victims, the heaviest sufferings produced by the struggle are falling and are to fall...[1]

The following day (6 October), the Daily Review devoted an editorial to discussing how the rottenness of slavery had left as its legacy exceptionally formidable difficulties for America to face in the immediate post-war period. While it conceded that the conditions which accompanied all progress involving transition from one state to another were almost inevitably fraught with doubt, fear and suffering for individuals and for races, the paper nevertheless recognized that nowhere in recent times had a state of transition been so obvious, so sudden, or on so grand a scale as in the South. In intimating the magnitude of the change in outlook and way of life required of the Southern whites no less than of the freed Negroes, the Review gave full vent to its hatred of the "peculiar institution".

Before emancipation and the military victory of the North, it declared, the familiar path ("trodden into a life track") along which the Southern States had moved had "taint[ed] them with many a mental mudspot of vice and crime, of cruelty, and meanness, and degredation". The editorial went on to depict the cumbersome functioning of the economy in a section where the propertied

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1 Daily Review, 5 Oct., 1865.

whites had lived "lives of ease and luxury" and the poor whites had also been characterized by laziness: "The great black and white mass of population, streaked by shades of all hues between, was dragged painfully and slowly on by slave labour". [1] The sudden abolition of so pervasive an evil must, then, universally be hailed, the Review implied, as a triumph for the forces of humanity; and this being so, Scottish people of goodwill had every reason to make a contribution towards helping to alleviate the sufferings of the hapless race cast adrift in the unavoidable confusion and dislocation of Southern society.

Essentially the same tone of sentiment could be advanced within the columns of a small, regional newspaper. At the beginning of 1866, for instance, the Huntly Express included in its resumé of the previous years' events not only an expression of its great joy and satisfaction over the termination and outcome of the American Civil War but also an illustration of its concern for the immediate condition of the freed Negroes. While rightly rejoicing that the curse of slavery which it so much detested had been removed from American soil, Britain could yet do more, the paper reminded its readers:

> [O]ur poor coloured brethren have been emancipated from the lash and scourge of slavery - their blood-bought freedom has brought desolation to many a heart and home, and while the hearts of Britain are enlisted in sympathetic congratulations at their release from the galling yoke, let them at once bestir themselves to do, and give something to ameliorate their condition and raise them from the sad and forlorn circumstances in which at the price of liberty they have been placed by ...war. [2]

While the Scottish press could thus provide hints and exhortations of that nature, some of the Scots who spoke at freedmen's aid meetings were

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1 Ibid., 6 Oct., 1865.

2 Huntly Express, 6 Jan., 1866.

still more direct in their efforts to keep before the public eye the heinousness of the system which had been responsible for the miseries, past and present, suffered by the Negro race in America. It was obviously predictable that a very substantial proportion of those who campaigned on behalf of the freedmen should have earlier exerted themselves in the abolitionist cause: and assuming a prominent place among the number who actively promoted both movements was the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie.[1] As well as the ability and desire to arouse popular concern and sympathy for the unhappy plight of the emancipated Negroes as such, Guthrie also naturally brought to the freedmen's aid cause, therefore, the zealous urge of the former anti-slavery campaigner to condemn the sin of slaveholding.

The irresistable inclination to reaffirm his detestation of the institution which the Civil War had swept away was well demonstrated in the course of his speech at the freedmen's aid meeting held in Edinburgh early in December, 1865. Having been cheered for his assurance that "I have no hesitation in saying that, with the exception of one subject, and only one,[2] there is no topic that can be discussed, or has been, that could have brought me, as this has..., out of my retirement with more pleasure than that which is now before this meeting", he immediately consolidated the audience's support by declaring that next to love of the Bible was his hatred of slavery. To renewed applause, he asserted that he would "speak as loud as I have tongue to speak to say, with John Wesley, that I regard slavery as the sum of all villainy, and hate it with all my heart".[3] And a month later, presiding at a meeting

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1 For further references to Guthrie's involvement in Scottish anti-slavery activities, see above, Chapter I, pp. 30-31 and below, Chapter X, pp. 268-269.

2 The subject here referred to would almost certainly have been the Ragged Schools, which institutions Guthrie founded in Edinburgh in 1847: see below, pp. 535-536 and Chapter X, p. 270.

3 Report of a speech by Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's cause held in the Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in Scotsman, 6 Dec., 1865.

in Edinburgh where the Rev. A.L. Simpson re-delivered a lecture in aid of the freedmen's fund, Guthrie again returned to this theme, intimating how greatly he rejoiced in the recent knowledge that the abolition of slavery had been written into the United States Constitution, and that there was at last guaranteed freedom for "that long down-trodden and bound, and sold and bought, and degraded race".[1]

Guthrie's widespread popularity and acknowledged gift for instilling into his listeners something of the fervency of his own sentiments must have helped to bring a certain concentration upon retrospective condemnation of slavery into the very forefront of the consideration of many Edinburgh citizens who were prepared to offer aid to the emancipated Negroes. But the evangelical Free Church was not alone in supplying the freedmen's aid movement in Scotland with a pillar of the mid-nineteenth century Scottish religious scene: we have already observed that one of the established Church of Scotland's most impressive and best known figures, the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod, also showed an active interest in publicly supporting the movement. Macleod,it would appear, had not significantly participated at a public level in the anti-slavery agitation of the preceding generation. Nevertheless, this did not stop him, in the course of his endeavours on behalf of the freedmen, from adopting an approach which was basically similar to Guthrie's in its emphasis upon the evils of slavery. Thus, in his role as one of the main speakers at a public meeting arranged by the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society in September, 1865, he devoted a major part of his speech to attacking the system which had been "an insult to humanity".

In seeking, for a purpose, to refresh or to reawaken Scottish appreciation

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1 Report of speech by Guthrie at a public meeting to hear a lecture delivered in aid of the freedmen's fund held in Edinburgh, 4 Jan., 1866, in ibid., 5 Jan., 1866. The very brief reference to the meeting published in the Scotsman was even headed "The Rev. Dr. Guthrie on the abolition of slavery".

of the diabolical character of the crime of slaveholding, Macleod, however, took a different tack from Guthrie in outspokenly criticizing the nature of the general British response to abolition in America. Stressing his own steadfast support of the North, he pronounced himself "amazed, ashamed and humbled" at the "cold indifference" with which Britain had greeted emancipation, and declared that the former "friends of the slaves" had since the achievement of that goal become remarkably quiet.[1] Obviously, he felt that a British effort was needed in respect of freedmen's aid in order to help redress blatantly pro-Southern British sentiment during the war years,[2] and to re-establish something of the old anti-slavery sentiment and spirit.

The strictures voiced by Macleod on that score must almost certainly have touched a sensitive nerve among the abolitionist stalwarts who constituted the driving force behind the freedmen's aid movement in Scotland. For the intense desire felt by that element to keep alive the great British anti-slavery sentiment was in fact by this time a desire bolstered up by anxious fears that this sentiment was waning. The Scottish effort to provide help for the liberated Negroes of the United States had, and (equally importantly) was seen to have, its origin in the vigorous anti-slavery commitment of former days and its basic generating force in a vital continuation of the same abolitionist impulse. This being so, it was only logical to assume that if the freedmen's aid cause was to be successful, there had to be preserved within Scotland the essence of that spirit which had earlier animated the country's vehement protests against Southern slaveholding. At the same time, however, it seems clear that there did exist a section of the Scottish population (including presumably, the vast majority of those who had carried

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in the City Hall, Glasgow, 23 Sept., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 28 Sept., 1865.

2 The dismay which Macleod felt over British support for the Confederacy is indicated above, Chapter II, p. 119.

their abolitionist zeal into freedmen's aid work) which dearly wished to see the perpetuation of the old anti-slavery sentiment for its own sake. And while that element naturally hoped to see the Scottish freedmen's aid movement prosper by association with the principles and clarion calls of its emancipationist predecessor, it might be suggested that on the other side of the coin, there was to some extent also a desire to have the campaign for the free Negroes succeed in order to ensure and to prove that the traditional strong and healthy Scottish anti-slavery sentiment was not dead.

Given these circumstances, then, the Scottish energies expended on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause were almost certainly in some measure intensified by disconcerting suggestions issuing from various quarters to the effect that the fine old fervour of Scotland's opposition to the concept of human slavery had largely passed away. Certainly, in the period immediately after the end of the American Civil War, Norman Macleod was not alone in identifying, profoundly regretting and outspokenly deploring such a disturbing fact. Ironically, in choosing at the Glasgow ffreedmen's aid meeting loudly to profess the great depth of his personal support for the Northern cause during the war and to denounce the attitudes of a certain proportion of the population towards the accomplishment of Negro emancipation, Macleod actually paved the way for the launching of an attack upon his own standing in relation to the question of Scotland's slipping allegiance to its anti-slavery traditions.

Prompted to write to the Caledonian Mercury on the subject of Macleod's speech, an ex-patriate Scot in London, one D.H. Russell, conveyed a dejection similar to that of the eminent Scottish minister himself when he declared that future historians would blush to chronicle the character of Scottish sympathies during the Civil War. And as one force which might have helped to prevent the misguided deviation by many Scotsmen from their anti-slavery principles, the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod had signally failed, Russell indicated,

satisfactorily to face up to his obligations. Seizing on the later admission of sympathy for the Federal cause, he took Macleod severely to task for lacking the moral courage to speak out in favour of the North during the height of the struggle. By doing so in his magazine Good Words and elsewhere, Russell suggested, he could certainly have done much "to lead the world to realize the real merits of the struggle, and tend to counteract the false teachings of those newspapers who (sic) threw their influence on the side of the slavemongers". Regrettably, many more had, like Macleod, been "afraid to speak out" and had thereby missed the critically important chance to mould public opinion and to show the Southern slaveowners that they had little sympathy from Britain in "their heinous attempt to found a slave empire".[1]

There had been provided, of course, positive grounds for dismay of this type in the undeniably substantial incidence of Scottish support for the Confederacy. It was a sentiment shared and morosely voiced by others who had maintained a constant, wholehearted and outspoken support for the North and the anti-slavery forces during the conflict in America. In the immediate aftermath of the war and of Lincoln's assassination, the steadfastly pro-Federal Aberdeen Free Press offered a bitter comment, for instance, on the despicable views on the Civil War being put forward in Britain by the two 'Trent' notables, Mason and Slidell, and on the manner in which they had been emboldened to voice their opinions by the "sympathy, encouragement, and ample material aid" given to the South by leading Britons. Only the persistent dissemination in Britain of "false views" respecting the struggle could have produced a climate receptive to their propaganda: "Such talk would have been impossible if there had not been a strange disregard of first

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1 Letter from D.H. Russell, Clarence Road, Wood Green, London, 27 Sept., 1865, in Caledonian Mercury, 30 Sept., 1865.

principles, and a widespread perversion of public sentiment". And at the basis of that condition there lay a disagreeable reality: the blindness of the British people to the fact that the South had been fighting for slavery could only be attributed, the Free Press estimated, to a significant deadening of the country's old abhorrence of slavery. "Had the good old sentiment been fully alive", it declared, "it would - even amid all the prevalent crudity of political conception - have effectually excluded the impression that the cause of the South could have any claim to the sympathies of a free people". By way of helping to bring Britain belatedly back to its "right mind" on the conflict, the paper urged the country to give assistance to the Americans in the "great trial" which faced them in the early post-war years.[1]

Such gloomy admissions by native Scottish observers of the evaporation of their precious store of anti-slavery sentiment had, however, been preceded in strong statements framed along precisely the same lines by a prominent American resident in Port Glasgow, A.F. Stoddard. In terms of unwavering commitment to the abolitionist cause, Arthur Francis Stoddard's own credentials were impeccable. When in 1860, at the age of fifty, he retired from his partnership in the family business of importing dry goods into the United States and went to live in Scotland, it had been a decision primarily influenced by his "burning disapproval of slavery".[2] From his new home at Broadfield near Port Glasgow, he continued to campaign assiduously for abolition, becoming a frequent speaker on the issue at meetings in Glasgow, and taking care to make his views known in the local press. Throughout the actual Civil War years, when the predominant opinion of the city was clearly in favour of the South, Stoddard stuck openly and firmly to his principles - and ultimately celebrated the Northern victory by giving a party for American

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, 5 May, 1865.

2 A.F. Stoddard & Co. Ltd. (C.A. Oakley), The Carpet Makers, p. 2.

friends "in the course of which he is said to have caused consternation to shipping in the Clyde by firing a salute of twenty-one guns".[1]

While the war was still in progress, he fired a devastating verbal broadside at the hallowed British anti-slavery tradition when in late February, 1865 he wrote to the Glasgow Herald expressing his immense disappointment over the apathy of the British press and people towards the carrying of the Thirteenth Amendment. In a highly charged letter which did not seek to spare the feelings of his adopted country, Stoddard declared his faith in British anti-slavery badly shaken and suggested that the British outcry against American slavery in the days of Uncle Tom's Cabin might well have been insincere. The Americans, he emphasized, would in the future be watching to see how news of progress regarding abolition and related matters was received in Britain, and from any lack of warm response, would conclude that all British professions of staunch opposition to slaveholding had been a sham.[2]

This communication to the Glasgow Herald was by no means the first public rebuke which Stoddard issued to the British people for their serious lapse from abolitionist principles, however. In tone and substance, it had, indeed, been closely foreshadowed in a lecture delivered as early as January, 1863 and subsequently published in pamphlet form. Speaking at Paisley just under a month after the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, Stoddard had similarly castigated the British for their singularly lukewarm acclamation of the measure. Clearly much pained and indignant over what he judged to be an astounding desertion by the nation from its celebrated tenets regarding liberty and humanitarianism, he had on that occasion some particularly harsh words to say on the early British abolitionists. A few

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1 Ibid.
For a biographical note on Stoddard, who founded in 1862 a lucrative carpet manufacturing business at Elderslie, Glasgow, see Appendix I.

2 Letter from A.F. Stoddard, Broadfield, Port Glasgow, in Glasgow Herald, 1 March, 1865.

years before, Britain had been "ringing out" with cries of the guilt involved in American slavery. What, Stoddard asked, had since become of "the half-million benevolent women...these pretended philanthropists" who had so fervently raised their voices in that respect? With a withering cynicism which took no account of former efforts, he suggested that most of them had probably died out or emigrated to "an unknown region, whilst others have evidently retired, until the new Southern edifice is fairly completed, and the slave trade re-opened, when their batteries will doubtless open again on the enemy".[1]

Stoddard's scathing criticism of the British people and of Britain's foremost abolitionists for a deplorable loss of faith on the anti-slavery issue was plainly stimulated in large part by his genuine inability to comprehend the general nature of the country's attitude to the Civil War. Pointing out that a "large and influential section" of the British community - most especially the upper and middle classes - were openly in support of the South, he assured his Paisley audience that history would find nothing more surprising than the approval given by a portion of the British press and people to constitutional government on one side, and slaveholding and despotism on the other:

> One is wholly unable to understand how or why it is that a people who have always been the advance guard of civil and religious liberty, the upholders and advocates of constitutional government, could have lent their support to the very opposite principles.[2]

Recalling the malicious views of most elements of the London press, the "disgrace" of Confederate steamers being allowed, unchallenged, to leave British ports, and the lack of sympathy shown by the government for the North in its "struggl[e]... to establish freedom",[3] Stoddard could only

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1 Stoddard, Slavery or Freedom in America, pp. 46-47.

2 Ibid., pp. 49-50.

3 Ibid., pp. 50-52.

conclude that there had been a serious diminution in the intensity of the great British anti-slavery spirit.

Inevitably, no matter how closely some Scots might be coming to echoing this disturbing conviction, the view did not go completely unchallenged in Scotland. As a journal which faithfully reported the day-to-day public activities and discussions in Glasgow and the surrounding district, the Glasgow Herald would certainly have been well acquainted with the frequency of Stoddard's arguments along these lines. Insofar as actual critical comment on his statements was concerned, however, it was with the contents of the letter written to its editor for publication in early 1865 that the paper first took issue. Since Stoddard had chosen to make it the medium through which to place yet again an ugly blemish on Britain's reputation by questioning the sincerity of her anti-slavery commitment, and since, also, his imputations could be seen to have a special relevance at a time when the American Civil War seemed to be fast approaching a critically decisive stage, the Glasgow Herald judged it valid to devote an entire editorial to his convictions and insinuations.

In addition to resenting Stoddard's allegations as constituting an unwarranted charge against the sound abolitionist principles and traditions of Britain, the Herald made it plain that it opposed them on the grounds that they were misleadingly dangerous to the then delicate cause of Anglo-American relations. Despite the fact that there was already by that time in the Northern states widespread anger and bitter disappointment at Britain for her attitude towards the Civil War, the Herald seemed determined at least to attack antagonisms of such a nature when they surfaced within Britain itself. Accordingly, with a sublime disregard for the existing temper of feelings in the Federal states, the paper stressed its desire that the long-standing sympathies which Britain and America felt for each other should not be alienated in any way at that period, and declared that

in this connection it would therefore be "very regrettable" if the North were to get the idea that Britain had forsaken its commitment to the anti-slavery cause. The impression to that effect conveyed in Stoddard's letter was, the editorial roundly asserted, in the main false, "and does injustice to the sentiment of our people".[1]

At the same time however, the patently undemonstrative nature of the local response to the carrying of the Thirteenth Amendment was something which had to be conceded. And the Glasgow Herald did go so far as cautiously to admit that there was some truth in Stoddard's claims. Yet, the very essence of the paper's rejection of the main burden of these claims was in fact its readiness to turn this acknowledged lack of enthusiasm to good account. Thus, while it was certainly true that the "anti-slavery triumph" in question had not been the source of much overt jubilation in Glasgow or in the country at large, the Herald took the view that the absence of British excitement over the Thirteenth Amendment had really been a compliment to the North, "a proof of our belief in the sincerity of her professions". Hence, in affirming its desire "to vindicate the Scottish people from a charge of insincerity and indifference" towards abolition, the editorial suggested that there had been no lavish public celebrations simply because the country had quietly looked upon the Emancipation Proclamation and its incorporation into the American Constitution as the logical expected result of joint labours by Britain and America in the anti-slavery field: "It is accepted with silent but cordial approbation as the natural issue of the anti-slavery policy which the North has been pursuing for the last three years, and which has, slowly but steadfastly... been enlisting British sympathy on her side".[2] Having in this manner early

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1 Glasgow Herald, 1 March, 1865.

2 Ibid. The Herald did indicate, however, that there would probably be greater rejoicing once "the full character" of the Thirteenth Amendment was realized and appreciated by the nation. The paper itself hailed it as "the key-note of a higher civilization - the apotheosis of American liberty".

sprung to the defence of the British - and specifically the Scottish[1] - anti-slavery sentiment, the Herald was subsequently to demonstrate its confidence in the substantial continuation of that sentiment by judging it worthwhile to make an appeal of its own for Scottish support for the freedmen's aid cause.[2]

On the same day as the Glasgow Herald published its considered objections to A.F. Stoddard's statements, there appeared in the paper a letter from a correspondent who also sought to dispute the American's assertions and to offer an explanation as to why Britain had not shown greater open delight at the news of the American government's approval of the Thirteenth Amendment. In putting his case, "J.R." took pains to emphasise at the very outset that Britain had in the past unquestionably held the lead in the anti-slavery impulse: "The nation which fought the battle of freedom for the slave, and was the first to inaugurate emancipation, surely could not for a moment remain indifferent to the touching spectacle of the manumission of four millions of bondsmen". Yet, while recent American emancipationist achievements should certainly have given cause for "unspeakable joy" in Britain, it nevertheless remained a fact that the country which had for twenty years sent addresses and remonstrances to the United States urging abolition had ultimately greeted the accomplishment of this without the "slightest manifestation" of feeling.

In the opinion of the correspondent, however, the nature of its response to abolitionist triumphs in America did not in the slightest measure indicate that Britain was becoming lukewarm in "the good old cause".

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1 In view of the usual practice - in the Glasgow Herald no less than in other Scottish newspapers of the time - of using the designation "England" in circumstances where "Scotland" would have been more accurate, it is worthwhile noting that in this particular instance the Herald at one point made explicit its desire to exonerate the "Scottish" people from Stoddard's charges.

2 See ibid., 7 Sept., 1866.

It was his firm belief, rather, that in view of the method of emancipation adopted by the United States, the British people had little reason to express emotional, joyous satisfaction. The main purpose of "J.R.'s" effort was in fact to demonstrate that Britain's lack of enthusiasm over the Thirteenth Amendment was the direct result of distaste for a Federal policy which was selfish, callous and injurious to the nation as a whole. Recalling that before the Civil War there had been in America no serious single effort to emancipate the slaves, he accused the North of having dispensed with the institution of slavery merely because it had been unprofitable in that latitude, of selling the slaves South and pocketing the money, and of then turning viciously upon the slaveholding Southerners from a position of smug self-righteousness. Abolition was an exceedingly easy creed for the Northern people to espouse - "Having...no slaves to liberate it involves no sacrifice on their part"; and unlike the British who had compensated the colonial planter class, the Northerners had carried through emancipation in a manner which had arrogantly disregarded the effect which this measure would have on the social and economic condition of the South.[1]

On the correspondent's assessment, in keeping with the essentially unsavoury character of the North's overall involvement in anti-slavery was the Emancipation Proclamation itself and the consequent Thirteenth Amendment. Lincoln's assertion that the Negro was vital to the Northern war effort was seized upon as indicative of a sinister, ulterior motive behind the officially sanctioned emancipation guarantees. The North's real purpose in passing legislation to secure the Negroes' freedom was not one which recommended it, "J.R." implied, to the sympathies and plaudits of a country which genuinely deplored, and had with the utmost sincerity abolished, human slavery:

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1 "Glad Tidings from America - what are they worth?": letter from "J.R." in ibid., 1 March, 1865.

> After four years of bloodshed...[productive of] little success and less glory,...[the North] now brings forward this measure in a penal, vengeful spirit, and with a military object. Unable to conquer the South by means of aliens and mercenaries, she wishes to get hold of the negro and toss him into the conflict...Surely it cannot touch very closely the sympathies of the people of this country to see a poor inoffensive race thrust forward into this fearful war and swept off in thousands...To arm the slave, call him a freeman, and make him fight your battles and die in your cause, savours...rather of a political manoeuvre than of a philanthropic action.[1]

The approach adopted by "J.R." in refuting Stoddard's allegations represented an expedient way of retaining an insistence upon Britain's continuing anti-slavery commitment while at the same time withholding positive support for the Northern cause in the American Civil War. Furthermore, his letter helps to illustrate the way in which pride in the vigour of this British spirit was also claimed by those who were not prepared to argue that the North was fighting a war against slavery. From one who nursed so strong an anti-Federal bias during the war years, there was very probably little inclination at a later stage to encourage Scottish aid for the Americans of the Northern states in their efforts to improve the condition of the liberated Negroes. In such cases, the defence of the battling British anti-slavery impulse remained an end in itself.

For in spite of all the optimistic pronouncements to the contrary by keen workers in the British freedmen's aid cause, it did remain, in practice, extremely difficult to divorce the movement from American politics and partisanship to the extent of recruiting widespread support from among the ranks of those whose wartime sympathies had been with the Confederacy. During the Civil War years, to be anti-slavery certainly had not necessarily meant to be pro-North; but to be pro-South had meant also to be against the manner and motives of the Federals in fighting the war, and this

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1 Ibid.

involved being against a force which - whether from selfish or sincere incentive - had secured emancipation as a war gain. Therefore, those Scots who found it possible to be both anti-slavery and pro-South were bound to regard Northern actions towards the Negroes at that time as utterly and contemptibly self-interested and insincere. And the post-war retention of such a view clearly would not render these individuals particularly ready to participate in assisting the North's subsequent programme of aid for the ex-slaves. With regard to "J.R." and others who felt as he did about the position of the Northern states in the conflict, it might be suggested that support for the freedmen's aid cause was not seen as a natural follow-on from support of the abolitionist movement. Thus although the Scottish anti-slavery impulse unquestionably gave much to the later freedmen's aid campaign and received back in return a certain extension and enhancement of its spirit, attachment to the straightforward emancipationist tradition as such and a readiness defiantly to insist that it had not, by the 1860s, perished was still a sentiment strong enough in some instances to exist independently of connection with the freedmen's aid cause.

Among other elements of the Scottish community, those which had recognized in the Northern war effort a struggle at least partially waged on behalf of Negro emancipation and had zealously and unreservedly sympathized with it, there was, however, some tendency outspokenly to maintain that the fair repute of the Scottish anti-slavery tradition could only be preserved by a firm and generous involvement in the movement to help the suffering and impoverished freedmen. Nowhere was this proposition more vigorously and explicitly stated than in the columns of the Caledonian Mercury. Surpassed by no British journal in the consistency with which it had championed the Federal cause during the war, the Mercury lost no time after the cessation of hostilities in directing the attention of the Scottish public to the practical way in which it might give valuable service to the North in

its admirably thorough endeavours to tackle the problem of providing for the black population and simultaneously consolidate Scotland's healthy anti-slavery image.

Taking stock of the situation in early September, 1865, the paper readily acknowledged a heritage of sound abolitionist sentiment in Britain. Significantly, however, it identified as the most honourable phase of the emancipationist movement that period when such "moral heroes" as Buxton, Clarkson and Wilberforce, complemented by the eloquence of Pitt, Canning and Brougham, had striven for freedom, that time when the British people had only to hear of slavery and the anti-slavery cause to want to contribute money and do all they could to help it. At that stage, "The feeling was general, the sympathy sincere, and the practical results commensurate with the work required to be done".[1] Since those days, the editorial went on strongly to imply, there had been an unfavourable change in the functioning and character of the anti-slavery campaign itself as well as (a yet more serious matter) successive revelations of a disturbing erosion in Britain of a positive commitment to the cause of abolition in the United States.

Despite the fact that the Caledonian Mercury's radical, dissenting bias was shared in no uncertain fashion by the vast majority of the Scots who laboured in the emancipation cause in the middle decades of the nineteenth century,[2] the paper was certainly not disposed to be particularly complimentary nor even, indeed, charitable in its assessment of the nature of that group's abolitionist activities. On the contrary, the Mercury clearly tended to feel that the excessive rhetoric and the internecine squabbles which had characterized the movement at that time had damaged the anti-slavery cause in the country and been highly injurious to the effective operation of the

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 4 Sept., 1865.

2 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 44-79.

abolition Societies themselves. The mid-century effort had been marked by a regrettable misapplication of energies:

> Since then, [the period when Buxton, Wilberforce and others had formed the respected vanguard of a widespread national agitation against slavery] our nation has had days and weeks, and even months occasionally, of spasmodic retchings on the subject of the oppressed negro race in America, Cuba and the Brazils - a sort of verbal diarrohea, somewhat exhaustive, if not injurious, to the persons labouring under it, and by no means agreeable to the great crowds who place their faith in cheap cotton, abundance of the best rice, and an unlimited supply of the juiciest and least costly tobacco. We know what a state of excitement was produced in Scotland at times by these periodical outbursts, and how, so long as the slaveholders and slaveowners subscribed largely to Church and other purposes in our land, the outbursts themselves generally ended only in defilement all round, the slaves being rather the injured than the benefited parties by the disordered results.[1]

Beyond the development of this unfortunate trend within the organized anti-slavery movement, there had been in the country at large evidence of a serious waning of the initial strength of the emancipationist impulse, the Mercury decided. Amongst the wealthiest, most influential sections of the British people there had emerged, it contended, the well known opinion that the American slaves were better off than the British working classes.[2] And certain Irish patriots who, in striving to establish an Irish Republic, sought to rid their country of an alleged oppressive bondage to England, no sooner arrived in the United States than they stoutly vindicated the slave system, "some of them, like John Mitchell (sic), writing with diabolical fervour and recklessness in its support". Moreover, it was widely recognized that an attitude at odds with the best interests of the abolitionist cause in the United States had been pursued by the British ruling classes and "privileged orders", and by "the ignorant and soulless members of our Press", at the time when America had been strenuously embroiled in "striking off the

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 4 Sept., 1865.

2 The Caledonian Mercury's identification with the radical cause would seem to have blinded it here to the fact that this particular sentiment was at least as vociferously adhered to by radical members of the British working class in the second third of the nineteenth century - see, for example, above, Chapter VII, pp. 234-235.

fetters of the slave and trampling the whole system in the dust never again to raise its hideous head".[1]

In view of these disturbing features in Britain's traditionally profound concern for the ending of Negro slavery, the paper felt it necessary and valid to enquire as to what Scottish feeling was in reference to the four million freedmen "thrown in all their helplessness and all their ignorance" on the American nation: "Have we any sympathy for them at all? - any disposition to help them? - any inclination to bear our fair share of a universal human burden"? Obviously stimulated in its approach by the former abolitionist mentality which had viewed the emancipation of the American slaves in the context of an international unity of philanthropic effort,[2] the Caledonian Mercury itself had absolutely no hesitation in stating its own support for the principle of British involvement in supplying aid:

> The Northern people have done marvels both by their Government and through their voluntary associations to feed, clothe and educate the refugee - more...than any other people under the sun would or could have done in the trying circumstances in which they were and still are placed. They cannot fairly be expected to do it all. The liberated Negroes have, in a sense, no more claim upon them than they have upon us or upon any other people... [I]t would not be fair, therefore, to ask them [the Northern people] simply because the fugitives found their nearest and safest home on Northern soil, or could not leave the soil and homesteads of the South, to bear the whole expense and meet the entire burden.[3]

And in addition to the visible claims upon common humanity inherent in the plight of the emancipated slaves, there was, the editorial took care to point out, a specific obligation to be met in respect of the earlier interest in the cause of abolition. "Is it manly, is it human, is it Christian", the Mercury asked, "to stand with folded arms and hear cries for food, for clothing, for shelter, for protection, of those millions of the negro

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1 Caledonian Mercury, 4 Sept., 1865.

2 For a discussion of this concept, see Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 20-25.

3 Caledonian Mercury, 4 Sept., 1865.

race for whom we so often professed the strongest sympathy, and give no sound, certain or uncertain, on the subject"? Clearly, the paper judged that lack of a positive, satisfactory contribution towards assisting the freed Negroes would symbolize the final demise of the once vigorous anti-slavery spirit in Scotland: and by early September, 1865 it was already beginning to entertain fears in that connection. The relatively paltry extent of freedmen's aid activity in the country by that time led it to suggest that it looked as if the American Ambassador Charles Francis Adams' wartime observations that British sympathy with the slaves had ceased to be the fashion since slavery had ceased to be a pretext for reproaching the United States was becoming true. From its position of unswerving devotion to the abolitionist and Northern cause, the Mercury returned to bitter condemnation of those elements who had done so much to seal the impression that Britain was on the side of slavery and slaveholders.

Concentrating its fire upon a local target, the paper effectively demolished something of Edinburgh's cherished reputation as a seat of particularly warm anti-slavery sentiment and concern for the American Negro. During the Civil War, it declared, "wondering and astonished" Americans who had visited the city had found "the godless" and "the so-called godly" press energetically ringing the praises of the Confederacy and the slaveocracy, and deprecating the cause of the Free States and the free institutions of the American people. More serious and despicable still had been the response of the influential men of religion and of the public to early efforts at raising Scottish sympathy for the freedmen:

> They [the Americans who visited Edinburgh during the war] tried to get a minister of the Gospel of any religious denomination to take the chair at a meeting in support of a college to promote the education of freed negroes, and at another in support of the Freedmen's Aid Society, and they did not succeed. Not a minister in Edinburgh, though two respectable American professors appealed to them, could be got either to take the chair or to make a speech on either occasion; and at one of the meetings...not more than some twenty or thirty persons could be induced to attend.[1]

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1 Ibid.

It was the Caledonian Mercury's anxious concern to discover whether "this disordered drunken state of feeling" still continued, for the persistence of such a sentiment was held to be of the utmost significance. Critical to the paper's enquiry was its conviction that the entire former anti-slavery impulse of Scotland could legitimately be dismissed as hypocritical if not followed up by sincere and active concern for the freedmen: "If we are not to be set down as the rankest hypocrites - as the grossest deceivers that ever under the banner of liberty gloried in human bondage or cared nothing as to its release, we will stand no longer idly by". Should the Scottish people give no help to "this long-outraged and insulted race", it was impossible for them to escape "the infamy of making great professions with little or no performances."[1]

In the estimation of the Caledonian Mercury, then it was not only logical but absolutely imperative for the preservation of Scotland's enviable, long-standing abolitionist reputation (already by then beginning to show some distressing signs of corrosion, it seemed) that the earlier agitation against American slavery should be followed up by a proportionately strong involvement in the movement to bring essential aid to the emancipated slaves. The conviction that the anti-slavery impulse must be carried over into the Reconstruction era in this way was nowhere more loudly echoed than in the ranks of those who in the summer of 1867 gathered together on various occasions to honour perhaps the most famous and controversial of all the American abolitionists who had made an impact on Scotland - William Lloyd Garrison. To be sure, the ultimate purpose of Garrison's trip to Europe at that time was in itself such as to afford a clear demonstration of the firm, active commitment which former campaigners for abolition ought, as a matter of course, to extend to the post-emancipation movement to help the

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1 Ibid.

Negroes. Always anxious to revisit Britain after the achievement of emancipation in the United States, Garrison was actually to have the date of this venture largely determined for him by the fact that he was appointed by the American Freedmen's Union Commission to represent it at an International Anti-Slavery Conference at Paris in August, 1867.[1] Thus, when in early May he sailed from Boston in the company of George Thompson, the veteran British abolitionist who was returning to England after three years' residence in America,[2] Garrison travelled not merely to renew old anti-slavery acquaintances and to indulge in rejoicings with them over the triumph of their cause, but also on official freedmen's aid business.

A short, initial visit to Paris was followed by his arrival in London in mid June, and by the end of that month an extremely successful Public Breakfast in his honour, attended by many prominent aristocrats, politicians and anti-slavery workers,[3] had been held in the city's St. James's Hall. At that function, one of the most well received speakers next to Garrison himself was certainly George Thompson, and in an address which hailed the meeting as "one of the most hopeful and glorious signs of the times", he decisively pointed the continuing spirit of enthusiasm for the abolitionists' labours in the direction of freedmen's aid activities. Understandably, Thompson was mainly concerned to express the extreme pleasure and satisfaction

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1 W.P. Garrison and F.J. Garrison, William Lloyd Garrison 1805-1879. The Story of his Life told by his children (London, 1889), Vol. 4, p. 190.

2 Ibid., p. 191.

3 Among the notable Scots present were the Duke and Duchess of Argyll (the Duke had been chairman of the committee of arrangements as well as being a speaker at the meeting itself); Lady Edith Campbell (Argyll's eldest daughter who in that year married Henry George, 7th Duke of Northumberland), the Earl of Airlie, the Hon. F. Leveson Gower, M.P. (second son of the Duchess of Sutherland), Duncan and Priscilla Bright McLaren, John Gorrie (a member of the committee of arrangements). The Hon. Arthur Kinnaird sent a letter expressing sympathy with the objects of the meeting. See Proceedings at the Public Breakfast held in honour of William Lloyd Garrison, Esq. of Boston, Massachusetts, in St. James's Hall, London, on Saturday, June 29th, 1867 (Pamphlet; London, 1868), pp. 13, 17.

with which he personally welcomed the downfall of slavery, and the "abounding delight" which it gave him to know that his old friend Garrison, "so long traduced", had seen his cause triumph and his name honoured. Pronouncing the occasion one of the happiest hours of his life, the indefatigable British campaigner won the wholehearted sympathy and appreciation of the audience by the obvious sincerity of his deep emotional response to the emancipationists' success and to the civil and political rights subsequently secured for the freed Negroes.[1]

These sentiments once adequately conveyed, Thompson moved on, however, to offer his hopes and observations on the future of the black population in the South, and in so doing, to put forward the proposition that efforts on behalf of the freedmen were but a vitally important extension of earlier efforts on behalf of the slave. His view of the future was essentially optimistic - as, indeed, it was almost bound to be. Abolition, he believed, would have the effect of ameliorating and ultimately extinguishing colour prejudice, the new scope for promoting greater integration having already by 1867 been put to good use: "a better state of things will take the place of the past, and it will not be long before the entire population, through all shades of complexion will be blended into one homogeneous and harmonious mass. Among the chief instrumentalities now being employed to bring about this result are the Freedmen's-Aid Commission, and other kindred organizations". The objects of these American associations were nothing less, Thompson stressed, than "the basic reconstruction and regeneration of society in the South", the accomplishment of a "social revolution" through giving education to the Negroes:

> This important and truly beneficient movement has been generously aided by the people of this country, and has already produced the most gratifying results. It is a noble

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1 Report of speech by George Thompson in ibid., pp. 46-50.

> and necessary supplement to the labours that have been so zealously performed for the abolition of slavery. Through the channel of the Freedmen's-Aid Societies, all who seek to promote the future welfare of the negro race may send their contributions, in the assurance that they will be well and beneficially applied.[1]

In earlier days, George Thompson had been a key figure in founding the Edinburgh and Glasgow Emancipation Societies and in entrenching Garrisonianism in Scotland.[2] There was thus something of a special continuity of sentiment in the manner in which the Edinburgh Ladies Emancipation Society - one of the most inflexible adherents to Garrison's creed among the British abolitionist organizations during and after the split of the early 1840s[3] - echoed Thompson's views in 1867. By mid July, Garrison had reached the Scottish capital, and the Society lost no time in honouring him at a tea-meeting attended by about two hundred "ladies and gentlemen". In his opening speech from the chair, Councillor Fyfe set the pattern of the proceedings when he expanded his comments beyond the obligatory references to the glorious achievement of Garrison and his fellow abolitionists to include praise for the ladies of the Emancipation Society for having subsequently turned their attentions and energies towards promoting the interests of the freedmen.[4]

The address prepared by the ELES for presentation to Garrison significantly augmented the broad implication made by Fyfe that a genuinely intense advocacy of Negro emancipation in America was naturally productive of a compassionate concern for the freedmen's welfare. For the most part,

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1 Ibid.

2 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 2, 57, 91-92.

3 Ibid., pp. 235-236.

4 Report of speech by Councillor Fyfe at a tea-meeting of the Edinburgh Ladies Emancipation Society held in honour of William Lloyd Garrison in the Bible Society's Rooms, Edinburgh, 12 July, 1867, in Scotsman, 13 July, 1867.

of course, the content of the document represented a religiously-inspired eulogy on the life and work of the visiting hero. But at the same time, its authors did not let slip the opportunity to stress forcefully both the singular strength of the ELES' former commitment to the abolition of slavery in the United States and the readiness of the Society to recognize a definite duty in respect of the freedmen's aid cause.

Accordingly, in reading the address on behalf of the Society, it fell to David McLaren to welcome Garrison to

> this ancient capital of free Scotland, where, during the long struggle you and your heroic compeers maintained against slavery, strong hearts throbbed in sympathy with you, and where tongues ever tuned to your principles even when they were least popular, and joined in the plaudits which celebrated the downfall of the slave power in America. In no place, perhaps, outside of your own country, was the thirty years' contest with chattel bondage regarded with more interest or its happy issue hailed with heartier joy, than in the city of Edinburgh.[1]

From the base of the triumphant outcome of their concerted, harmonious labours in the field of anti-slavery agitation, the ELES clearly expected that both Garrison and itself would go on to play constructive roles in the freedmen's aid movement. The wish was expressed that the celebrated American abolitionist would yet be granted a long and happy life in which, it was hoped, he would retain a "lively interest" in the freedmen, whose "claims for timely succour in their present necessities, and for the means of education and moral enlightenment, cannot be denied and will not be forgotten". We have already observed the enthusiasm with which in its 1866 and 1867 Annual Reports the Society recommended support for the appeals on behalf of the former slaves;[2] and in the context of Garrison's visit, it

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1 Address prepared by the ELES for presentation to Garrison and delivered by David McLaren, in ibid. One particular member of the assembled company may have felt these statements grate a little on his sensibilities, however; for present at the tea-meeting was James Robie, former editor of the (by 1867) defunct Caledonian Mercury, who less than a couple of years before had presented, as we have seen, a very different assessment of the capital's commitment to the anti-slavery cause.

2 See above, pp. 348-350; and Chapter VII, pp. 287-288.

offered the most important illustration of the way in which earlier Scottish immersion in the anti-slavery cause could lead on directly and naturally to an involvement in American freedmen's aid. Perhapd over-generously equating the mood of the entire country with its own, the ELES assured its guest that

> The people of Scotland will not be slow to respond to these claims...Having borne a humble part in the struggle for emancipation, we are willing, as we are in duty bound, to bear a proportionate part in the work of education, whereby the freedmen are to be raised to that manhood of which chattel slavery robbed them.[1]

In full measure, therefore, the sentiments voiced by George Thompson in London regarding the essential connection between labour in the abolitionist and freedmen's aid causes was shared by the faithfully Garrisonian ELES. Garrison's visit tended, indeed, to provide the most splendid of opportunities for the presentation of such views because of the depth of anti-slavery emotions which his presence aroused, because of his own active involvement in freedmen's aid, and because of his ability to reinforce interest in the movement by personal advocacy of it and the delivery of first-hand information on the conduct and prospects of the emancipated Negroes. When he rose to speak at the Edinburgh meeting, for instance, he received a standing ovation of a warmth which prompted him to remark that he felt as if he were "coming out of Arctic into tropical regions" - passing, that was, from the "obloquy, persecution and ostracism" which had faced him for thirty years in America. And in a speech in which he paid tribute to the great efforts of the ELES and others in the abolitionist cause and expressed his desire to see a continuation of Anglo-American co-operation in the interests of mankind, he was constantly and loudly applauded. The mood of the audience would certainly have been

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1 Address by the ELES to Garrison, in Scotsman, 13 July, 1867.

receptive, therefore, to Garrison's concluding remarks concerning the freedmen. In these, he contrived to secure Edinburgh's sympathies for the ex-slaves not by issuing a direct appeal on the grounds of their suffering and needs or on the basis of the abolitionists' obligations towards them, but simply by indicating how extremely well they had conducted themselves after emancipation. The tremendously encouraging character, progress and potential shown by the liberated Negroes demonstrated, Garrison declared, that God intended to lift them not only to equality with the whites but to make them the foremost race in the South.[1] Presumably, then God's work in this respect deserved to be actively supported by Christians in Scotland just as they had earlier supported His work in destroying the evil institution of slavery.

It was in a considerably more direct reference to British involvement in freedmen's aid, however, that Garrison shortly afterwards reiterated to another Scottish audience the conviction that the Deity had intervened in moulding the destiny of the free black population in America. The occasion for the renewal of emphasis on this aspect of his beliefs was a Public Breakfast held in his honour in the Merchant's Hall, Glasgow, one week after the reception accorded him by the ELES. There was lacking, perhaps from the Glasgow meeting something of the intensity of emotional fervour which had characterized the proceedings at Edinburgh; but nevertheless, the eager readiness of workers in the Scottish anti-slavery movement to keep alive their old spirit and to honour their hero was amply displayed in the impressive turn-out of prominent abolitionist stalwarts.[2] The

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1 Report of speech by William Lloyd Garrison, in ibid.

2 Platform figures included such staunch anti-slavery advocates as A.F. Stoddard, the Rev. Dr. W. Anderson, the Rev. Dr. Calderwood, the Rev. Mr. Crosskey, Councillors John Burt and James Thomson, James Smith, William Smeal, James Moir, Andrew Paton, while in the body of the hall were other distinguished campaigners in the cause, represented by men like Councillors Dreghorn and William Wilson, the Rev. Dr. Russell, the Rev. D. Macrae, John Knox, Robert Smith, W.B. Kidston, R. Barclay, John Smith - see Report of the Public Breakfast held in honour of William Lloyd Garrison in the Merchant's Hall, Glasgow, 19th July, 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 20 July, 1867.

function was in fact held under the auspices of the still extant Glasgow Emancipation Society, and it was on behalf of that organization that a welcome was extended to Garrison by the chairman, the Rev. Dr. George Jeffrey, and an address congratulating and praising him moved by the Rev. Dr. William Anderson.[1]

In a lengthy reply which traced the difficulties which abolitionists had encountered in the United States and included a firm insistence to the effect that the retention of slavery had been the only object of the Confederacy, Garrison at the outset expressed his great pleasure in being in Glasgow again, and the grateful memories he had of former visits, when at public meetings his advocacy of emancipation had been warmly and enthusiastically received. A special word of thanks was, moreover, accorded to those in Glasgow whom he identified as having given invaluable service to the anti-slavery struggle over the years.[2] And in the midst of this impressive recall of the strength

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1 See ibid. The record of the U.P. Church's Rev. Dr. William Anderson in the anti-slavery cause is referred to below, pp. 581-584.

2 These Garrison named as Professors McGill, Jardine and Milne; Rev. Drs. Wardlaw, Heugh, Wm. Anderson, George Jeffrey, Alexander Harvey, Willis; Robert Grahame of Whitehall, Anthony Wigham, Patrick Lethem, William Craig, James Johnstone, John Murray, the Smeals and the Patons - see Glasgow Herald, 20 July, 1867.

It is interesting to find that some thirty-seven years after Garrison had spoken to this effect, Glasgow's contribution to the abolitionist cause could still on occasion become a focus of local attention. Thus, at a meeting of the Old Glasgow Club held on 21 November, 1904, William G. Smeal, most probably the son (but just possibly the nephew) of William Smeal, read a paper on "Glasgow's Share in the Anti-Slavery Struggle" in which he described the tremendous activity maintained by the GES from the era prior to the achievement of emancipation in the West Indies up until the latter decades of the 19th century, and recalled several of the more outstanding episodes in the Society's history. Included among these were Garrison's "striking tribute" to it at the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840, its spirited attack on the Free Church for acceptance of money from the slaveholding States, and its role in "guiding and enlightening public opinion on the real nature and issues of the American Civil War" - see Old Glasgow Club Transactions, Vol. 1, Sessions 1900-08, pp. 30-32. And eleven years later, on 28 January, 1913, at a special meeting of the Club held, significantly, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the issue by Lincoln of the Emancipation Proclamation, William G. Smeal again appropriately delivered an address on "The Glasgow Emancipation Society". On that occasion, he stressed that the GES' records showed it to have been an organization formed with the aim of concentrating its main attentions on agitating for the abolition of slavery in America; and remaining true to that objective it had, he illustrated, cultivated close and enduring connections with American abolitionists - see ibid, Vol. 2,

of Scottish anti-slavery sentiment, a propitious reference was made to British contributions on behalf of the emancipated race. Having thanked Britain for the assistance it had already given to the freedmen - its "generous and noble offering" - Garrison, in his somewhat oblique plea for a truly generous response to the cause of freedmen's aid, went on to show himself capable of playing not only to the fund of sympathy for the American Negroes which existed among some sections of Glasgow's population but also to the city's self-interest. By helping to provide for the initial material, educational and spiritual requirements of the Negro freedmen, Britain was making a long-term investment which would ultimately bring great recompense, he suggested. It was his contention that once the black population had risen to an improved condition within the Southern community, it would constitute a vast new market for British exports to America. The inducement should be powerful enough, he felt, to convince Britain of the efficacy of assisting the North in its task of elevating the freedmen.[1] In a city where trading and commercial considerations were of supreme importance, it was clearly expedient for Garrison to base his case on such an argument. Furthermore, in the specific context of Glasgow, there was the prospect that a proportion of those seeking to make some amends for the wealth gained by the city from wartime shipbuilding for the Confederacy might be prepared generously to support any means which could conceivably do something in the long run to redress the nature of former "exports" to America.

Yet, it was not of the essence of Garrison's mode of approach, in advocating the American Negroes' cause, to concentrate exclusively on such an aspect, and the attentions of his Glasgow audience were soon switched back to the more altruistic, crusading concept of aiding a people striving conscientiously with God's guidance to do the very best they could and to prove themselves

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1 Report of speech by Garrison, in Glasgow Herald, 20 July, 1867.

worthy of their newly found freedom. In the years following emancipation, Garrison asserted, the Negroes had been progressing so well that it seemed they must certainly be "working under Divine inspiration": "They are the best behaved people at this time perhaps in the world". Since they had already provided ample evidence that they possessed the virtues of industry, thrift and self-reliance, there was absolutely no need to doubt their capacity for sustained advancement. In order to succeed on a still more impressive scale, they required only equal rights, a fair start, and the protection of the law.[1] The implication behind Garrison's principal message was that the earlier work of bringing the oppressed, helpless Negro slave up to freedom had as its logical development the rewarding work of helping to bring the deserving, industrious Negro freedmen up to the good social position to which he so worthily aspired.

Unlike the deputies formally appointed by the American freedmen's aid Societies to labour in the field of British philanthropy, Garrison did not visit Britain in 1867 specifically or even primarily to appeal for contributions to the freedmen's aid fund, and the indications are that he took care not to be seen overtly to do so. Nevertheless, simply by presenting his reassuringly glowing accounts of the basic character, rate of progress, and future potential of the emancipated Negroes, he could scarcely have failed to convey to the Scottish public the very positive impression that the cause was one well worthy of active support. Nor, of course, was it really feasible for him, formally associated as he was with the American freedmen's aid movement, to concentrate during his visit exclusively on the abolitionists' achievements to the avoidance of all comment on the current condition and prospects of the liberated race. To have done so would have been to belie the intrinsic connection which he wished to foster between labours on behalf of the slave

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1 Ibid.

and on behalf of the free Negro, and also, it might be suggested, to disappoint those in Scotland who were genuinely concerned to learn all they could of the black population's situation at that time. Hence, even when a deputation from the Port Glasgow Total Abstinence Society called on Garrison at A.F. Stoddard's home (where he was a guest) to present him with a complimentary address, the bearers of this honour were given a brief review of anti-slavery history in America, and the evening was spent in discussing not only the importance of the temperance movement and ways of conducting it but also the anti-slavery campaign and the position of the freedmen.[1]

It seems highly probable, then, that Garrison's visit had some considerable value in bolstering and revitalizing Scottish awareness of the links between a commitment to abolition and a commitment to the American Negroes after freedom. What his presence in the country certainly did do was to inspire fresh appreciative appraisals of his work and achievement which help to illustrate the eagerness of Scotland to display a continuing adherence to the principles of its former deep attachment to the anti-slavery cause. In view of both the inevitable tone and content of his public speeches and the strong emotional memories of abolitionist agitation which he, as a very special individual, aroused, Garrison himself was of course partly responsible for reawakening something of the old vigour of Scotland's anti-slavery spirit at that time. His success in this sphere may have been the greater for the fact that he was careful to adapt the slant of his emphasis upon the evils of the Southern slaveholding system to suit the predominant interests and concerns of the audience he was addressing. Thus, as we have already had occasion to note,[2] in replying to the congratulatory address of the Scottish National Reform League he skilfully tied the oppressions perpetrated by the

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1 See Glasgow Herald, 24 July, 1867

2 See above, Chapter III, pp. 305-306.

former slaveowners of the South to the oppressions practised by politicians in Britain. In so doing, he therefore took a calculated step to establish in the popular imagination the relevance of the anti-slavery movement to other, later causes.

That there did, however, exist within Scotland prior to Garrison's stimulating visit a healthy remnant of the old abolitionist drive capable of channelling considerable energy into freedmen's aid work, was a fact reflected in the warmth of his reception and the numbers present at the public meetings held in his honour, and in the laudatory remarks made about him in the press. And on the other side of the coin, the persistence of Scottish (as well as American) abolitionists in clinging to their "fanatical" views on the ending of slavery in the United States was also testified to in some measure by the virulence of the attack which a journal such as the Edinburgh Courant, with its bitter opposition to their fervent ideological approach and political convictions, felt it appropriate to issue at that time.

It might have been expected that amid the clamour of the Scottish anti-slavery sympathisers and the Scottish press to pay fulsome tribute to Garrison for his mighty endeavours in the victorious abolitionist cause, the Edinburgh Courant would have registered its inflexible hostility to his style of campaign and his political assumptions by preserving a lofty silence on the British visit. On the contrary, however, the paper chose to use the event as a pretext for offering a scathing assessment of the anti-slavery activities and dogmas of Garrison and his co-workers on both sides of the Atlantic. And for the actual abolitionist get-togethers which the visit had inspired, it reserved suitably acerbic comments. With a biting contempt, the Courant suggested that it was "natural and allowable" that Garrison and his British friends should rejoice over the result of the Civil War: "no one can object if those who were prominent in the abolitionist crusade before the war choose now....to assemble to express to each other their mutual

satisfaction and self-complacency". It had therefore no fault to find with the "entertainments" of Garrison arranged by Scottish anti-slavery advocates, or to "the mutual self-glorification of each other in which he and they have indulged".[1]

With these opening shots effectively fired, the Courant enthusiastically proceeded to indicate that notwithstanding their "moral earnestness", the abolitionists had pursued their objective in a highly distasteful manner by fighting their battles against the slave interest "in a fanatical and excited spirit, tempered by neither wisdom nor prudence". But more significantly still, it went on to counter the adulation then being showered upon Garrison in the country by seriously depreciating the role of the abolitionists in bringing about emancipation. "A calm review of the circumstances", the editorial asserted, "will not allow us to admit that ...[emancipation] was mainly owing to the triumph of abolitionist sentiment in America, and the consequent moral condemnation of slavery as a wrong and intolerably unjust system". Reminding its readers that slavery had been extinguished purely as a result of "the natural circumstances and the conditions of the civil war", the Courant, reiterating a favourite theme, contended that the principal impetus for abolition had been the North's realization that in curbing the influence of the South, its interests could best be served by attacking slavery.

From this firmly entrenched standpoint, the Edinburgh Courant looked with disparagement on the nature of the references made by Garrison to war issues at the meeting which had been held in his honour in Edinburgh. While the paper did concede that it was natural that he should identify the cause of the North with his own and therefore also identify the Southern one with slavery, it presented him as a representative voice of "zealous

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1 Edinburgh Courant, 15 July, 1867.

abolitionists" and castigated him for his failure, while denouncing the South, to acknowledge that the North's guilt in tolerating and perpetuating the slavery system had been equal to, if not greater than, that of the Southern states. Insisting that Garrison himself must be fully aware of how little toleration there had once been in the North for those preaching abolition, the editorial again hammered home the message that Lincoln's emancipation proclamation had been dictated not by pressures from anti-slavery agitators but solely by the necessities of war:

> Only when self-interest pleaded for emancipation was it even thought of...The crowning act of emancipation does not therefore reflect the highest moral glory upon the North, and however we may rejoice in the actual result, history will determine that the North was equally responsible with the South for the maintenance of the slave system, and for the harshness and cruelty with which the black was treated.[1]

It was thus clearly part of the Edinburgh Courant's purpose to discredit the entire abolition movement by dragging it squarely into the arena of unprincipled, self-centred American politics and by showing how it had become totally identified with a Northern government and military cause which aimed primarily at objectives much less worthy than the emancipation of the slaves. Garrison's public utterances during his 1867 visit on the animating forces of the conflict and the glory of the Federal victory provided splendid material from which to build the unfavourable picture of the abolitionists as a fanatical clique, prepared blindly to support a self-seeking political regime with no respectable anti-slavery record simply for the sake of seeing slavery and the Southern slaveholders crushed. Still more significant, however, in considering the Courant's continuing animus towards what it evidently recognized as a persistently influential and inimical thread of abolitionist "extremism" in the post-war United States, was the fact that Garrison's speeches at that time (in 1867) also provided

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1 Ibid.

fodder which encouraged the paper to pursue this basic line of thought into the Reconstruction era.

Taking care, then, to follow up its condemnation of Northern war aims with reference to the "relentless hostility" of Congressional legislation towards the South and the "oppression" of white Southerners by Federal military representatives, the Courant held that the essence of the trend which Reconstruction politics was taking with regard to the establishment of Negro supremacy in the Southern states had been demonstrated in the content of Garrison's speech at the ELES' tea-meeting:

> The spirit with which the North is animated in its dealings towards the South is reflected in Mr. Garrison himself, who, apparently unconscious of the bitter ignominy to which the suggestion of such a thing dooms the Southern people, glories in predicting that the freedmen are to become the rulers of the Southern race.

The editorial emphasized that there was undoubtedly a desire among "Northern Radicals" to make the Negroes the foremost race in the reconstructed South; and included as a dominant force within that radical category were of course the former abolitionists. And as in the war period, the abolitionists' fanatical pursuit of their designs in this direction was seen to tie them to unscrupulous radical politicians who strove for the same goal simply because it offered them the prospect of "party and political supremacy forever".[1]

But certainly the most important feature about the Courant's editorial was the tendency to identify the spirit of the abolitionists in the policies of the post-war North towards the South, and especially towards the status of the freedmen in the South. It suggests that detractors of the trans-atlantic anti-slavery movement and of the North during the Civil War were inclined to believe that the earlier advocates of abolition had an instinctive impulsion, which they were successfully employing, to take an instrumental

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1 Ibid.

role in shaping the nature of the American Negroes' future after emancipation. Enjoying the willing legislative support of the compliant, self-interested Radical Republicans in Congress, American abolitionists, therefore, were seen to be still actively exerting a positive, dangerous influence in the sphere of Southern affairs (if not, indeed, in the sphere of United States stability as a whole) during the Reconstruction era. And the ardour of the welcome for Garrison in 1867 showed that in their new labours to achieve social and political supremacy for the black population in the South, he and his former abolitionist colleagues in America could still count on very substantial strength and encouragement from the British side. The Conservative Courant's deep hostility towards the intrinsic radicalism of abolitionist (and especially Garrisonian abolitionist) means and ends prompted it to view the American emancipationists' efforts on behalf of the freed Negroes almost exclusively in terms of unpalatable political aspirations. On the basis of this outlook, the enthusiasm which seemed still by the time of Garrison's visit to permeate the remains of the old British anti-slavery movement was the more regrettable in that it was being automatically channelled into active support for freedmen's aid organizations intent upon the ultimate reversal of the social and political order in the Southern states.

Not all of those elements in Scotland which roundly opposed American (and British) radicalism were quite so anxious to denigrate the work of William Lloyd Garrison and of the British abolitionists, however. While an indication of the vitality of the Scottish abolitionists' continuing concern for the American Negro after emancipation can be gathered from the invective which the Edinburgh Courant still deemed it worthwhile to shower upon the transatlantic movement, it perhaps also says something for the widespread nature of the Scottish desire to preserve the country's anti-slavery reputation that the Whiggish Scotsman did not react to Garrison's visit by an open show of contempt and dislike. On the contrary, despite

its suspicious distruct of extremism, its recent support of the Southern Confederacy, and its avowed opposition to the spirit and substance of Radical Reconstruction, Scotland's leading journal was positively complimentary to the American visitor.

Thus, regretting that "unnecessary controversy and some unjust comments" had arisen out of the reception for Garrison held in London, the Scotsman stoutly declared that he did not warrant being designated an extremely violent and mischievous person. The abolitionists were credited with having undertaken a "great task" in attempting to create in America a public sentiment which was against the whole principle of slavery. But more surprising than that, the Scotsman went so far as to reject the arguments levelled against the methods which had been employed by Garrison and his fellow workers, defending even their occasional use of "strong language and proposed strong measures": "it is not to be expected that men burning with indignation against a great wrong, and pursued by persecution, are never to be otherwise than calm, discreet, and soothing in their words and acts". The editorial's strictures were reserved rather for those British admirers who, in publicly honouring Garrison, had been "so carried away as greatly to overstate the credit due both to the statesmen and the people of the United States in regard to the abolition of slavery, and as much to underrate the credit due to the people of Great Britain for their feelings and dealings in regard to the same matter". The tendency to exaggerate the merits of the politicians and people of America in that respect was also unfortunate, the paper suggested, because it detracted from the proper value of the role played by the small band of campaigners active in the cause.[1]

The Scotsman did contrive, therefore, to drive home the point that the American abolitionists had been essentially a group apart from the mainstream of the community in the Northern states though desperately seeking

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1 Scotsman, 5 July, 1867.

to inculcate into that community their own principles. But in marked contrast to the approach of the Edinburgh Courant, this fact was stated minus the implied corollary that the American abolitionists had been in reality an isolated clique of largely ineffectual fanatics. For all its intense disapproval of the policy adopted towards the South during Reconstruction by the political heirs of the abolitionists, the Radical Republicans, and in spite of its deep conviction that slavery should not have been abolished at a stroke, the Scotsman was nevertheless not prepared in 1867 to damage the venerable anti-slavery reputation of Scotland by unduly disparaging the activities - past or present - of the former emancipationists. In retrospect at least, it was possible to cultivate a respect for the triumphant labours of Garrison and the untiring abolitionists of America and Britain.

A statement which similarly reaffirmed the Scottish concern to show a continuing interest in the abolition achievement in America and to assess in generous terms Garrison's part in it was put forward one day in advance of the Scotsman's comment by Robert Carruthers' Inverness Courier. The main burden of the Courier's editorial on Garrison's visit was to argue that although "an incident of the war, and the accident of a day" had accomplished an end which had "hardly been begun by the labours, perils and martyrdoms of thirty years", it was nevertheless to the early advocates of abolition that the credit for emancipation in America was due. It was as one of that number that Garrison himself was acclaimed by the paper as

> a man whose name has of late years been somewhat forgotten, though he was the beginner of a great work, which it was left partly to other persons, more largely to events and accidents, to complete. The men who are really entitled to the honour and the glory of the abolition of slavery in the United States are the humble men who began the agitation against it more than thirty years ago, not the brilliant statesmen or warriors who brought about the result three years since. The old agitators, by tongue or pen, intended the abolition of slavery, and worked for it; the more recent statesmen and generals, by no means excluding President

> Lincoln, had no such intention, and worked towards quite different purposes.[1]

By 1867, it had become conveniently possible to avoid overt recollection of the "radical" doctrines embraced by Garrisonian abolitionists on both sides of the Atlantic and the debilitating schisms which these principles had been instrumental in creating within the movement. This being so, it becomes clear that Scots who wished to give the impression that their country had preserved, into the Reconstruction era, a deep-seated concern for the welfare of the American Negro considered it highly expedient if not, indeed, almost obligatory to pay tribute to the individual whose personal contribution and dedication to the anti-slavery cause was beyond dispute. The aura which attached to Garrison during his Scottish visit at that time was not one of a potentially dangerous, subversive zealot who in earlier days had fervently advocated a radical and heretical creed for society and politics, but rather an aura of the abolitionist par excellence - the man who more than most others of his convictions had borne abuse, social ostracism and danger to life for the sake of his beliefs. So compelling was the appeal of this martyr's streak in Garrison's public image during the mid-1860s that even an element within Scottish society which had in the past been subjected to impassioned attacks by Garrisonians in Scotland found it worthy of respectful recognition.

When in the mid-1850s the United Presbyterian Church had become the focus of abolitionist controversy over its policy of allowing its missionaries in Old Calabar to convert slaveholders who then continued to own slaves, members of the Garrisonian emancipation Societies had been foremost in issuing vigorous and sustained denunciations.[2] Mindful, perhaps, of that as much as of the disturbing nature of some of his principles, the U.P. Church

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1 Inverness Courier, 4 July, 1867.

2 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 369-384.

was still in 1867 prepared to state its reservations about certain aspects of Garrison's anti-slavery campaign. Recalling his remarks at the ELES' tea-meeting on the way in which the strong charges hurled against him had become obsolete since emancipation,[1] the United Presbyterian Magazine stoutly declared that the denomination did not feel called upon to justify every word he had ever said and every step he had taken in the struggle for abolition. Nevertheless, this most ardent of all the Scottish religious sects to labour for freedmen's aid was also ready during the Reconstruction years to acknowledge the tremendous debt which was owed to William Lloyd Garrison for his anti-slavery endeavours. Having proved himself"the uncompromising enemy of slavery, and the tried friend of the slave", he was hailed as "an instrument raised up by God to do His work...We honour him as an honest and earnest worker in a noble cause, and as the representative of the anti-slavery cause in the United States of America".[2] By this stage in the century, homage to the celebrated visitor on these lines seemed to be virtually demanded of those Scots who professed a commitment to the best interests of the American Negroes both as slaves and as freedmen.

The image of Garrison as the embodiment of the anti-slavery triumph was particularly convenient and irresistable, therefore, for a newspaper such as the Glasgow Herald which (produced as it was in a city which had been a solid pillar of support for the Confederacy) still in 1867 seemed to feel remorsefully uneasy with regard to British sympathies for the South during the war. Commenting in early July upon the Public Breakfast which had a few days previously been held in London, the paper welcomed the warmth of the reception for Garrison as offering proof to the Americans that despite wartime appearances to the contrary, British sentiment on slavery had been

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1 In his address to the ELES' tea-meeting, Garrison had somewhat bitterly announced that "I am just as much a fanatic, and an incendiary, and madman as I ever was. But now these terms have become obsolete. What was deemed fanaticism is now pronounced sanity; what was deemed infidelity is now recognized as pure Christianity; and what has been treason is now recognized as the highest form of patriotism" - see Scotsman, 13 July, 1867.

2 United Presbyterian Magazine, Aug., 1867, p. 383.

and remained sound. The lavish tributes and sincere veneration which were accorded the visitor from the moment of his arrival in Britain enabled the Herald confidently to reassert that the triumph of the North, representing as it did the triumph of the abolitionist party, had also been the triumph of "truths long held and defended in Britain".[1]

In line with the satisfaction which it derived from this specific demonstration of the country's continued active regard for anti-slavery principles, the Glasgow Herald displayed at that time a markedly generous appreciation of the contribution made by the American abolitionists to the securing of emancipation. Britain and America could unite, it suggested, in applauding Garrison and "the leaders of the extreme Republican party" for never having shown inconsistency or half-heartedness in their commitment to the anti-slavery cause. If the accolade handed out by the Whig Herald to the Radical Republicans of the United States was surprising, so too in somewhat lesser degree was the extent of the impact and influence which the paper was prepared to attribute to the role of Garrison and his colleagues. Arguing that the Emancipation Proclamation had not been merely a necessity of war but also the product of a Northern mood which had become increasingly "abolitionised", it marvelled at the amazing rapidity with which the "earnestness and energy" of the American abolitionists had seized hold of the American mind: "Every obstacle fell before them".[2]

This theme was developed three weeks later when the Herald devoted an editorial to Garrison's visit to Glasgow. In it, Garrison and his followers were given full credit for clinging to their strict anti-slavery principles at a time when these had been mistakenly considered fanatical. The

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1 Glasgow Herald, 3 July, 1867.

2 Ibid.

abolitionists, it was asserted, had instilled into the New England states a fierce sense of the evils of slavery and, through the force of their "moral weight", had ultimately been responsible for spreading throughout the North principles which would have made its continued "participation" in slavery intolerable. Far from representing an obsessive extremism, the abolitionists' "devotion to a great cause" had been "the salt keeping the controversy of slavery continually sore".[1]

Among other elements within the Glasgow press - journals which had eagerly reflected the local community's strong support for the South in the Civil War - there also appeared the urge to recognize the magnitude of Garrison's contribution to emancipation. In seeking to convey its own implicit reverence for anti-slavery tenets and for the inauguration of a new post-war era of justice and higher public principles in the United States, the North British Daily Mail, for example, considered the London reception to Garrison "an event to be regarded as one of historic significance". It was fitting that British and American abolitionists should "meet and exchange felicitations" since "The abolition of negro slavery in America marks the close of an era and the opening of a new page of civilized history, wherein principles in politics and public morality of a more pure and elevated character than heretofore have come perceptibly to occupy the foreground of opinion". Garrison himself was looked upon as one who had justifiably felt it necessary to employ a violently denunciatory style in order to arouse the conscience of America to the crime of slavery. With Clarkson and Wilberforce, he deserved to be ranked as "one of the genuine philanthropists...perceiving that, whether black or white, 'the man's the man for a' that'".[2]

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1 Ibid., 22 July, 1867.

2 North British Daily Mail, 2 July, 1867. While deciding that his early severity against the Southern slaveholders was necessary in the circumstances, the Mail found it "perhaps less easy to excuse the unsparing invective with which Mr. Garrison has so often assailed those friends of emancipation who have thought it right to pursue a course different from his own" - ibid.

With a comparably enthusiastic stance in favour of the Southern Confederacy behind it, the Glasgow Sentinel similarly hailed Garrison as the greatest single labourer in the cause of abolition and, moreover, as a man who possessed one of the highest claims of any contemporary individual to having made the world better. Praise for the courage which had made him stand firm "against the whole political power of his country, and against its cherished prejudices and vested interests" was complemented by the declaration that he had attained his "great purpose" by simple force of honesty, resolution and "faith in God's justice". And that the Sentinel had not divorced the abstract ideal of Negro emancipation and Garrison's role in securing it from the actual reality of its impact upon the Negroes themselves was shown by its significant observation that it still remained to be seen whether emancipation would convert the slaves into "a prosperous population of free labourers".[1]

Both the Glasgow Sentinel and the North British Daily Mail, then, clearly went some way during the Reconstruction years towards bearing out the Glasgow Herald's contention that British sympathy for the South during the Civil War had not been synonymous with British sympathy for slavery. Garrison's visit in 1867 proved, indeed, to be an excellent means of bringing to light the earnest desire which existed among Scots of all political persuasions to show that the traditionally vehement opposition of the Scottish people towards slavery was neither dead nor dormant, and that with regard to emancipation in the United States, Scotland had been, in spirit at the very least, on the side of American radicalism insofar as the American abolitionists had represented a radical creed. At the same time, however, it should be borne in mind that the profuse expressions of praise and esteem (most especially those in certain sections of the Scottish press)

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, 6 July, 1867.

meted out to Garrison at that period in no way offer an accurate gauge of the general level of Scottish acceptance of his specific style of abolitionist activity during the earlier decades of the century.

But the fact that certain of the post-emancipation eulogies on Garrison were delivered by elements which, to say the very least, had probably not been over-enthusiastic in the past about his mode of campaigning against slavery does not significantly detract from the importance of the widespread Scottish urge during the Reconstruction era to profess continuing allegiance to the anti-slavery principle by honouring one of its greatest champions. In becoming accepted as the symbol of the abolitionists' welcome success, his controversial approach towards achieving his aim was alternatively vindicated, forgiven, or forgotten. A short editorial comment in the Dundee Courier, stimulated by Garrison's public appearance at Edinburgh, well encapsulates the manner in which he was generally regarded, and the opportunity which his visit was seen to provide for reaffirming the Scottish concern for the cause of the American Negro. Judging his sustained labours for emancipation to have represented "one of America's brightest passages", the Courier attributed to Garrison the greatest influence of perhaps anyone in America in bringing about abolition and anxiously desired that along with the capital city, other principal Scottish towns would join in acclaiming him.[1]

Nowhere, however, had the warmth of Garrison's reception been more directly correlated to the intensity of British sentiment on the slavery issue than in the speech made by the Duke of Argyll at the Public Breakfast in London in late June. The British, Argyll declared, were "not naturally demonstrative or emotional"; it required a very great cause to move them to give a public honour such as Garrison was receiving. And his was a very

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1 Dundee Courier, 19 July, 1867.

special cause: "it is not too much to say that the cause of negro emancipation in the United States of America has been the greatest cause which, in ancient or modern times, has been pleaded at the bar of the moral judgement of mankind".[1] In referring to the tremendous opposition which Garrison had had to face in America, compared to which British abolitionists had enjoyed a relatively easy passage,[2] the Duke rejoiced that the "young and noble life" of the United States had been freed from "the taint and curse of slavery", and, optimistically looking forward to a future of liberty and justice for all men in America, he gave thanks to God that the spirit of the whole Republic had finally come to be at one with the spirit of Garrison: "freedom is now the policy of the Government and the assured policy of the country, and we can to-day accept and welcome Mr. Garrison not merely as the liberator of the slaves, but as the representative also of the American Government".[3]

For one so personally involved as Argyll was in efforts to aid the American freedmen, the contemplation of this happy state of affairs must have been particularly reassuring. And there are signs that by this stage in the post-war era he had come to hold the view that the war had been waged on the Federal side as a conscious, deliberate, dedicated struggle to extinguish the legalised crime of human slavery. Thus while regretting the

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1 Speech by the Duke of Argyll at the Public Breakfast held in honour of Garrison in London, 29 June, 1867, Proceedings at the Public Breakfast... in St. James's Hall, London..., pp. 24-25.

2 Argyll advised his audience that while in Britain Clarkson and Wilberforce had certainly been denounced as fanatics for their abolitionist efforts, nevertheless "it must not be forgotten that so far as regards the entwining of the roots of slavery into the social system there was no comparison whatever between...[the British] contest and the contest in America". The number of persons in Britain committed by personal interest to slavery had always been comparatively few, "whilst in attacking slavery at the headquarters in the United States, Mr. Garrison had to encounter the strongest objections which were entwined with the self-interest of mankind" - ibid., p. 27

3 Ibid., p. 28

catastrophic effects of the conflict on America, he was prepared in 1867 to measure its motivating force and its achievements against those of conflicts for liberty in mid-nineteenth century Europe. "In our own time", the Duke declared, "the march of great battalions has generally been in the wake of the march of great principles...[I]n the freedom of Italy, in the consolidation of Germany, and still more in the recent contest in America, we are to look to the triumphs of opinion as...the triumphs which have been won". Even allowing for "the heaps of slain", there could be joy, he suggested, in the knowledge that martial victory had won the independence of a country "or, still better, established the independence of a race".[1]

Argyll's stated conviction that emancipation for the oppressed Negro race had been the main spur behind the North's rallying to arms was however of very recent vintage. In letters to Charles Sumner during the actual war years, for instance, he had pointed out that to a considerable extent the British people could not easily sympathize with the Federals in their struggles because while it was clear that they were fighting to preserve the Union, it was by no means obvious that they were fighting to end slavery.[2] At least so far as Argyll is concerned, Northern victory was certainly a principal factor in encouraging him to regard the Northern cause as something in the nature of a crusade.

Yet, in adopting this point of view the Duke of Argyll was by no means favouring a stance unique among his fellow countrymen in Scotland. On the contrary, his somewhat mild inference that the triumphant Northern cause had been impelled by a mighty, dynamic moral force paled in comparison to the strength of the opinions held and publicly stated on that theme by many other Scots during Reconstruction. It has been estimated with specific regard to

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1 Ibid., p. 27.

2 See Duke of Argyll to Sumner, Roseneath, 3 Dec., 1862; Argyll to Sumner Balmoral, 30 May, 1863, PMHA, pp. 100, 79 respectively.

English attitudes during the Civil War that only "a few notable exceptions" joined "the very simple" in looking upon the war as a crusade for abolition, where the forces of righteousness had engaged the evils of slavery in mortal combat.[1] Perhaps the picture in Scotland may have been somewhat different. Certainly, in the years immediately following the end of armed hostilities in America, there are distinct indications that precisely such an outlook was common to a far larger section of the Scottish community than merely the "notable exceptions" and "the very simple".

In the United States itself throughout most of the Reconstruction era (and especially in the early post-war period) the spirit dominant among those who had supported the North was a moralizing one which sought to present the Federal victory as a victory for right against a heinous attempt by the evil forces of slavery to destroy the Republic.[2] And it would appear that to a significant degree, exactly the same interpretation was also prevalent in Scotland. The Scottish tendency after the Civil War to see the Northern action in terms of a crusade represents yet another facet of the desire to display a sentiment deeply sympathetic to the anti-slavery impulse and to the agencies responsible for crushing the hated system. And it might be suggested that this particular aspect of the general concern to preserve the abolitionist fervour was of special importance in laying the foundations for involvement in freedmen's aid since the freedmen's aid cause could be seen as the logical extention of the crusade, as a vital part of a great moral work still unfinished. Taking this into account, it is necessary to give some consideration to the incidence of this view in Scotland, and to the eager manner in which it was publicly voiced by prominent individuals and associations subscribing to it.

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1 See Van Auken, English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy, p. 130.

2 See Thomas J. Pressly, Americans Interpret Their Civil War, pp. 57-58, et seq.

One of those who carried a total devotion to the anti-slavery cause over into a total commitment to the campaign on behalf of the freedmen was that formidably stalwart Edinburgh abolitionist, Eliza Wigham. With more than three decades of exceedingly vigorous emancipationist activity to her credit,[1] Eliza Wigham still retained during the Civil War years and in the period immediately beyond the influential position of joint-secretary to the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society and was one of the leading spirits in shaping a post-emancipation policy which involved the Society in positive efforts to aid the liberated Negroes of America. As early as 1863, in a highly-charged, emotive work entitled The Anti-Slavery Cause in America and its Martyrs, she had demonstrated her attachment to the concept of the abolitionist movement as a holy crusade. At the very outset of the book, she sought, as a Quaker and a pacifist, to vindicate the Northern resort to arms by stressing that the war had originated in the South's determination to maintain, perpetuate, and extend slavery, and that "the interests of freedom throughout the world" were dependent on the success or overthrow of Southern aims. Already convinced that the cause of the slave was becoming increasingly prominent in the psychological armoury of the Federals, and that abolition would be achieved as a result of the struggle, she declared that "all who are interested in the cause of humanity must watch the contest with intense earnestness, fervently desiring its speedy termination, which can only be righteously effected by the emancipation of the most oppressed of the human race".[2]

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1 Along with her step-mother, Jane Smeal Wigham (the sister of William Smeal), Eliza Wigham was one of the founders in 1833 of the ELES, and she remained throughout its existence one of the Society's most prominent members. The extent of her activities within the Scottish anti-slavery movement are indicated in Rice, The Scottish Factors, passim. For a biographical note on Eliza Wigham, see Appendix I.

2 Eliza Wigham, The Anti-Slavery Cause, pp. 1-2.

It is important to appreciate, however, that Eliza Wigham regarded the abolitionists of the North rather than the politicians and armies of the North as the section of the American people sincerely and exclusively engaged in a crusade to obliterate the forces of evil in their land. In her case, this distinction is clear, and consequently of the utmost significance. Having once stated her support for the Northern military effort as the (albeit unfortunate) harbinger of emancipation and her optimistic belief that the Federal states were becoming progressively more attuned to abolitionist principles, Eliza Wigham did not hesitate, for instance, to point out that the Northern people and most especially the Northern politicians had not initially gone to war to end slavery; nor had they even by 1863 become "fully committed to fighting in the name of liberty". With a vein of bitterness which could not totally be disguised, she censured the North for its errant toleration over generations of so infamous a system, and sparing not even Lincoln himself, concluded that the Civil War had "come in judgement for the iniquity of the nation".[1]

As against this, those who had openly and fearlessly advocated abolition were revered as individuals prepared to suffer varying but inevitable degrees of martyrdom in their efforts to promote the cause of freedom for the slaves. "Most conspicuous" in this regard was held to be John Brown of Harper's Ferry, for whom Eliza Wigham reserved her highest praise, judging him to have been "the instrument of One far wiser than himself".[2] But it was not the activities of Brown alone which inspired comments of a broadly similar nature. Through all of her writing on the American abolitionist movement and its most famour personalities there ran an extremely strong tendency to depict the work as a crusade, as an irrepressible and steadily advancing force for

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1 Ibid., pp. 69, 89, 151-160.

2 Ibid., pp. 133-143.

good which took its inspiration from divine sanction. The predominant tone which this idea imparted to her work was well reflected in her comment upon the failure of the 1857 financial panic in the North to stay the progress of anti-slavery agitation: "The cause of the slave was in the hands of the Almighty, and the voice of all those warnings calling to repentance was His voice".[1]

During the early post-Civil War years, Garrison's visit to Scotland afforded the occasion for a renewed demonstration of her zeal in investing the abolitionists' labours with the character of a holy war. As joint-secretary of the ELES and one of its most venerable members, to her must surely have fallen the main task of compiling the Society's address to Garrison.[2] Certainly, the tribute was imbued with a spirit closely akin to that which pervaded The Anti-Slavery Cause and its Martyrs - a fact which in itself illustrates that the intensity of Eliza Wigham's views in that connection was substantially shared by her colleagues in the ELES. The vividly religious, crusading flavour of the entire address was captured in the initial words of greeting, in which Garrison was welcomed "in the name of Him who 'hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth' and in the name of Him who was 'sent to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that were bound'".

Through his labours and achievements, Garrison became a literal Godsend - a crusader in the cause of right who had been persecuted for his beliefs but wisely left to carry through to fruition his magnificent aim. Recalling his subjection to "brutal indignities", mob violence, and peril to life at the instigation of a Southern state governor, the address considered he had been

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1 Ibid., p. 122. Original emphasis.

2 That Eliza Wigham was mainly responsible for preparing the address seems the more likely in view of the fact that just before reading it out, David McLaren paid tribute to her - see report of the tea-meeting held by the ELES in honour of Garrison, in Scotsman, 13 July, 1867.

> forced to taste of the bitter cup of which the slaves daily drank, that you might the more fully answer the demand of your calling... Was it not in this hard school you were taught and trained for the stern service you were afterwards to render? You were led to the bloody altar of slavery, but it was not that you should burn there a sacrifice, but that you should swear eternal hatred to oppression, and, being delivered thence, return to renew your efforts with redoubled zeal till crowned with victory...[Y]ou have been preserved, upheld, and borne on from conquering to conquer, by that mighty Power which worketh all in all, and causeth the righteous to triumph evermore...You, Sir, by the blessing of God, survive your labours.[1]

Further testifying to the dominance at the meeting of strong crusading sentiments, the temper of the address itself had been immediately anticipated in the speech of the chairman, Councillor Fyfe, who had declared to loud applause that those attending the function were "sitting in the presence of a great moral power that nothing could contend with successfully", and that Garrison had undoubtedly been "raised up by God to fulfil a special purpose".[2]

In at least one other main branch of the organized Scottish movement for emancipation the members did not, however, exclusively confine to the activities of the American abolitionists the notion of a crusade against slavery. Regarding the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment by so large a majority as "one of the greatest triumphs of modern civilization", the Union and Emancipation Society of Glasgow[3] transmitted to President Lincoln an Address expressing the satisfaction of its members over the event. Included in this document was a distinct acknowledgement of the Northern people and the Northern soldiery as having been willing and conscious instruments in bringing about the end of "a formidable conspiracy against law and right". The Society indicated that it recognized in the war "the work of Divine Providence"; and in the result of the conflict it recognized also the vindication of the efforts of the Americans, "our kinsmen, who in many a stubborn field have

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1 Report of ELES' address to Garrison, in ibid.

2 Report of speech by Councillor Fyfe, in ibid.

3 This body was simply the old Garrisonian Glasgow Emancipation Society with its nomenclature temporarily altered to reflect more precisely its sympathies during the Civil War years.

proved themselves worthy descendents of those who fought for a new world in which to preserve their ancient faith".[1]

The tendency to look upon the entire Northern war effort as a campaign waged by the forces of righteousness under Divine command was probably even more popular within Scotland than the parallel tendency to attribute such a character merely to the actions of a narrower abolitionist clique. The crusade concept in this wider context certainly came to be publicly proclaimed as early as the beginning of May, 1865, for instance, by no less a personality than Edinburgh's radical M.P., Duncan McLaren. McLaren's strong sympathies for the democratic structures of the United States and for the Federal cause during the Civil War have already been frequently indicated. These sentiments had been linked down through the years to an active participation in the anti-slavery cause - to a personal concern for the emancipation of the American slaves, made the more intense, it seems likely, by his long, close friendship with the Wighams,[2] and his marriage in 1848 to John Bright's strongly abolitionist sister, Priscilla.

The keenness of his interest in the abolition struggle was reflected in the extremely warm welcome which, as Lord Provost of Edinburgh, he had given to Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1853. His exertions on that occasion went beyond those immediately required of the civic head. As well as presiding at the banquet in her honour, he personally arranged the more important meetings which Mrs. Stowe addressed during her stay in the city.[3]

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1 Report of the contents of the Union and Emancipation Society of Glasgow's Address to Lincoln on the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, in Glasgow Herald, 22 March, 1865.

2 See Mackie, Duncan McLaren, Vol. 1, pp. 122-123; Vol. 2, pp. 14, 17.

3 See ibid., Vol. 1, p. 318. A yet more personal indication of the high esteem in which the McLarens held Harriet Beecher Stowe was the fact that they named their youngest son, born in 1848, Walter Stowe - ibid., Vol. 1, p. 54. He was to become M.P. for the Crewe division of Cheshire.

A year later, he became President of the New Edinburgh Anti-Slavery Association,[1] and represented the ELES at the annual Anti-Slavery Conference held in London:[2] by 1863, his reputation as a conscientious worker in the emancipation cause and as a staunch supporter of the North was sufficiently secure to warrant his being chosen to chair the public meeting in Edinburgh at which Henry Ward Beecher spoke on the American conflict.[3] In that same year, he became a member of Glasgow's Union and Emancipation Society,[4] and by the time that the peace was scarcely a month old, the similarity of his views with those of the Society's executive regarding the essential character of the war was made plain. Speaking at the public meeting held in Edinburgh after Lincoln's assassination, McLaren enshrined his long-standing abolitionist views - and foreshadowed his later involvement in freedmen's aid - by conveying to his audience the idea of a noble, liberating Federal army marching in to crush the forces of darkness in the South and set the slaves free. Slavery he declared, was extinct wherever the Union flag was because the military commanders had been ordered to liberate all the bondsmen. And to thunderous applause, he went on to identify the United States flag as the symbol to which the Negroes had had to look in order to be freed, just as the Israelites, to be healed, had been told to look on the brazen serpent uplifted by Moses.[5]

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1 See Rice, The Scottish Factor,p. 380. The Association was generally Tappanite in tone, and was fairly ineffective, never operating on anything more than a sporadic level.

2 See Sarah Wigham (then President of the ELES) to the organizers of the forthcoming Anti-Slavery Conference in London, Edinburgh, 27 Nov., 1854, A-sl.p., C160/222.

3 Report of the Proceedings of a public meeting held in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 14 October, 1863 to hear Henry Ward Beecher (pamphlet).

4 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, p. 702.

5 Report of speech by Duncan McLaren at the public meeting on Lincoln's death, held in Edinburgh, 3 May, 1865, in Scotsman, 4 May, 1865.

McLaren himself was present at a freedmen's aid meeting held in Edinburgh at the end of 1865 when the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie expressed an attitude governed by basically the same spirit. Claiming that after the Emancipation Proclamation he had "never hesitated one hour or moment" as to which side to support, Guthrie revealed that he had earnestly prayed that "God would crown the arms of the North with victory". The ultimate Federal success had, therefore, been achieved through "His blessed and wise Providence".[1] A very much stronger statement illustrative of his belief that the Northern war effort deserved to be seen in the light of a battle for righteousness was, however, voiced by Guthrie at a subsequent meeting for the freedmen's cause. It is significant that on this later occasion, he also gave a clear indication that he considered it vitally necessary for the crusade on behalf of the American Negroes to continue in the period beyond emancipation. The work of the crusading forces was yet, in 1866, unfinished, for having freed the slave, the Americans, with British help, must "arrest him from the dust, from degredation, from long and cruel and unchristian oppression". At the back of that labour for the freedman, there was the solid image of a great achievement for humanity, won by the Northern people with God on their side:

> I confess when out of the dust and confusion of the earlier parts of the controversy, this battle stood forth as a great fight for freedom, for the rights of manhood, for the extinction of the greatest curse that ever fell on mankind; I felt a stern joy in listening to the roar of cannon,

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in the Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in ibid., 6 Dec., 1865.
Duncan McLaren occupied a seat on the platform, and made a short speech which took the form of a tribute to the strength of Edinburgh's anti-slavery traditions.

knowing that the iron mouths have seldom been opened in a cause so good.[1]

At least as far into the Reconstruction era as the early 1870s, retrospective consideration of the Civil War could evoke similar strands of thought amongst churchmen in Scotland's dissenting denominations. Providing clear evidence of this was, for instance, the Rev. Dr. John Edmond, minister at the United Presbyterian church in Regent Place, Glasgow.[2] In 1870, Edmond had gone to America as a deputy carrying the congratulations of the Scottish U.P. Church to the first General Assembly of the reunited Presbyterian Church of the United States. During his visit, he had witnessed with "a melancholy pleasure and pride" the laying of the foundation stone for a monument to Federal soldiers in Pittsburgh. Watching the march of companies in their old battle dress, carrying their ragged colours, the ranks including a proportion of coloured troops, he had been forcefully struck by the fact that the marchers were some of the men who had "saved the Commonwealth and struck the blow for the overthrow of slavery. My heart did them quiet homage as they passed; and I felt that brave endurers and doers such as these belong not merely to country but to kind, and help

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held under Free Church auspices in the Free Church Assembly Hall, 2 July, 1866, in ibid., 3 July, 1866.
Guthrie to some extent reinforced the idea of the Northern cause as a crusade by the nature of his fulsome praise for the innovatory work of the Sanitary and Christian Commission. In the functioning of that body, he recognized "a nation rising to its duty, resolving to put a Bible in every soldier's knapsack, and resolving to send a band of Christian volunteers to follow the soldier into the camp, into the hospital and into the battle-field - where the dying soldier found one beside him to pray with him, to take his last message to his mother, and to turn his last expiring looks to Him who died for sinners" - ibid.

2 The Rev. Dr. John Edmond was ordained at Dennyloanhead, Falkirk in 1841 and was called to Regent Place, Glasgow in 1848 and 1849. He declined both times, but finally went there in 1850 - Small, History of the...United Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, pp. 676-677. He was Moderator of the U.P. Synod in 1871 - see United Presbyterian Magazine 1871.

to enoble humanity".[1] It would seem to have been Edmond's considered opinion that the North had fought a crusade against slavery which also of necessity involved the related, vital drive to save the Union.

The rather delicate task of reconciling the concept of a wholehearted Federal anti-slavery crusade with the undeniably paramount wartime concern of the Northern people and the Northern armies to preserve the Union was likewise accomplished to his own personal satisfaction by the Free Church's senior minister, the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan. And he was not slow to impart to an important (from his point of view at least) section of the Scottish community his beliefs in this connection. Following Lord Dalhousie as speaker at the Free Church's General Assembly in 1865, Buchanan felt himself compelled to take issue with the Earl's highly disparaging remarks on the motives of the Northern forces in fighting the Civil War. While agreeing with Dalhousie that the conflict had not come about exclusively or even primarily as a result of the North's determination to secure abolition, Buchanan was at pains to point out that at the same time there had been a great difference between the position on slavery of the two sides entering the war.[2]

Taking all interests and circumstances into account, he was prepared to argue that ultimately, slavery certainly had been "the occasion of forcing upon...[the Northern people] the necessity of going to war". There had been in the North a "large and influential party" which from the first had been dedicated to abolishing slavery, and which "under God's providence" had eventually triumphed. God, he maintained, had seemed in the Civil War to be putting the two sections of the American nation on trial over the

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1 Rev. Dr. John Edmond, "America and the Americans" in ibid., Vol. 16, March, 1872, p. 104.

2 For a fuller reference to Buchanan's comments in this regard, see above Chapter III, pp. 164-165.

slavery issue. As the trial proceeded, and the South adhered to its purpose of maintaining the system, the Northerners had reached the conclusion that it was "their great duty as well as a political necessity" to abolish it. The kernel of Buchanan's thinking on the conflict was contained in his observation that from the time that the Southern states decided "to sink or swim with slavery" their fortunes had ebbed, while after Lincoln had pledged the North to emancipation, its prospects brightened.[1] At least from a post-war vantage point, Buchanan had come to view the Northern cause as a war for the forces of civilization, ably led and inspired by the abolitionists.

The predilection of the Scottish dissenting mentality for evaluating the American conflict in terms of a battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil was yet more vividly demonstrated, however, in the relevant statements of the Original Seceders. In the September, 1865 issue of its magazine, this small Presbyterian sect which prided itself on its distinctively strict adherence to the National Covenants brought to bear on the subject of the Civil War the full fervour of its peculiar religious outlook. The spirit governing the article devoted to "Slavery and its Downfall" was perfectly reflected in the initial observation that abolition in the United States had brought the world "one step nearer the millenial glory".[2]

Indignantly recording that many in Britain and America had been too occupied with the political and commercial aspects of the war to give thought to the ultimate moral and social results, the Original Secession Magazine firmly identified slavery as the real crux of the conflict and asserted that the destruction of "a slavery stained with blood, and drenched with tears, as 'the domestic institution' of the West has been in its entire history" must be looked upon as ushering in a new era in the world's history.

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan at the Free Church General Assembly, 30 May, 1865 in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1865 p. 276

2 "Slavery and its Downfall", Original Secession Magazine, 1865-1866, New Series, Vol. 7, p. 290.

It was conceded that the North had for long ignored the "enormities" of the slave system, but the Southern attempt to extend it was still held to have brought about its overthrow. And in the total, violent nature of its overthrow, a "divine judgement" was seen to have been delivered on American slavery. In the estimation of the Original Seceders, the problem had been one which had required to be "solved in blood", and the magazine pertinently noted that the "remarkable" Northern victories during the war had all been connected with the progressive development and enunciation of emancipation principles.[1] Having identified the hand of God in the achievements of the Northern people, the article went on to call for a continued application of their crusading zeal to the work of evangelizing and educating the freedmen.[2]

Basically, only the flamboyance of the language in which it was expressed differentiated the view of the Original Seceders from that held by many individuals within the other, larger dissenting Presbyterian denominations in Scotland. For instance, the opinion which the Free Church's prominent Edinburgh minister, the Rev. William Arnot, persistently adhered to following his trip to the Presbyterian General Assembly in America in 1870 was essentially in harmony with the conclusions so vigorously voiced in the Original Secession Magazine just after the war's end. Arnot, too, suggested that while the North had not initially fought for abolition, slavery or freedom for the Negro race had been the real issue in the contest all along, and he also maintained that it had been the Southern determination to preserve slavery which had activated the Northern determination to end it. It had been the increasing momentum of the anti-slavery sentiment in the North, channelled into positive and successful action by a "Higher Hand", which had ultimately secured abolition in America.[3]

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1 Ibid., pp. 291-292.

2 Ibid., p. 295. For further consideration of this feature of the article, see below, pp. 465-467.

3 Rev. William Arnot, "Sketches in the United States: The Civil War - its causes and results" in Family Treasury, 1871, p. 68

It becomes clear that closely inter-connected with the crusade idea, and indeed forming something of the basic element in that idea, was the conviction that the Almighty had directly intervened on behalf of the Negro and the Northern cause. When news of the end of the Civil War first filtered through to Scotland, views of that nature were speedily adopted and given currency not only by ministers and the periodical publications catering for the various Presbyterian sects but also by certain elements of the secular press which carried a dissenting religious bias, which had strongly and consistently supported the North, and which were to be energetic during the Reconstruction years in advancing the cause of the freedmen. Thus, by mid April, 1865 the Dundee Advertiser for instance, had already decided that the purpose of the conflict had been subject to Divine influence. The men of the North had not initially aimed at abolition, it suggested, because they had not been allowed by God to see at first how far to go. Untimately, He had taken over and directed that the Northern arms be employed in the service of winning freedom for the slaves.[1] Similarly, in an editorial assessment offered on the very same day, the Aberdeen Free Press declared that in the midst of the North's justifiable war for the Union, God had stepped in to accomplish another great object - abolition. It had been Divinely ordained that slavery and "the slaveholders' rebellion" should go down together; and for their former complicity in perpetuating the evil system, the Northern states had been "taught by a series of lessons only less terrible than those for the South".[2]

There was, indeed, an acute consciousness that although having positively favoured the Federal forces as His chosen agents for securing emancipation, the Almighty had visited both sections of the Republic with a stern and

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1 Dundee Advertiser, 21 April, 1865.

2 Aberdeen Free Press, 21 April, 1865.

violent rebuke for their active perpetuation, and at best their passive toleration, of a serious crime against humanity. This was an attitude most forcefully expressed by, predictably, yet another of Scotland's breakaway Presbyterian sects, the Reformed Presbyterians. In the April, 1865 issue of its monthly magazine, before the final result of the American struggle was known, that denomination made plain the tone of its thinking on the course of the war in the harsh but firm statement that "God has seen meet to purge the national sin of slavery by the spirit of judgement, and by the spirit of burning, and we trust that all nations will profit by this new and striking proof, and that if they do violate the Divine Commandment, under whatever plea, their own iniquity shall correct them, and their own backsliding shall reprove them."[1]

The uncompromising viewpoint of the Reformed Presbyterian Church with regard to the North's guilt and punishment was reiterated immediately after the war's end; but on the subsequent occasion it was accompanied by a still stronger emphasis on the decisive role assumed by the Almighty in dictating the purpose, progress and outcome of the contest. Hence in its Report to the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in May, 1865, the Church's committee on the "Signs of the Times" perceived that the American Civil War had provided the clearest ever manifestation of God's hand working in complicated circumstances to bring good out of evil:

> We have seen the clear development and the triumphant issue of a great and superhuman purpose working through the passions of men. Both North and South have been terribly punished for their wickedness in the matter of slavery, and herein we see the awful displeasure of God at the sin of nations...Whether...[the final act of abolition] came from the earnest convictions of some, or from the military necessity and war policy pursued by others, we, who now see the end, must be blind indeed if we do not recognise the

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1 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, "Notes on public affairs: America", April, 1865, p. 136.

wisdom and power of Him who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.[1]

Although relatively more restrained in its pronouncements, the Free Church also formally put on record its adherence to sentiments of a basically similar nature. At the session of the Church's General Assembly on 30 May, 1865, one Mr. Nelson of Greenock accordingly read out the draft of a special committee's Address to the Evangelical churches in the United States which included the observation that "God has assuredly been speaking to your country by terrible things in righteousness". Like the Reformed Presbyterians, the Free Churchmen also discerned, however, that good had come out of evil and that the war had opened up many new fields of Christian philanthropy.[2] One of the most important of these was, presumably, providing for the material, spiritual and educational needs of the freed Negroes. Certainly, the conviction that the North had been engaged upon a crusade with God's hand directly guiding it was in itself sufficient reason for some individuals actively to support appeals on behalf of the freedmen. Thus a contribution to the freedmen's aid cause remitted by an unidentified donor to the ELES in early 1866 was accompanied by the intimation that it was a "thank-offering" to God "for the marvellous, the literal fulfilment of his God-like promise, as exhibited in the history of millions...recently in bondage in America on that awfully memorable day when the rebellion was brought to a termination".[3]

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1 Report of the Committee on the "Signs of the Times" to the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, meeting at Glasgow, 9 May, 1865, in ibid., June, 1865, pp. 196-197.
The committee, as reappointed, consisted of the Rev. Messrs. Goold, Guy, Hamilton, McDermid, McLachlan and Neilson, and Mr. Alexander Gardner.

2 Report of the committee appointed to prepare an Address to the Evangelical churches in the United States in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1865, p. 270.

3 See Caledonian Mercury, 13 Jan., 1866.

In Scotland, then, the tremendous eagerness during the years beyond the Civil War to recall the country's deep, long-standing hatred of slavery and the equally intense desire to emphasise the undiluted continuation of that sentiment were factors of vital importance in providing both a background and a positive driving force for Scottish participation in freedmen's aid. Scots could contribute towards the efforts on behalf of the liberated race in the knowledge that they were carrying on the spirit of the venerable anti-slavery tradition, and in the belief that they were helping to accomplish a vitally necessary work which was the inevitable sequel to, and in a sense simply a new phase of, a crusade which had brought freedom to the American slaves.

III British complicity in American slavery and the necessity for atonement

But if the creditable emancipationist record of Scotland seemed to call for her subsequent involvement in the movement to provide for the needs and the elevation of the freed Negroes, there was at the same time another side to the question of slavery in America which could be cited as a strong incentive for such an involvement. For while the spontaneous abolitionist and humanitarian impulse remained of paramount significance, there was also to some extent a feeling that Britain was morally obliged to assist the Americans in aiding the freedmen because of early British complicity in American slavery. The spectacle of the United States having expiated its guilt over slaveholding by engaging in the most devastating war of modern times helped to encourage certain elements in Scotland to the view that the least Britain could do by way of atonement for her instrumental role in introducing the system to their land was to support the American people in their attempts to create a solid foundation for the future of the emancipated Negro race.

While the Civil War was still raging across the Atlantic, Port Glasgow's

prominent ex-patriate American, A.F. Stoddard, greatly disillusioned as he was with the British attitude towards the conflict and somewhat jaded also in his contemplation of the ruin which America was inflicting upon herself, coldly informed a Paisley audience that Britain and America were both currently suffering for their connivance at and toleration of "a huge system of wrong and oppression".[1] Stoddard's comment requires to be considered, of course, in the context of his bitter disappointment with the quality of British anti-slavery sentiment at that time.[2] But certainly, once the war was over it did leave in its wake a notable disposition among some native Scots readily to acknowledge Britain's unsavoury historic involvement in the crime of American slavery.

In its unbounded delight at the news of the Northern victory, the Dundee Advertiser, for instance, was even prepared to assign to seventeenth century Britain a portion of the massive burden of wrong which it saw as attaching to the Southern slaveholders' unsuccessful cause:

> We sympathise with them as misled and misguided men...We sympathise with them so far as they inherited from our forefathers and their own an institution which, so long as it exists, must be a curse, and which, the longer it existed, became the greater curse to all connected with it.[3]

Five years later, in his History of the United States, Robert Mackenzie, a leading merchant in Dundee whose personal interest in American affairs was well known in the locality[4] and who had taken an active role in the city's extremely satisfactory response to the freedmen's aid cause, took the opportunity bitterly to censure British colonial policy in respect of

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1 Stoddard, Slavery or Freedom in America, p. 17. (Lecture delivered in Paisley, 28 Jan., 1863).

2 See above, pp. 389-391.

3 Dundee Advertiser, 18 April, 1865.

4 See above, Chapter II, pp. 64-66.

American slavery. Giving his attention to the demise of the slave-trade in 1807, Mackenzie argued that it would have vanished before then if Britain had not forbidden the colonists to end it. "England", he contended, "forced the slave trade upon the reluctant colonists. The English Parliament watched with paternal care over the interests of this hideous traffic".[1]

Nor was the recognition of serious blemishes on Britain's anti-slavery image baulked at by certain sections of the Scottish Presbyterian church - for all their simultaneous declarations that the Almighty had punished America through terrible bloodshed for its preservation of the institution. We have already observed the strength of the Reformed Presbyterian Church's abhorrence of slaveholding and its views regarding American culpability on that issue. The sect in Scotland had in fact special reason to pride itself not only on its own staunch principles in this regard but also on those of its American branch, since the Reformed Presbyterian Church of America had from its inception in 1798 consistently refused to accept slaveowners as members.[2] Following the end of the Civil War, the Scottish Reformed Presbyterians therefore felt justified in sending "warm fraternal congratulations" to the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States which, although at that time split in two by a doctrinal schism, had in both its sections retained "the peculiar and honourable position" of the Church relative to slavery.[3] While thus reassured and confident about the stance of its own transatlantic adherents the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church was clearly less certain about the post-war inflexibility of America as a whole on the issue of maintaining total abolition. Hence it was largely with the intention of gently advising the Americans how best

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1 Mackenzie, The United States of America, p. 61.

2 See Hutchison, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 406.

3 See report of resolutions on the "American Question" moved by the Rev. Prof. Goold and adopted at the evening sederunt of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, meeting at Glasgow, 9 May, 1865, in North British Daily Mail, 10 May, 1865.

to make emancipation a "permanent reality" that the Rev. Professor Goold submitted to the May, 1865 Synod a series of resolutions for transmission to the United States.[1] And in these (which were promptly adopted) the characteristic recognition of the Civil War as "God's judgement and discipline" on America for its oppression of the Negro race was accompanied by a candid acknowledgement of Britain's share of guilt on the same count.[2]

The Reformed Presbyterians' willingness bluntly to state in their early post-war communication with America their recognition of British involvement in the slave system was shared in full by the Free Church. Within that denomination, too, strictures on America's earlier policy were not allowed totally to eclipse Britain's measure of guilt. The Address remitted to the Evangelical churches of the United States shortly after the war's end contained the intimation that "We [the members of the Free Church of Scotland] shall watch with the liveliest interest the future history of the negro race within your borders; and you have our best wishes for the success of every scheme bearing on their (sic) temporal or spiritual welfare". But along with this, and testifying to the Free Church's anxiety to be accepted purely as a helper and in no way as a dictatorial adviser on behalf of the freedmen's cause, was the significant assurance that "We are by no means forgetful of our former share of national guilt as to negro slavery, and it would ill become us to judge you harshly or unadvisedly".[3]

The tone of its Address strongly suggests that the Free Church was in fact in this instance referring to Britain's "national guilt" on Negro

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1 Ibid.; and report of court meeting at the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, 9 May, 1865, in ibid.

2 Report of resolution on the "American Question" in ibid.

3 Report of the committee appointed to prepare an Address to the Evangelical churches in the United States in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867, p. 271.

slavery as it applied to wider spheres than merely the colonial American one.[1] It was certainly in the broader context of the situation which had until recently obtained within certain contemporary British colonies that the Duke of Argyll levelled his charges against Britain for her share in perpetuating the heinous system of slaveholding. Speaking at the inaugural meeting of the National Committee of British Freed-men's Aid Associations in mid-May, 1865, Argyll sought to check potentially damaging doubts on a familiarly sticky aspect of Federal wartime motivations and to lead his audience into decisively steadfast support of the freedmen's aid cause by declaring that even if it were true that anti-slavery feeling in the United States had arisen from circumstances of political necessity, that would not alter his personal sentiments regarding the desirability of British help for the freed Negroes or make him less anxious to perform his duties in advancing that cause. By way of dismissing the sour observations of those who attempted to deny the necessity for Britain's involvement in the freedmen's aid movement, he went on rhetorically to ask whether, in view of their country's former conduct regarding slavery, the British people had any right to taunt and reproach the Americans with slowness on the emancipation question. And the Duke was prepared to go even further by arguing that the United States had had even more excuse than Britain for dilatory action on abolition since the Americans had been brought up under the influence of slavery and had perhaps seen only its "milder forms".[2]

On occasion, Argyll's friend, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie, also incorporated in his public efforts on behalf of the American freedmen a

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1 The draft of the Address had included the notable observation that "it is but right and proper that we should encourage you by our British experience - for the abolition of slavery in our West India Islands removed a great stumbling-block out of our path" - ibid., p. 271

2 Report of speech by the Duke of Argyll at the inaugural meeting of the National Committee of British Freed-men's Aid Associations held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, 17 May, 1865, (microfilm),pp. 16-17

direct reference to the shameful nature of Britain's earlier policy towards the Negro race within its colonies, from which there derived the clear implication that the British people might go some way towards compensating for that unattractive record and towards helping their American brethren to avoid similar unhappy results by giving support to freedmen's aid. In his address to a meeting on behalf of the cause held at Dundee in early 1868, the popular Free Church minister accordingly informed his listeners that while America had a heavy post-emancipation debt to pay to the black population, Britain had had the same debt to pay to the Negroes of the West Indies but had not paid it. The planters, on the other hand, had promptly received their compensation; but the wrong inherent in the situation had, Guthrie suggested, recoiled on Britain. To appreciative applause, he contended that if Britain had anticipated America by elevating, educating and christianizing the Jamaican negroes, there would have been less ground for complaint against their immoralities and indolence, and the November, 1865 uprising would have been avoided.[1] The selfish and disastrously short-sighted attitude which Britain had adopted after emancipation towards the race it had enslaved seemed in Guthrie's view to warrant a special effort by the Scottish public to assist the Americans in their honourable approach to providing for the freedmen.

But so far as appeals on behalf of the liberated American Negroes were concerned, the greatest activating force on the Scottish conscience along these lines probably remained that which demonstrated direct British complicity

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 7 Jan., 1868.

The forthright manner in which some elements in Scotland were prepared to admit the glaring wrong which had permeated Britain's colonial system until the nineteenth century was well reflected in the Aberdeen Free Press' acknowledgement that "the ruling race in both...[America and Britain] were guilty of the same wrong. We both oppressed the Negro, and both at length set him free" - Aberdeen Free Press, 3 Jan., 1873.

in American slavery. Certainly, that aspect of the British past did not go totally unexploited by the deputies of the American freedmen's aid Societies who were operating within Scotland in the mid 1860s. Perhaps one of the most sagacious (and certainly one of the most popular) of these, the Rev. Sella Martin chose, indeed, to base a major part of the plea which he delivered to the Church of Scotland's General Assembly in 1866 on the obligation which he believed it fell to Britain to discharge in respect of the freed slaves of the United States. Having spoken of the extent of the problem involved in providing for the material needs and the general elevation of the freedmen, and of the American nation's admirable endeavours in tackling it, Martin proceeded to make it clear to the General Assembly that he appeared before it as the representative of the Negro race. The elucidation of his precise position was of the utmost significance because it enabled him the more easily to present the claims for aid which he personally believed the American Negroes had upon the people of Britain.

"I think", he informed the gathering, "I have the more right to come to you, because both of you [i.e. Britain and America] were guilty of fastening the institution of slavery on the negro". Judicious enough to discredit the allegation that Britain was the more guilty of the two for having given the initial sanction to slavery in America, Martin noted that the Americans could have got rid of it if they had really found it objectionable. Yet he remained absolutely firm in his blunt assertion that upon Britain there devolved a considerable burden of complicity in the crime of American slavery. Nor was it an involvement confined merely to the period when Britain had "fastened the chain of slavery" on colonial America. Through generations, and up until the Civil War itself, Britain had countenanced the slave system in order to reap the advantages of United States cotton, upon which its great manufacturing districts were built:

> [W]e say to you that, inasmuch as you have wrung your wealth out of the blood of the slave, it is nothing more than right that now...you should devote at least a portion of the wealth to the relief of these people. You ought to employ a portion of that wealth which has built such cities as Manchester for the elevation of the negroes, to whose degradation you have contributed in the first instance.[1]

The warmth of Martin's reception, both from the body of the Assembly and in the official resolutions and the speeches by individuals which followed,[2] denoted the Church of Scotland's readiness to accept the basic charges and responsibilities relative to the American Negroes which the AMA deputy had candidly laid at Britain's doorstep. At the very least, the reservations which some lay and clerical members of the Church might have been expected to have had towards such strong allegations were strictly silent ones, and certainly no voice was raised at the Assembly in overt protest at Martin's vigorous criticism of British participation in American slavery. It seems, indeed, fairly likely that the majority of those present on that occasion would substantially have agreed with the spirit of Martin's sentiments: quite simply, it was not really possible to dispute the plain assertion that Britain had been a party to American slavery and must therefore assume a share of the guilt. And there is evidence that both before and after Martin delivered his exhortation at the 1866 General Assembly, some Scots concerned in recommending the freedmen's

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 4 June, 1866, in Proceedings at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in reference to America: 1866, pp. 9-10.

2 Martin received applause from the Assembly specifically for his references to Britain's obligations to recompense the American Negroes for the profits made from the manufacturing of United States cotton, and he was loudly cheered when he finished his speech. After moving the resolution recording the Church's support for the freedmen's aid cause, James Alexander Campbell personally acknowledged Britain's responsibility for instituting slavery in America; and in his closing speech, the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. John Cook, referred to the "high gratification" of the Assembly in receiving the AMA deputation, and to the "touching illustration" given by Martin of the oppression endured by the Negro race - see ibid., pp. 10-18.

aid cause to the sympathies of the public were themselves placing emphasis upon that aspect as a spur to Scottish support for the movement.

The recognition of British complicity in the transatlantic slave system and of the responsibilities which it had created for Britons in the sphere of assistance for the destitute American freedmen could be remarkably well exhibited even amongst those exerting energies on behalf of the cause at a purely local level. At the meeting in aid of the freedmen held at Banff in late 1865, for instance, Bailie Wood in his speech from the chair was quick to point out that he was not going to criticize the American past in reference to slavery, since "perhaps Britain herself has not clean hands in this". Alexander Brand, the visiting speaker from Aberdeen, yet more specifically drove home the message by insisting that they all had a distinct obligation to help the emancipated Negroes of the United States on the double grounds that Britain had introduced slavery into America, and that but for her consistent purchasing of cotton down through the years, the system would have ended long before. This theme was immediately taken up by one of the prominent county gentry, Gordon of Parkhill. In his address, Gordon forcefully stressed that Britain was "answerable for slavery" in the United States through the establishment of it there in colonial times and through the demand for cotton which had led to its continuance. Indicating that "Sir T.F. Buxton's association"[1] had since 1863 sent in all £25,000 to America to aid the ex-slaves, he pronounced that total "very inadequate", and

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1 The organisation referred to by Gordon was the Freed-Man's Aid Society which had been formed at a meeting in St. James's Hall, London, on 24 April, 1863 with the Rev. John Curwen of Essex as secretary and Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton as treasurer. Following Levi Coffin's visit to Britain in 1864, the Society had amalgamated with a recently established committee for publicizing freedmen's aid to become the London-based Freedman's Aid Society - see Vaughan, The British Freedmen's Aid Movement, pp. 22-27.

urged that generous British help for the freedmen must be forthcoming at once.[1]

Attitudes of a similar nature were also evident in certain sections of the Scottish press. By early 1866, the Glasgow Sentinel had shown itself ready to go some considerable way towards castigating the Southern slaveholders whose rebellion it had supported, and in the direction of depicting the former slaves as the miserable victims of employers' oppression. Along with this shift in viewpoint went a concern to see the Negroes' freedom made totally secure by adequate safeguards from the Federal Government. And in helping to create circumstances which would of themselves lessen the chances of the freedmen's liberty being eroded, American and British charity were seen to have a vital part to play. Against the background threat that the Negroes would "lapse again into bondage as hapless as before", many people in Britain were, the Sentinel perceived, giving attention to their condition. But beyond a worthy philanthropic involvement, the paper discerned that it was simply Britain's duty to subscribe to the relief of the emancipated Negroes. In view of the fact that Britain was "partly responsible for American slavery" by having first established it there, "justice, as well as sympathy for the suffering, should lead us to give something to alleviate the suffering millions in the Southern States".[2]

As an assumption which influenced, and was used by, active advocates of the movement in Scotland, this train of thought persisted into the later phases of freedmen's aid activity. Almost two years after the appearance of the Glasgow Sentinel's editorial, for instance, the sentiments which it

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1 Report of a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in Banff, 11 Dec., 1865, in Banffshire Journal, 12 Dec., 1865.

2 Glasgow Sentinel, "The American Freedmen", 13 Jan., 1866.

had expressed were precisely echoed by the Free Church's Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan. At an afternoon meeting in Glasgow's Religious Institution Rooms on 7 November, 1867, where a company of interested individuals gathered to hear a statement by the Rev. James A. Thome of the AMA and to discuss plans for a public appeal, Buchanan agreed with a suggestion that there should be an early public meeting in the city addressed by Thome and Martin, and stressed that the work of providing for the freedmen must not be left to the United States alone. To approval from those present, he argued that since Britain had been instrumental in planting slavery in America, she should help at that stage to remedy the evils which had sprung from the system.[1]

And much later still, British participation in American slaveholding was recalled for a Scottish audience by no less a personage than the Earl of Shaftesbury. Speaking in the summer of 1873 to a large invited company at John Burns' home, Castle Wemyss, on the occasion of the Jubilee Singers' first concert appearance in Scotland, Shaftesbury concluded his spirited appeal on behalf of the Singers and the American freedmen as a whole with a reference to Britain's share of the guilt for American slavery: "We forced that system upon the United States, and, sharing their responsibility, we must also join with them in seeking to assist the emancipated slave".[2]

IV Reciprocal action for American help and the strengthening of Anglo-American goodwill

Amongst Scottish motives for support of the freedmen's aid cause, then,

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan at a meeting of "gentlemen interested in the condition of the freed negroes in America" held in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, 7 Nov., 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 8 Nov., 1867.

2 Report of the proceedings at a concert given by the Jubilee Singers at Castle Wemyss, 16 Aug., 1873, in ibid., 18 Aug., 1873.
For further consideration of this event, see below, Chapter X, pp. 284-285.

there was the sense of a responsibility to be met, as well as of a philanthropic cause to be served and an anti-slavery tradition to be kept alive. Included also in the stimuli for involvement was the recognition of American generosity and kindness to be repaid. It has been indicated that on a national level British workers in the freedmen's aid movement derived a certain additional encouragement in their task from the consideration that a respectable response to their appeals would help to repay the generous aid which Americans had given to Britain in respect of the distress caused by the Irish potato famine and, later, by the shortage of raw cotton supplies in Lancashire.[1] Certainly, this specific factor would seem to have been one which weighed heavily with those in Scotland who took it upon themselves publicly to advocate the freedmen's cause. Calls on the Scottish people to remember America's ready, liberal assistance for British difficulties pervaded many of the appeals raised on behalf of the emancipated slaves; and the country's obligation to display, through contributions to the freedmen's aid fund, a concrete appreciation of the earlier United States gestures was clearly held to be almost as great as the obligation deriving from its complicity in American slavery.

Public meetings for the cause did tend to provide an excellent atmosphere in which to advance the proposition that Scottish subscriptions for the American freedmen might be given partly as a token of thanks for past manifestations of American goodwill towards Britain. The audiences attending these gatherings were naturally likely to consist for the most part of individuals predisposed to feel a warm admiration and affection for the United States, and an argument in favour of a scheme which promised to strengthen the bonds of friendship and compassionate understanding between Britain and America was obviously of the sort which would be sympathetically received by them. Accordingly, the significance of recalling

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1 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 216.

to a friendly company the concern shown by the United States for acute cases of British distress was opportunely seized by speakers at the rash of freedmen's aid meetings which took place in Scotland in the autumn and winter of 1865.

Well experienced in the art of persuasive public speaking, Montrose Burghs' long-standing M.P., W. E. Baxter, chose in his chairman's address at the meeting in Dundee in late September to place very considerable emphasis upon the duty which Britain had to repay a debt to American kindness. Having reminded his listeners of the close blood ties between the British and Americans, Baxter went on to refer to the generous manner in which the United States had helped when the Lancashire cotton operatives had been thrown idle. The extent of help received at that period, taken in conjunction with the assistance given at the time of the Irish potato famine, represented, he declared, a total of £¼ million in American aid. Through a substantial display of "pecuniary aid and moral sympathy" for the freedmen, the Scottish people should, he advised, reciprocate the good feeling and kind acts of their American well-wishers.[1]

Elsewhere, in similar circumstances, the same sentiments were voiced. At Perth, Bailie John Pullar, presiding, drew the audience's attention to the liberality of the American action regarding the Irish famine and the Lancashire distress before requesting it to "unite as one man" in advancing the freedmen's aid cause; and in the resolution of support for the movement adopted at the end of the meeting, there was included a reference to the earlier example of Christian philanthropy set by America.[2] The public meeting in Aberdeen heard Alexander Brand proclaim that the North was doing

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1 Report of speech by W.E. Baxter at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26th Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

2 Report of a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in City Hall, Perth, 28 Sept., 1865, in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865.

the best it could for the ex-slaves but that it might well ask Britain to help, considering the £250,000 the United States had expended on relief for British sufferings. The American offering had been gladly made, he implied, for his personal experience of a fairly lengthy residence in Chicago had shown him that "the Americans are a liberal people".[1] And one of the diverse and numerous slants which the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie brought to bear on his appeals on behalf of freedmen's aid was the contention that Britain should reciprocate the tangible sympathy shown by America to Britain at the time of the cotton famine.[2]

The idea that British reciprocal action of this nature might reasonably be expected under the circumstances was even in some small measure impressed upon Scotsmen by certain of those visiting deputies from the American freedmen's aid Societies. Addressing the Free Church General Assembly in 1866, the Rev. Dr. W. Patton, for instance, included in his appeal on behalf of the AMA a reminder to the Church's members of the aid earlier given by his country to the distressed of Ireland and Lancashire.[3] He did not, however, repeat

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1 Report of a speech by Alexander Brand at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Belmont Congregational Church, Aberdeen, 29 Sept., 1865, in Aberdeen Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865.

2 See Report of Chairman's speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a lecture delivered by the Rev. A.L. Simpson of the U.P. Church, Derby (and late of Edinburgh) for the benefit of the freedmen's aid fund, in Edinburgh 4 January, 1866 in Edinburgh Courant, 5 Jan., 1866; report of speech by Guthrie at the public meeting in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 7 Jan., 1868.

It is interesting to note that on both these occasions Guthrie specifically referred to the aid which had been forthcoming for the distress in Lancashire but made no mention of the American contributions which had earlier been sent to help the victims of the Irish potato famine. This may have been simply an oversight on his part. But on the other hand, it is just conceivable that the Free Church minister's hostile and bigoted attitude towards the Roman Catholic Irish who had settled in Scotland as a direct consequence of the 1840s famine was sufficiently strong to influence him to avoid all public recollections of that episode. (Guthrie's attitude in this connection is further considered below, pp. 535-539.)

3 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. W. Patton, Chicago, to the Free Church General Assembly, 2 June, 1866, in Procs. Free Church G.A., June, 1866, p. 321.

the reference to American benevolence when a couple of days later he appeared (along with Sella Martin) before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Yet, conversant as he would certainly have been with the substance of Patton's speech at the Free Church Assembly, the Rev. Professor Mitchell, in seconding the resolution of sympathy and support for the freedmen's aid cause, showed that his Church had appreciated the expectations of the American deputy by declaring that the Scottish people must have kindly, helpful feelings towards the Americans if only for the assistance which they had provided during the Lancashire cotton operatives' hardship.[1]

The prospect of repaying one Christian, humanitarian action with another of a broadly similar nature also recommended itself strongly to that stalwart little band of Scottish Quakers who, throughout the century, had assumed an importance in the organization and direction of the country's anti-slavery movement out of all proportion to the Friends' numbers in Scotland. Through the columns of Robert Smeal's British Friend, a valiant attempt was made to preserve a high level of involvement in the welfare of the American Negroes beyond emancipation. To the Society of Friends in Britain as a whole there had fallen, in fact, the distinction of having been the first British body to launch (in February, 1863) appeals for aid for the freedmen.[2] The sect's labours in that connection continued unabated in the early years after the end of the Civil War, and already in March, 1865 Smeal in Glasgow was contemplating with satisfaction the "gratifying result" of a conference in London which had reasserted the duty of the Society of Friends towards the freed negroes and which had promised to contribute several hundred pounds

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1 Report of a speech by the Rev. Professor Mitchell at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 4 June, 1866, in Proceedings at the General Assembly...in reference to America: 1866, p. 17.

2 The initiative had been taken at the Friends' Meeting for Sufferings in February, 1863, and by April of that year, substantial sums had been raised - see Vaughan, The British Freedmen's Aid Movement, pp. 6 - 8.

in aid of their cause.[1]

One of the main characteristics of the Quaker involvement in advancing the best interests of the American Negroes, both before and after liberation, was, however, a zealous and relentless energy, and Robert Smeal did not confine his efforts to reporting the freedmen's aid achievements of Friends outside his immediate, day to day sphere of acquaintance. Thus, information on the successful London conference was directly followed up by news of a scheme for raising funds for the freedmen which had been presented to the Quaker-dominated ELES; and in urging its acceptance, Smeal recalled the American aid for the people of Ireland and Lancashire.[2] The notion of recompensing America for past kindness continued to crop up in the British Friend's incitements to the Quakers of Scotland and England to meet the "strong claims" which the freedmen had upon them. An article contributed by John Hodgkin of Bath to the May, 1865 issue reflected the general tenor of the magazine's sentiments in its jubilation at the "new and increasing" impulse in favour of the American freedmen which it discerned among the British public at large and its conviction that "we are at length, I trust, fairly aroused to a sense of the urgency and extent of our duty, and labouring in good earnest to discharge it". But these general sentiments were also equally well represented in Hodgkin's sedulous recognition of the great

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1 British Friend, March, 1865, p. 63.
Born in Glasgow in 1804, Robert Smeal was eleven years younger than his brother William. The two of them were joint editors of the British Friend from the early 1840s until 1861, when it came under Robert's personal management. He remained editor until his death in 1886; and although (in striking contrast to William's tireless involvement in a plethora of public activities) he kept himself very much out of the public eye, he was widely known and wielded considerable influence as editor of the British Friend. Throughout his long association with the monthly journal, he ably defended all the Friends' philanthropic movements - see cutting from unidentified newspaper, dated 12 June, 1886 in Newspaper cuttings Vol. 3 p. 106, Grieve Scrap Book, Mitchell Library: Andrew Aird, Glimpses of Old Glasgow (Glasgow, 1904), pp. 443-444.

2 British Friend, March, 1865, p. 63.

obligation which Britain had in respect of the former slaves - in his strong emphasis upon the debt which was owed to the United States for her liberality in the 1840s and early 1860s.[1]

By early 1866, Robert Smeal himself had clearly come to accept that in order fully to reciprocate America's generosity and to register a respectable response to so worthy a cause, the total British contribution for freedmen's aid would have to be roughly commensurate with the actual amount which America had donated for British distress. Welcoming the generous support which had been given to the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends for the relief of the emancipated Negroes, Smeal brought attention to the committee's injunction to British Friends not to slacken in their endeavours at that stage but to bear in mind that the £60,000 raised by them was not comparable to the sum forwarded by America on behalf of suffering in Ireland and Lancashire.[2]

The need to reciprocate the goodwill and generosity displayed in the American actions was, of course, most forcefully emphasized by those keenly concerned in a deliberate effort to arouse the maximum public support in Scotland for the freedmen's aid movement. But the opportunity which the plight of the emancipated slaves afforded Britain to match her charity and humanitarianism with that of the United States did not go entirely unnoticed among ordinary individuals and in the Scottish press. The Glasgow Sentinel, for instance, was ready to pronounce it just as much Britain's duty to subscribe to freedmen's aid on account of "American liberality in the Lancashire famine" as on account of her involvement in American slavery,[3]

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1 John Hodgkin, "Freedmen's Aid; the Fall of Richmond; the End of the War; new Events Bring New Duties" in ibid., May, 1865, p. 109.

2 Ibid., Feb., 1866, p. 37.

3 Glasgow Sentinel, 13 Jan., 1866.

And an appeal made in Glasgow on behalf of the cause by the Duke of Argyll in 1868 was recommended to "the charitably disposed" mainly on the basis of a consideration of the American aid for Ireland and Lancashire.[1] Itself sincerely anxious to advance the claims of the movement, the Dundee Advertiser was quick to highlight this same aspect.[2]

While one of the country's most radical journals, the Caledonian Mercury, did not in its editorial comment draw upon the United States example as a precedent for British contributions to the freedmen's fund, it carried on one occasion a reader's letter which brought that concept into the forefront of attention. Writing in early September, 1865, "H.D.F." (who interestingly identified himself as a member of the working class) praised the Mercury for doing well in keeping its readers "in mind of their duty" regarding the American freedmen. To the paper's efforts in that direction he added his own exhortations: "We owe it to considerations of humanity and Christian consistency that sympathy, practical and substantial, should be shown without further delay". Furthermore, he reminded the public of Britain's traditional stance on slavery and of "the noble proofs of friendship and sympathy shown by America in the Irish famine and to our distressed in Lancashire". In view of these circumstances, Britain would clearly be "worthy of scorn" if she did nothing to assist the Americans in their task of providing for the emancipated slaves.[3]

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1 Ibid., 1 Feb., 1868.

2 Dundee Advertiser, "Aid for Freedmen in America", 22 Sept., 1865.
It is noteworthy that while the Edinburgh Courant certainly made no effort to use the incidence of American generosity to Britain in the service of the freedmen's aid cause, it did employ the recollection of British gratitude to America in an appeal for British aid for the victims of the Chicago fire in 1871. Britain, it argued, must help generously to alleviate the miseries partly because of "benefits freely and generously vouchsafed during our own misfortunes. Such gratitude we bear to America for her unsolicited and open-handed aid to the victims of famine and fever in the Ireland of 1847, and to the distressed operatives of Lancashire during her own Civil War" - Edinburgh Courant, 16 Oct., 1871.

3 "Help for the Emancipated Slaves": letter from "H.D.F." in Caledonian Mercury, 9 Sept., 1865.

It is certain that "H.D.F.'s " reference to the "friendship and sympathy" demonstrated by the United States towards Britain would not have been lightly made. The process of recalling the munificence of American help in times of British distress implicitly involved a process of recalling also the strength of the goodwill, affection and kinship which existed between the two countries. Reminders of American aid for Ireland and Lancashire formed a splendid basis for appeal for contributions to the freedmen's aid cause since beyond the opportunity which it provided for a straightforward courteous, reciprocal action, the situation seemed to present itself as one where lack of a healthy British charitable response could be interpreted as failure to appreciate and to reinforce the special friendship of Briain and the United States, a friendship which the early American gestures had so worthily deepened. Indeed, it might be argued that this latter consideration was likely to have been of the utmost importance for it was one which was closely connected with a major facet of the entire Scottish campaign for freedmen's aid, namely, the conscious desire, through that specific philanthropic channel, to reaffirm and advance the warm, filial relationship between Britain and the transatlantic Republic.

It has been shown that during the Reconstruction era there was within Britain as a whole a strong current of sentiment in favour of significantly cementing the bonds which had traditionally linked the British with the people of the United States; [1] and certainly in the ranks of those who in Scotland took an active concern in advocating support for the emancipated slaves, sentiments of that nature were abundantly evident. Amongst a large proportion (very probably the large majority) of that element, the considerations that Scottish involvement in the freedmen's aid cause would greatly

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1 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, pp. 26-33.

help to strengthen and consolidate Anglo-American friendship and goodwill was clearly a very important incentive for participation.

The pre-existing special relationship between Britain and America was, indeed, of itself identifiable as a powerful factor determining the need for generous British support of the movement on behalf of the freed Negroes. Nowhere, perhaps, was this more lucidly and vigorously demonstrated than in a notably straightforward statement contained in the editorial which the Perthshire Courier devoted to discussion of the city's 1865 freedmen's aid meeting and its objects. Showing itself acutely aware of the outstanding claims which as a people suffering serious privation and distress the American freedmen had on international philanthropy, the Courier was also at pains to communicate an appreciation of another persuasive argument relevant to Scottish advancement of the cause. "Supposing", it suggested, "we had no such interest in the sufferers - as, from the fact of their being newly emancipated slaves, we have - surely an appeal from the sister-land of America, on behalf of four millions of its people in want, could not be sounded in our ears in vain". A generous British response could validly be called for and expected on the grounds of the deep, long-established bonds which connected the two nations. The Perthshire Courier perceived that despite all "the exaggerated, inflated, unfriendly nonsense which finds unfortunate currency and publicity", the British people felt a peculiar closeness of relationship and sense of mutual interest with the United States which should automatically rally them to support of the freedmen's aid cause:

> [H]ow should the Atlantic, of little else than a week's span efface all the ties of blood and tongue, not to speak of even closer links [?] ...Why,...the cry of distress from America really sounds at one end of the land very much as if it were a cry from the other. British distress brings aid from America just as Highland distress brings aid from the lowlands; it cannot be that American distress will be unheeded by Britain.[1]

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1 Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865.

It was that uniquely close tie which, it was widely felt, would be strengthened by substantial Scottish contributions to freedmen's aid. The confident hopes entertained in this direction were at an early stage announced with remarkable, if somewhat indiscreet, candour by the Banffshire Journal. Taking "much pleasure" in directing the attention of its readers to the account of the meeting on behalf of the emancipated slaves which had been held in Banff the previous evening, the Journal declared that "The object is in every sense highly laudable. The amount of money to be raised seems altogether a secondary object to the expression of opinions fitted to exercise a beneficial influence on the relations between this country and the United States."[1] Whatever their private views, other interested parties were not so readily prepared, however, publicly to place their priorities in that order. At the actual meeting in Banff, the Chairman, Bailie Wood, had followed a more tactful and representative approach by putting the main emphasis upon the need for funds to alleviate suffering and to advance education, and then indicating that British donations would also help to foster friendly Anglo-American feelings.[2]

The pattern of issuing a subordinate but nonetheless firm reminder of the advantages to be gained in terms of increased goodwill and co-operation with the United States was essentially that adopted by many of the speakers at freedmen's aid meetings. At Aberdeen in September, 1865, for instance, the Rev. Mr. Adam, after moving the resolution of support for Martin and Storrs' appeal, made some "pointed and forcible remarks" to the effect that Scotland might "naturally feel some ambition to take part in...[the work of freedmen's aid] seeing we did our part in sending over our appeals to them

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1 Banffshire Journal, "Freedom in America", 12 Dec., 1865.

2 Report of speech by Bailie Wood, in ibid.

[the Americans] formerly, and doing what we could to excite an anti-slavery feeling", and that participation of that nature would draw the countries closer together.[1] W.E. Baxter's belief that Britain should reciprocate the earlier generosity of America led him, also, directly to the assertion that "such co-operation in benevolent undertakings" tended to "soften national asperities" and "promote universal brotherhood".[2]

From within the fold of the Free Church, the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan gave his warm approval to the freedmen's aid movement as representing "the cause of Christianity,...[in which] all Christians are bound to help", but also as "a cause which will be a powerful means of linking America and Britain with the bonds of amity and love".[3] And undoubtedly one of the individuals most persistent in employing the latter argument as a basis for soliciting public support for the campaign was Buchanan's colleague, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie. Stress on the opportunity offered for a significant furtherance of Anglo-American friendship formed, in fact, an immensely important and constantly recurring feature of Guthrie's appeals on behalf of the freedmen's fund. At his first public appearance as a speaker in that connection, he established a personal precedent for future platform orations when he informed his Edinburgh audience that he would be ashamed of his country if it did not "respond to the utmost" to the calls for aid for the liberated slaves and thereby give proof of its sympathy for America and its joy in the formation of a new tie binding the two countries closer.[4]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Mr. Adam at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Belmont Congregational Church, Aberdeen, 29 Sept., 1865, in Aberdeen Free Press, 6 Oct., 1865.

2 Report of speech by W.E. Baxter at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.

3 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan at a meeting held in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, 7 Nov., 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 8 Nov., 1867.

4 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in Scotsman, 6 Dec., 1865.

Subsequently, he increased his emphasis on that theme and waxed yet more eloquent in declaring that he asked for generous contributions to the cause for America's sake, for the Negroes' sake, and so that the expressions of British friendship and sympathy would "bind the two nations for ever and ever together".[1] And at Dundee as late as 1868, he still found it expedient to conclude his address to a crowded meeting with the suggestion that by giving their aid to the freedmen, the members of the audience would do more than Lord Stanley to draw America and Britain into a yet deeper and more cordial relationship.[2]

As an encouragement to Scottish support for the freedmen's aid movement, Guthrie's marked concentration upon the specific aspect of strengthening Anglo-American goodwill and co-operation had in fact connotations beyond the simple wish to foster friendship for friendship's sake. For while the advocacy of the freedmen's cause certainly was his main concern on these occasions, his eagerness that a good Scottish response to the movement might work to consolidate the links with America was a sentiment clearly governed by a strong desire to see the advancement of a concept of positive Anglo-American co-operation which included but also stretched far beyond the immediate task of providing for America's emancipated slaves. The precise nature of Guthrie's hopes in that regard will be considered presently. It needs to be fleetingly recalled at this point, however, that the widespread stress placed on the relationship with America by Scottish advocates of the freedmen's aid cause was probably also to some extent the product of a desire both to reinforce the British

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1 Report of speech by Guthrie at a meeting held under Free Church auspices in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 2 July, 1866, in ibid., 3 July, 1866.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 7 Jan., 1868.

affection which had always been felt for the non-slaveholding section of the Union and to establish a still closer bond with the whole American nation following abolition. It may be suggested that the mood and mentality of those who drew attention to the part British contributions for the ex-slaves could have in the area of Anglo-American relations would have been essentially represented in Councillor Fyfe's statement at the meeting in Edinburgh for Garrison, in which he happily observed that with the end of the Civil War and the emancipationists' success, Britain had found itself in a position "to stretch forth the hand of friendship to all our brethren in America, to say to them, 'The great cause of disunion between us has been taken away - we feel now in deed and truth children of the same fathers, partakers of the same common faith; and we therefore rejoice in every opportunity that is afforded us of...cheering you on in the great and glorious future that is before your mighty nation'".[1]

The scope for the extension of activity by the erstwhile Scottish abolitionists into the post-emancipation era and the opportunity which was afforded, through that activity, for an increase in the warmth of the countries' mutual regard for each other were realities equally fully recognized by that branch of Scottish dissenting Presbyterianism represented in the Original Secoders. In the September, 1865 issue of its magazine,

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1 Report of speech by Councillor Fyfe at a tea-meeting of the ELES for Garrison held in the Bible Society's Rooms, Edinburgh, 12 July, 1867, in Scotsman, 13 July, 1867. Garrison himself showed that he appreciated such sentiments by accepting the ELES' address to him as "the olive branch which you hold out to my country. It is with a view to continued international amity and goodwill". His remarks were received with loud applause - see speech by Garrison, in ibid.

The anxiety of the Scottish abolitionists during the Civil War years to see the preservation of goodwill between their country and America had been conveniently reflected at, for instance, a public meeting held in Glasgow on 13 October, 1863 to receive Henry Ward Beecher, when the Glasgow Emancipation Society had moved a resolution stressing its accord with his views and hoping there would always be feelings of "amity and friendship" between America and Britain - see report of anti-slavery meeting in the City Hall, Glasgow, 13 Oct., 1863, in GES Minute Book No. 4 Smeal collection.

the sect, professing its "deep interest" in the future of America and her freedmen, was already regretting that Britain was not showing enough sympathy for the Americans in their "time of difficulty". Help for the Negroes would, it was indicated, promote a closer friendship between the two nations. But far outweighing that consideration in the Original Seceders' estimations was the concern to see the freedmen substantially assisted by "the practical sympathy of British Christians. Now is the time for the former advocates of emancipation to prove their sincerity by acts of liberality". A double but inter-related duty was held to fall upon Britain inasmuch as it was up to the British people to show their deepest sympathy with their "American brethren" and, yet more urgently, their practical sympathy with those seeking to evangalize the Negroes.[1]

V Education and evangelization and the concept of Britain and America as guides for the world

The Original Seceders' call for their country's wholehearted involvement in freedmen's aid was therefore rooted in much more than the desire to facilitate good relations with America, in more, even, than the desire to have Britain give a measure of material comfort and educational uplift to the former slaves. It becomes abundantly clear, indeed, that the kernel of the Original Seceders' eagerness for a significant British contribution to the cause was contained in their anxious wish both to see an immediate start made to a thorough process of evangelizing the American Negroes and to have the assurance that the wider, immense benefits for Christianity which would result from that process would as soon as possible begin to be realized. The nature of the sect's excited contemplation of the new missionary field opened up by abolition in the United States, and the basic goals to which it was concerned to direct Scottish philanthropy, were

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1 Original Secession Magazine, "Slavery and its Downfall", New Series, Vol. 7, Sept., 1865, pp. 294-295.

stated with a succinct, explicit zeal:

> In the gracious providence of God, a wide door has been opened up for missionary and educational efforts among the liberated slaves...By first reaching those in America, the way may be opened up for the evangelisation of millions of benighted Africans. May we not see, in the explorations of Livingstone and Barter and Speke, as contemporary with the emancipation of four millions of the sons of Africa, in a country pre-eminent in the missionary spirit, indications of the fulfilment of the promise - "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" [?][1]

It has already been indicated that the Original Seceders were an extremely minor Scottish Presbyterian sect; and it might have been unjustifiable to devote so much attention to their views on British participation in the business of improving the condition of America's freed Negroes were it not for the fact that the enthusiastic and prophetic comment in their September, 1865 magazine represents not only one of the first but also one of the most straightforward recognitions of the missionary aspect as a major stimulus for Scottish support of freedmen's aid. There can be little doubt but that the hopes and convictions so clearly articulated in the Original Secession Magazine were shared by a very substantial proportion of those Scots who actively exerted themselves on behalf of the cause. The concept of Scottish philanthropic contributions being used to evangalize vast numbers of American Negroes, many of whom could then be expected to undertake invaluable missionary work among their race in Africa, was an immensely congenial one to all sectors of the country's Presbyterian mentality, and most especially, of course, to Scottish Presbyterian churchmen who, it will by now have become obvious, tended to assume an exceedingly prominent role in publicly supporting the freedmen's aid movement. As the Reconstruction years wore on and the immediate post-Civil War appeals for assistance in providing for the essential material needs of the freed slaves became progressively less urgent, the emphasis came increasingly to

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1 Ibid., p. 295.

be placed upon the practical help which could be given towards Christianizing and educating them, both in their own best interests and with a view to the tremendous achievements which those who were trained as missionaries would be able to accomplish in foreign mission posts.

This important facet of the movement being one which was guaranteed to recommend freedmen's aid to the sympathies of the Scottish Churches and people, it was sedulously publicized both at General Assemblies and at public meetings by deputies of the AMA during their labours in Scotland. As early as the autumn of 1865, in fact, Sella Martin - always keenly alive to the most promising approaches to adopt with regard to the Scottish environment - had already chosen to direct public attention to the specific theme of evangelization. Speaking at the freedmen's aid meeting in Perth, he stressed that the Negro race in the United States cherished the same hopes of the Gospel as white Americans, and that their trust in God was "unparalleled". That being so, he emotively appealed to Scots, who had "always...spoken of ...[the Negro] with interest", not to abandon the American freedman now that he had arrived at a position which they had long wished him to attain. With Scottish help, he declared, American Negroes would go to Africa as trained missionaries.[1]

Throughout his time in Scotland, Martin sustained his policy of concentrating on that aspect. At the meeting of interested parties held in Glasgow in early November, 1867 to discuss the convening of a public meeting on behalf of the cause, he enlightened those present on the AMA's decision to undertake the establishment of "normal schools" for the education of Negro teachers, and advised them that the appeal to the Scottish people was

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in City Hall, Perth, 28 Sept., 1865, in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct., 1865. The last statement was greeted with "loud applause".

now grounded in a desperate need of money for that project. Confining his attention on that occasion to the future role of the educated and evangelized Negro within the South itself, Martin claimed that the Negroes, properly instructed, would be the best teachers for the rest of their race there, partly because of the difficulty which Northerners experienced in adapting to the Southern climate. He pertinently indicated that with a Federal Government constitutionally unable to interfere in the states' individual action to legislate, progress in operating such a scheme for the spreading of general and religious instruction among the freedmen depended entirely on organized philanthropic effort and as such, required the practical help of well-wishers in America and elsewhere. For the meeting's benefit, Martin's colleague in the AMA, the Rev. James A. Thome, also explained that the American Government had no very direct agency in educating and evangelizing the Negroes, and that benevolent Societies, of which the AMA was the most flourishing, were tackling the task under Government care and protection.[1]

By 1868, the AMA's shift to concentrating the emphasis of the Scottish public appeals for freedmen's aid squarely on the need for assistance in the process of "educating and evangelizing" the Negroes had definitely been completed. These twin concerns were the principal stated objectives of appeals launched at public meetings on behalf of the freedmen in Dundee and Glasgow at the beginning of that year.[2] On both occasions, Martin and Thome were present, and they kept the focus of their audiences' charitable interest firmly on the great missionary labours which still required to be carried

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1 Report of meeting in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, 7 Nov., 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 8 Nov., 1867.

2 The result of an appeal made at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868 was published in the Dundee Advertiser under the heading of contributions for the "Education and Evangelization" of the American freedmen - see ibid., 25 Feb., 1868 and donations raised at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in City Hall, Glasgow, 27 Jan., 1868 were listed in the Glasgow Herald, 28 Jan., 1868 as having been given for the "Education of American Freedmen".

through among the freed slaves of America. In May, 1868 Martin devoted his entire address at the Free Church General Assembly to the vital and urgent need for Scottish Christians to help with the work of giving the true faith to the vast majority of the American freedmen. Basing his appeal on a crusading Presbyterian evangelism,[1] he referred to the satisfactory number of teachers and Negro scholars in the South and pleaded with the Scots, as a people who had been free to enjoy the advantages of Presbyterianism through many generations, to help the Lord at that time against the mighty forces of opposition.[2]

Certainly the most explicit public statement of the AMA's deliberate, fundamental move in switching the basis of its campaign from the initial material needs of the freedmen to their spiritual and intellectual elevation was voiced, however, by one of the Association's deputies from Ohio, Professor Humiston. In late March, 1869, he addressed a very well attended public meeting in Edinburgh; and something of the influential sympathy which the freedmen's aid cause could still command at that late date can be gauged from the fact that the function was chaired by no less a person than the Free Church's Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish.[3] Having gratefully acknowledged the contributions which his Association had already received from "philanthropic Scots", Humiston stressed that that first appeal which had elicited the "noble Scottish response" had been for physical aid - for food, shelter and

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1 This facet of Martin's appeal and the importance for Scottish churchmen of a specifically Presbyterian missionary effort among the American freedmen is considered below, pp. 524, 496-539.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at the Free Church General Assembly, 26 May, 1868, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1868, p. 99.

3 See report of a public meeting to hear an address by Professor Humiston, Ohio, on the condition of the freedmen in America, held in the Saloon No. 5, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, 22 March, 1869, in Daily Review, 23 March, 1869.

clothing. But the early demand for assistance in providing relief of that nature was by that stage over, he indicated. Better housing had been secured for the Negroes, and schools were being established for them all over the South, educational institutions in which they were giving remarkable proof of their ability and their desire to learn.[1]

It was strongly emphasized that the money sent from Scotland in the past had not been in vain but had helped to bring about a great work. And Humiston evidently saw his task in 1869 in terms of easing Scottish public opinion into a realization that his Association's efforts among the freedmen had since then moved into another stage, but one which also could and should be substantially aided by generous Scottish support. The dominant object of the new phase of endeavour was, he informed his audience, not to provide physical relief or even, indeed, education for the freed Negroes but to "Christianize" them. Describing the race's great desire to acquire religious as well as general knowledge, he made a special appeal on behalf of the AMA as the organization "now doing half the work of aid", recommending its platform as broad and unsectarian[2] and as one characterized by a particularly strong bias towards religious education: "Some of these associations prohibited the teaching of the Bible or any religious teaching. The AMA made religious instruction its great feature".[3]

It is in the undeniable truth of Humiston's statement regarding the overwhelmingly "missionizing" approach of the AMA to its labours among the American freedmen that there lies the key to the heavy emphasis which we have seen the Association's deputies in Scotland place upon the task of "educating

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1 Ibid.

2 The validity of this claim can be called into question, however, on the strength of Humiston's own stress on this occasion upon the urgent need to establish the principles of the Protestant creed among the Negroes of the South; see in greater detail below, pp. 523-524.

3 Report of speech by Humiston in Daily Review, 23 March, 1869.

and evangelizing" its charges. The central commitment of the Association was in fact clearly identified and defined by one of the most perceptive Scots to travel in the South during Reconstruction, David Macrae. Having had the experience of visiting many of the AMA's educational institutions in various Southern states (and of seeing those in North Carolina in the company of one of its field agents who was inspecting schools and mission stations[1]), Macrae formed a very positive impression of the critical importance of the long-term policy attaching to the Association's immediate educational programme. "The great aim of the Association", he discerned, "is not to constitute itself a permanent agency for teaching and evangelizing the black race, but rather to prepare that race for teaching and evangelizing itself. All its operations have this object steadily in view".[2]

The nature of the appeals by Sella Martin and his colleagues in Scotland, especially in the later 1860s, fully bear our Macrae's conclusion. Along with the aim of Christianizing the mass of the Negro population in the South, it was, quite simply, the stated policy of the AMA to conduct missionary work among the American freedmen for the purpose of bringing higher Christian education to a certain proportion so that "the negro race could save itself", and work out its own future with its own teachers and educators.[3] In choosing to function along these lines, the Association was in fact merely adhering to its original principles, for it had been founded in 1846 to establish missions for "the propagation of a pure and free Christianity", and churches in foreign lands.[4] From an initial involvement in a wide field

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1 See Macrae, The American at Home, pp. 161-169.

2 Ibid., p. 171.

3 Augustus Field Beard, A Crusade of Brotherhood: A History of the American Missionary Association (Boston, 1909), p. 147.

4 Ibid., p. 31

of missionary endeavour,[1] the AMA - having actively campaigned against American slavery - had by 1867 come increasingly to concentrate its efforts upon the American freedmen; and eventually it withdrew from all foreign fields except Mendi in order to devote its labours exclusively to the Negroes in the Southern States.[2]

In 1866, it had 353 missionaries there, and was establishing an educational system solidly grounded in the concept of the schools as foundations for churches: "from the first the school was an embryo church".[3] At that time too, the Association opened up Fisk University for the purpose of training Negro freedmen as missionaries.[4] And when in 1873 the Jubilee Singers appeared in Britain on a fund-raising tour on behalf of building extensions at Fisk, they were duly taken under the wing of the Earl of Shaftesbury's Freedmen's Mission Aid Society, an auxiliary of the AMA dedicated to securing British and American co-operation in evangelizing the African race.[5] Therefore, by such gestures as attending the annual meeting of that Society, where a report was read which contained the hope that the American freedmen would become educated and evangelize Africa,[6] and by simply appearing in Britain as representatives of Fisk University, the Jubilee Singers doubly helped at a late stage to keep the missionary aspect of freedmen's aid in the forefront of public attention.

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1 At one early stage, the AMA had missions in the Sandwich Islands, the West Indies, Siam, Egypt, and among the American Indians - ibid., pp. 51-62, 65-93.

2 Ibid., pp. 169, 197.

3 Ibid., p. 139. Beard observed that the religious character and influence of the AMA's schools was so great that it was difficult to tell where church work ended and school work began - ibid., p. 201.

4 Ibid., pp. 150-151.

5 See Gustavus D. Pike, The Singing Campaign, pp. 31-51.

6 Ibid. p. 52.

Considerable attention has been paid to the standpoint of the AMA during the Reconstruction years and to the manner in which its deputies in Britain sought to reflect that standpoint because this particular organization was by far the most active and vigorous in sustaining its campaign for freedmen's aid within Scotland.[1] But while the Association's workers encouraged the Scottish people to contemplate the merits of contributing towards the spread of Christianity among the Negroes of America and, ultimately, of Africa, there are indications that the importance of the evangelization issue was also on occasion brought to their consideration by another agency, namely, by visiting American Presbyterian churchmen.

The clearest incidence of the latter influence being brought to bear in that way upon the thoughts of Scotsmen was afforded in the address delivered to the Free Church General Assembly in 1867 by the Rev. Dr. Ezra Eastman Adams of the New School Presbyterian Church of the United States. Occupying the conspicuous and responsible position of being the first delegate from his Church ever to appear at the Free Church's principal annual event, Adams concentrated his speech exclusively upon what he judged to be the sphere of the New School's "greatest work", its Home Mission. Much of the direct labour of the Home Mission was, he indicated, among the American freedmen, and it also contributed generously to other associations operating in that field. And as well as simply focussing attention on the laudable efforts of that organization, it would appear that Adams also sought implicitly to recommend its work to the practical support of the General Assembly as constituting a significant missionary endeavour which would achieve lasting gains for Presbyterianism in America.

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1 The dominance of the AMA's deputies on the Scottish scene is considered below, Chapter IX, pp. 25-27, 29-38, 90-102.

Accordingly, he enthusiastically gave account of the extremely satisfactory results which the Home Mission was helping to accomplish in the Southern states, listing the number of schools established, maintaining that very many of the former slaves had great intellectual potential, and stressing the intense desire among all of them for learning. "Let them remain free", he declared, "and they will be educated, whether we aid them or not".[1] The vital importance and relevance, in missionary terms, of engaging in a rapid, thorough programme of evangelizing and educating the black population in America was, however, still more forcefully demonstrated by Adams through his informative statement that at Lincoln University, Oxford, Pennsylvania, sixty out of one hundred young negroes were at that time being educated for the ministry, and that graduates from there were going South to preach and teach among their own people.

But most emphatically of all, the American delegate sought to impress upon the Free Church General Assembly the sense that a comprehensive, successful evangelization effort by the Home Mission would have the effect of very substantially increasing the congregational strength of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. He explained that the Home Mission had separated from a similar body, the American Home Missionary Society, in order to be able to "put...forth our denominational energy in our own way", and it would seem valid to conclude that within the organization, zeal in imparting religious instruction to the American Negroes was commensurate with zeal in advancing the cause of Presbyterianism. That basic equation was, in fact, a critically important factor in influencing Scottish outlooks towards the entire freedmen's aid movement, and it will be considered in that wider context presently.[2] At this point, however,

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Ezra Eastman Adams at the Free Church General Assembly, 27 May, 1867, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867. Original Emphasis.

2 See below, pp. 496-539.

it is worth noting in full Adams' observations on the recruitment of Negro converts to Presbyterianism since his remarks give some insight into the persuasive forces which were operating outside the framework of the official American freedmen's aid societies to convince Scots of the inestimable advantages for their brand of Christianity which could flow from a competent policy of evangelization in the Southern states. Thus the gentlemen of the Free Church, gathered together in all their staunch commitment to an austerely unemotional form of religious worship, heard Adams stress that in proportion as the freedmen of America were educated, they demanded more solid discipline, and "tended to a more scriptual view of truth":

> They have been wont to consider themselves Methodists, and taught that religion consists in violent emotion and demonstration; but as they grow in knowledge another element of their nature reveals itself. They discover something within their minds deeper than mere feeling. They can think and reason. They feel the need of cultivating the more solid part of their intellectual being, and that culture leads them to a more profound view of doctrinal truth. They are tending surely to Presbyterianism.[1]

And as late as 1871, an American delegate, the Rev. Dr. Beedle of Philadelphia, was still drawing the especial attention of the General Assembly to the American Presbyterian Church's huge, formidable task of evangelizing the "great masses of the people", and to the particular magnitude of the work which remained to be done in that connection in the South and West.[2]

The concept of the Southern states of America as a region where evangelization work, timely undertaken, would yield not only the immediately satisfactory prospect of millions of Negro members for the transatlantic Presbyterian Church but also the unique long-term benefit of an established Presbyterian missionary service staffed by trained black missionaries was

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1 Adams, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867, p. 68.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Beedle, Philadelphia, at the Free Church General Assembly, 26 May, 1871, in ibid., May, 1871, p. 237.

naturally, then, readily acceptable to, and indeed heartily welcomed by, Scottish churchmen. The fullest expression of the hopes which Presbyterian ministers held for the success of the work, and the support which they were prepared to give those Americans actively engaged in it, was contained in the formal statement of recognition and greeting drawn up by the Free Church in regard to the American deputies who attended the General Assembly of 1867. It fell to the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish to deliver the address at the end of the Assembly's proceedings in relation to America; and it was a speech which significantly and predominantly reflected the gathering's appreciation of the facts and plans described by Ezra Eastman Adams in his information concerning the Home Mission, and of the basis of the appeal which had been made by James A. Thome on behalf of the AMA.

Having recorded the "great satisfaction" of the Free Church at the visit of the deputies from the American Presbyterian Churches, the address went on to affirm that the General Assembly rejoiced "most especially" at the marked progress made by the United States since the end of the Civil War. Yet the great difficulties of organizing a new era in American Christianity and civilization were fully realized, it was stated, by Free Churchmen, and they would view with "intense interest" American efforts to train the freedmen in Christianity. In hailing as a good sign the fact that so much had already been done in that direction by freedmen's aid Societies and other agencies, the Free Church General Assembly showed that it had clearly absorbed and endorsed the message conveyed to it by the American speakers:

> ...[The members of the General Assembly] accept this [the progress already made among the American freedmen] as an augury with regard to the future of the African race in the acquisition of knowledge, the discharge of the duties of citizenship, and the development of Christian character. It is their earnest hope that the negro may not only be fitted for his new sphere of duty in America, but that he may be honoured of God to act an important part in the evangelisation of Africa, from which his forefathers were so

> cruelly torn, and they commend the Freedmen of America to the sympathies and prayers of the Scottish people.[1]

Later that year, the Principal of the Free Church College of Glasgow, the Rev. Dr. Patrick Fairbairn, substantially strengthened his Church's existing interest in the education and evangelization of the American Negroes by voicing his own personal deep concern for the advancement of these objectives. Presiding at the Glasgow meeting to hear an appeal by Thome to discuss the calling of a public freedmen's aid meeting, Fairbairn recalled how during his visit to the United States as a Free Church deputy some months previously he had seen the operations of the AMA and of certain other Societies undertaking the work of teaching and Christianizing the freedmen, and declared that he was as a consequence totally in sympathy with Thome's cause. The Negroes, he stressed, had a very strong claim to British sympathy and regard not merely because they had been placed in "very perilous circumstances" through having been called to the possession of rights and privileges which they were only partially ready to use: in addition to that, their situation threw open a wide missionary field for the spread of the gospel. And it was a work which in his view could not be done by the American Churches alone but must be shared by the whole Christian world: for while Fairbairn acknowledged that the duty of "educating and evangelizing" the Negroes belonged more directly to the people of the Southern States, he also perceived that the nature of the Southern whites' feelings towards the black population would in practice mean that the North would be chiefly responsible for these labours for many years to come. Under the circumstances, therefore, he argued that northern organizations such as the AMA had the greatest possible claim to British support.[2]

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1 Deliverance adopted in regard to the American deputies and read by the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish, in ibid., May, 1867, p. 492.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Patrick Fairbairn at a meeting in the Religious Institution Rooms, Glasgow, 7 Nov., 1867, in Glasgow Herald, 8 Nov., 1867.

By a somewhat similar process, David Macrae was subsequently to arrive at an identical conclusion. In his case, observations of the functioning of the AMA during his journeyings in the South resulted in a sympathy for the Association's aims which was strong enough to make him willing to act as its deputy on his return to Scotland. It was in that capacity that he addressed the Free Church's General Assembly in 1869, thereby adding yet another contribution to that denomination's store of information on the merits of supporting missionary work amongst the American freedmen. Drawing on the conditions which he had seen to obtain in the South in his travels there the previous year, Macrae brought to the attention of the Assembly the existence of "large masses" of Negroes who were eagerly anxious to receive the Gospel and to be given an education. Himself destined to be ordained as a United Presbyterian minister three years later, he enthusiastically recommended the scheme launched by the U.P. Students' Missionary Society for raising money to send Bibles to the freedmen,[1] and by way of emphasising the practical relevance of that project to the current situation in America, he described in glowing terms the progress achieved in evangelization by the AMA. All the Association's teachers were, he declared, "thoroughly satisfactory", and through their guidance and instruction, the freedmen had been shown to be capable of reaching a high degree of Christian culture. Having therefore furnished an "outsider's" report extremely creditable to the AMA, Macrae suggested that it was within the obligations of the Free Church to "do something practical" for the Association.[2]

But even before Macrae delivered his spirited appeal, the 1869 session of the Free Church General Assembly had been issued with a timely reference to

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1 For consideration of this scheme see below, Chapter IX pp. 34-38, 212-221.

2 Report of speech by David Macrae at the Free Church General Assembly, 28 May, 1869, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May 1869. pp. 217-218.

the continuous missionary work being undertaken by various agencies among the black population of the Southern States. Speaking as one of a deputation from the Old School Presbyterian Church of the United States, the Rev. Dr. Davidson included in his detailed survey of the position of his sect the fact that it had at that stage 165 missionaries employed amongst the freedmen. The Old School Presbyterians, he stated, had come to feel that an increasing obligation rested on them to look after the spiritual interests of the ex-slaves.[1]

It was accordingly in the light of this renewed strong stimulus to concentrate upon the Christianizing of the freedmen that the Moderator, the Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff, tailored his remarks in relation to American affairs. At the same time, however, it obviously gave him much personal satisfaction to discover that in the ranks of the Old School Presbyterians - that section of the American Presbyterian Church which had adhered to the more conservative line on the admittance of slaveholders to communion[2] - "there is a fire of missionary zeal burning strongly among you, so that now, forgetting the differences between North and South, and between black and white, you are setting yourselves to seek and to save souls". And with regard to Macrae's address, Moncrieff's comments revealed still more clearly an indication of the very substantial extent to which the Free Church was prepared to give its enthusiastic consideration and sympathy to the task of evangelizing the freed slaves of America. Macrae's descriptions, the Moderator declared, had been "more fitted" than anything else in the whole Assembly to "quicken our spiritual life and cherish our Christian zeal"; and he assured the acting deputy of the AMA of the Church's co-operation and

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Davidson, in ibid., p. 214.

2 See Staiger "Abolitionism and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-38" pp. 393-414.

support in advancing the Association's objectives. [1]

It becomes evident that one of the elements in Scottish Society which was most consistently subjected to emphases on the missionary aspect of freedmen's aid, and which was also among the most keenly interested in that aspect, was the Free Church. And on public platforms, its leading advocate of the freedmen's cause, Thomas Guthrie, vigorously reflected the eager mood of his denomination on that issue. Presiding over the public meeting called under Free Church auspices in Edinburgh in July, 1866, for instance, he impressed upon his audience that the Americans were endeavouring not only to train the Negro to undertake voluntary labour and to make him generally fit for freedom, but also "to make him a Christian, to make him a man". [2] He repeated these sentiments a year and a half later when at Dundee he stated that by supporting the freedmen's aid scheme Britain would help to bless the former slaves by contributing to the process of educating and elevating them, and making them into Christians.[3]

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1 Report of speech by the Moderator, the Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff, at the Free Church General Assembly, 28 May, 1869, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1869 pp. 218-219. For the essentially non-committal nature of the help offered by the Free Church, however, see below, Chapter IX, pp. 24-29.

The Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff was born in Edinburgh in 1809. Following studies at Edinburgh University and New College, Oxford, he was ordained at Baldernock in 1836. A year later he was translated to East Kilbride. He joined the Free Church at the Disruption, and in 1852 took up a charge at St. Cuthbert's Free Church, Edinburgh, thereby becoming successor to his grandfather, Sir Henry Moncrieff. In 1851 he succeeded to the baronetcy. From 1855, he was one of the principal clerks of the General Assembly and was for many years secretary of the Bible Board for Scotland. He became the Free Church's senior minister in 1872. An authority on Church Law, he was a warm advocate of union between the Free and U.P. Churches, and in 1876 assumed a leading role in the negotiations which resulted in the union of his Church with the Reformed Presbyterian Church. He died in 1883 - see Ewing, Annals of the Free Church, Vol. 1 p. 274.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in the Free Church Assembly Hall Edinburgh, 2 July, 1866, in Scotsman, 3 July, 1866.

3 Report of speech by Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause held in Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 10 Jan., 1868.

In attempting to reach the essence of the Free Church's enthusiastic concern for the project of evangelizing the American freedmen and training some of them to be missionaries among their own race, it is, however, of the utmost importance to recognize that in statements such as Guthrie's there was much more than merely a detached interest in encouraging the Americans in their laudable missionary work. At the very heart of the Free Church's approval of Scottish sympathy and support for the evangelization work among the Negroes in the Southern states was the concept of Britain and America as kindred nations which shared a joint mission to disseminate civil and religious enlightenment to all the peoples of the earth. Nor was this by any means a notion confined to the zealous evangelical minds of Scotland's dissenting Presbyterian ministers (although, understandably, these did tend to be among the individuals who spoke out most strongly and consistently in that vein). The prevalence of that outlook within the country, and the manner in which it was used to influence attitudes towards contributions for freedmen's aid, make it necessary to consider in some detail the nature of Scottish pronouncements on that theme, many of the most revealing of which were not made in direct reference to the freedmen's aid cause.

By the dawning of the Reconstruction era in America, it is clear that there was already firmly established in Scotland an entrenched belief that the Protestantism of Britain and the United States had a role to fulfil in spreading its religious principles and liberty throughout the entire world. Although enlightened Scottish Presbyterian churchmen of the period would probably scarcely have been anxious to acknowledge it, they owed a debt of sorts to Robert Knox who in his book on race had in 1850 advanced the theory that Northern Europeans, and especially Anglo-Saxons, had an innate racial character which made Protestantism particularly congenial to them, and who had also insisted that the Anglo-Saxons were inherently lovers of liberty,

independence and democracy, and hostile to dynastic and despotic government.[1] Ideas on these lines quickly achieved popularity in the United States where as early as 1851 the Rev. Robert Baird was arguing that the Anglo-Saxon people - and the American Republic - were divinely ordained to be Protestant.[2]

Already by the mid 1850s the Free Church had wholeheartedly accepted the proposition that the Anglo-Saxon race was the spearhead of Protestantism and that it was the chosen agency for spreading "light and liberty" to the nations. Towards promoting that role, Free Churchmen were extremely eager to establish a close association with Protestant forces in America: and at that time, the prospects for the achievement of a rewarding co-operation would appear to have been considered bright. An event which significantly encouraged optimism in that direction was the tremendously warm welcome given to the Rev. Dr. Duff, one of the Free Church's most eminent men of the period, during his visit to the United States in 1854. In an article loudly celebrating the success of the trip, the Church's Home and Foreign Record unambiguously identified the root of its satisfaction through its declaration that the nature of Duff's reception and the honours showered upon him "shew (sic) that the Anglo-Saxon race is approximating its high mission as the predestined propagators (sic) of light and liberty over the earth". It was hoped that "great political advantages" would stem from the visit - that the closer ties forged with America as a result of it and of similar journeys in the future would help to establish a mighty, Protestant bond between Britain and the United States, one which would not only strengthen British defences against such "colossal despotisms" as Russia but would also serve to advance the cause of freedom and Christian truth on a universal scale. Consideration of Duff's experience gave the Free Church room to announce that the American

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1 See Knox, The Races of Men, p. 46. Knox identified the Anglo-Saxons as "democrats by their nature, the only democrats on the earth, the only race which truly comprehends the meaning of the word liberty".

2 See Gossett, Race, p. 185.

people, "still animated by the hero-spirit of the pilgrim fathers", would "never...stand aside and see Britain put down by the hordes of Roman or Muscovite despotism. The interests of liberty and religion, in every quarter of the globe, are bound up with a firm alliance betwixt the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race".[1]

Both within the circles of the Scottish Presbyterian Church and among the Scottish public, assertions and aspirations of such a nature gained an added impetus following the Civil War, the abolition of slavery having removed a serious blotch on America's reputation as the foremost land of equality and freedom and having paved the way for an unencumbered, unembarrassing association between Britain and the United States in educating and guiding the world in the paths of the true religion and of civil and political liberty. And throughout the Reconstruction years, the quintessential spirit of the conviction that Britain and America were cast as guides for the world was perhaps nowhere more positively and lucidly set forth than in a statement by the Liberal M. P. for Glasgow, W. Graham. In early 1869, it was Graham's task to deliver a speech following the presentation of an address to the new United States minister, Reverdy Johnson, at a public meeting held under the auspices of the Cobden Club in the City Hall, Glasgow. To a large extent, the occasion itself demanded that he concentrate fairly solidly upon the close links and friendship between Britain and America, and he certainly fashioned his speech around that theme.

Modern Britain, he suggested, had lost its old jealousy of America's greatness and only wanted to see the high level of development and prosperity which was the"inevitable destiny" of the United States. Britons saw in America the home of many of their countrymen, and how it had given them a

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1 Home and Foreign Record of the Free Church of Scotland, Vol. 4, August 1853-July 1854; May, 1854 issue, p. 277.

good life and a bright future: "We think of her as the ark in which civil, religious and political freedom found a refuge when the old world cast them out, in which they have grown to such gigantic proportions". And, in concert with Britain, the United States had "stupendous destinies" to realize:

> We see that in our common language she possesses the key to the whole intellectual wealth of the world, and in our common Christianity, the salt by which alone the vigour, the wealth and the intellect of States can be kept sweet and wholesome (Cheers). Believing as we do that the institutions of Christian freedom and human progress have to a large extent been committed to the American people jointly with ourselves for the future, as they were committed by God to us in the past, how can we do otherwise than bid them God-speed in their noble task without one jealous feeling or one selfish regret (Cheers).[1]

In rather more concise manner, similar sentiments were voiced by radical elements of the secular press. Also concerned with recognizing the arrival of Reverdy Johnson as the new United States Minister, the Reformer, in only its second issue, welcomed him primarily because he seemed to be a peace-maker and as such, likely to advance that "mutual good understanding" between Britain and America which constituted "the best guarantee for the progress of civil and religious freedom and prosperity in the world.[2] And the Glasgow Sentinel had very much earlier set on record its conviction that the United States and Britain had a joint role to perform as harbingers of enlightenment. It was Lincoln's death which in early May, 1865 prompted the Sentinel to stress the extreme desirability of close, deep friendship with America, and to announce that amity between "the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race" was vitally necessary "to the peace, progress and liberties

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1 Report of speech by W. Graham at a public meeting for the presentation of an address to Reverdy Johnson, held in City Hall, Glasgow, 9 Feb., 1869, in Scotsman, 10 Feb., 1869.

2 Reformer, 22 Aug., 1869.

of the human race".[1]

For those within Scotland who felt a basic warm affection and admiration for the structure of government and society in the United States, it was naturally immensely satisfying to contemplate the prospect of America's uniting with Britain in a massive missionary effort for the benefit of all mankind. Particularly enthusiastic in indulging their hopes and beliefs on that score were Scots who visited the United States during the Reconstruction years, carrying with them pre-existing favourable attitudes towards the country. One of the more interesting of these was the Liberal M.P. for Dundee, the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, who embarked upon his American trip in late August, 1865. Kinnaird's views on America were evidently sufficiently strong and sufficiently well publicized to have become familiar in his constituency, and, perhaps, within Scotland as a whole: noting his departure, the Perthshire Courier commented, for instance, that he was "long known to have a warm sympathy for the United States" and that he would be sure to be exceedingly well received there.[2] In the period following the Civil War, he was to be active (as we have already observed[3]) in securing the freedom of Sella Martin's sister and her family, and ultimately he became treasurer of the Freedmen's Mission Aid Society, the British organization which in the mid-1870s functioned in association with the AMA for the specific purpose of raising British help for the training of American Negro missionaries.[4]

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1 Glasgow Sentinel, 6 May, 1865.
Essentially the same viewpoint would appear to have been shared by at least a section of the much less radically orientated newspaper press in Scotland: see, for instance, the Aberdeen Herald, 22 May, 1869, which defined America as "our most natural ally in the advancement of humanity", and at an even more localised - and Whig - level, the Banffshire Journal, which on 14 Feb., 1871, advised that good feelings should not be disturbed between "the two peoples...who, united, ought to be able greatly to influence the progress of events throughout the world".

2 Perthshire Courier, 29 Aug., 1865.

3 See above, Chapter III, p. 315.

4 See Pike, The Singing Campaign, p. 51.

Something of the nature of the motivating interest which led to his involvement in the latter task was perhaps illustrated in a speech which he made to the annual meeting of the National Bible Society of Scotland at Glasgow in 1870. Speaking as President of the Society, Kinnaird put forward the view that the British empire was, in its greatness, "a visible interposition of the hand of God, exerted towards the diffusion of the Gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth".[1] And certainly, it had been simply a variation on that basic role which he had envisaged in the autumn of 1865 when, travelling with Morton Peto in America, he exuberantly recorded his impression that as "one great Protestant people, with one heart and one feeling" America and Britain could together "defy all the powers of Europe" and carry a dominating influence in religion, art, science and commerce all over the world.[2]

At about the same time as Kinnaird, Laurence Oliphant, the adventurous Liberal M.P. for Stirling Burghs, was also in the United States, paying a return visit to the country which he had first seen in 1854 and subsequently toured (for part of the way in the company of the London Times editor, John Delane), in 1856.[3] It has already been noted[4] that on his return from the post-war trip Oliphant delivered at Dunfermline a lengthy, analytical speech on "The Political Condition of the United States" which when later published as a pamphlet, achieved a considerable degree of popular attention and acclaim. In the concluding section of his carefully reasoned lecture, he was at pains to impress upon his audience the validity of his argument that while existing

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1 Speech by the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird at the annual meeting of the National Bible Society of Scotland, held in the Trades' Hall, Glasgow, 31 Jan., 1870, in Dundee Courier, 1 Feb., 1870.

2 Perthshire Courier, 10 October, 1865.

3 See M. Oliphant, Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant, pp. 62-74, 94-112.

4 See above, Chapter III, pp. 150-151.

British political institutions remained best for Britain, the retention of Republican institutions were likewise absolutely vital for the smooth governance of the United States. From the basis of the belief that both countries were therefore at that time functioning in the manner which realized their maximum potential as forces for good, Oliphant accordingly stated his conviction that the Anglo-Saxon race was the only one which could spread the principles of liberty and constitutional freedom far and wide over the earth. "England and America", he declared, "should go hand in hand in the interests of the world's civilisation and the world's liberties".[1]

It was half a decade later before James Macaulay, the London-based Scottish journalist, made his way to Reconstruction America, but his assessment of the mood and situation there led him to the same conslusions as those earlier formed by Oliphant and Kinnaird. "The alliance of America and England", he asserted, "can never be for such miserable purposes [as the maintenance of the balance of power] , but for worthy objects of freedom and civilization through the world".[2] And the published record of his journey ended on the confident pronouncement that it was the two countries working in unison which would ensure the "world's progress" in liberty and good government.[3]

We have already seen how as early as the mid-1850s W.E. Baxter's experience of America had produced in him the cast-iron conviction that the Anglo-Saxon race was destined to dominate the United States and to spread its influence throughout the world.[4] Almost fifteen years later,

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1 Report of speech by Laurence Oliphant on "The Political Condition of the United States" in the Music Hall, Dunfermline, 29 Jan., 1866, in Dundee Advertiser, 2 Feb., 1866.

2 Macaulay, Across the Ferry, p. 299.

3 Ibid., p. 424.

4 See above, Chapter I, pp. 27-28.

at the very period when he was appearing on public platforms in Scotland as a speaker advocating generous support for the freedmen's aid cause, he reasserted and expanded these views in an essay on commercial and political relations with America which he submitted as an entry for the Cobden Club's golden medal. It was that effort, written in 1868, which formed the substance of an address delivered by him to the Working Men's Club of Dundee in the autumn of 1873. Suggesting to his audience that there had emerged in Britain a "new school of politicians" who were not content merely with provincial or insular improvement but who wanted to raise the condition of all mankind, Baxter stressed the vital role which a close Anglo-American connection must have in furthering their designs: "The more it is rendered evident that the Anglo-Saxon race is eventually to become dominant throughout the globe, carrying its language, religion, manners and institutions over every sea, the more important it becomes that the two great branches of that race should better understand and like each other".[1]

Something of the strength with which the concept of Britain and America as guides for the world persisted into the later 1870s in Scotland was also reflected in certain of the addresses delivered in the presence of ex-President Grant during his visit to the country in 1877. Honouring the guest as the first American to receive the freedom of Inverness, the Provost of the town drew warm applause from the other civic dignitaries present, for instance, when he observed that throughout his Presidency, Grant had "manifested [his] desire that the two great English speaking nations should live in bonds of amity, and thereby show the world how true

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1 Report of address by W.E. Baxter on "The Best Way of developing improved political and commercial relations between Great Britain and the United States of America" delivered at the Working Men's Club, Dundee, 13 Oct., 1873, in Scotsman, 14 Oct., 1873.

progress can alone be made and sustained".[1] And a few days later, Glasgow's Lord Provost also received applause from the spectators (who on that occasion included members of the general public) when having presented the burgess ticket to Grant, he concluded his address with an expression of hope that the union between America and Britain, which Grant had so admirably strengthened, would continue, since "it is the guarantee that civilisation and liberty shall spread over the world".[2]

The earnest vigour with which they put forward their convictions suggests that to a greater or lesser extent, all the Scots who reasoned in that way were seeking to imply that a definite responsibility as well as a prestigious glory attached to Britain and America in regard to the establishment of a joint missionary effort to spread their brand of Christianity, freedom and egalitarianism across the earth. A particularly clear statement of the manner in which such a responsibility could be recognized at that period was in fact afforded in a speech at the beginning of 1872 by Robert A. Macfie, Liberal M.P. for Leith Burghs. Addressing the Musselburgh Young Men's Society on the subject of Britain's contemporary position and prospects, Macfie suggested that "This island is now in the centre, not of world-wide empire such as the ancients conceived, but of Christian civilisation and of beneficient influence". Significantly, it would appear to have been his belief that the full strength of Britain's force for good in the world could best be exerted in conjunction with complementary efforts in the same direction by the United States. Thus, both countries had in his view a massive responsibility to discharge: "The two English speaking nations realise the fabled shoulders of Atlas that

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1 Report of address by the Provost of Inverness on presenting Grant with the freedom of the burgh, in ibid., 10 Sept., 1877.

2 Report of address by the Lord Provost of Glasgow on presenting Grant with the freedom of the city at a ceremony held in the City Hall, Glasgow, 13 Sept., 1877, in ibid., 14 Sept., 1877.

together sustain the globe. Surely here is transcendant conjoint responsibility. The sister dominions exert not mere brute force. We are civilisers. We ought to be Christianisers".[1]

In his emphasis upon the urgent need for Britain and America to fulfil their mutual responsibilities in diffusing the light of the true Christian faith and of civilization to all the corners of the earth, Macfie was approximating closely to the attitude of a vocal section of contemporary Scottish churchmen: for it has already been mentioned[2] that in Scotland ministers of religion played an instrumental role in contributing to the strength of that particular climate of opinion regarding the Anglo-American relationship during the Reconstruction years. It is clear that Free Churchmen in particular, carrying on the conviction held by their Church at the time of the Rev. Dr. Duff's visit to America in 1854, were firmly wedded to the idea that the United States and Britain, working in collaboration, had a divinely ordained mission to civilize and Christianize the world according to the tenets of democratic, libertarian government and society, and Protestant, or more precisely, Presbyterian, religion. Their continuing attachment to that concept was repeatedly displayed, for example, in proceedings at the General Assemblies during the 1860s and 1870s.

At the very first Assembly to be held after the end of the American Civil War, the Free Church promptly set on record its expectations concerning the joint missionary labours of its own country and the transatlantic Republic. In the address to the Evangelical Churches in the United States,

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1 Report of lecture by Robert A. Macfie on "A Glance at the Position and Prospects of the Nation", delivered to Musselburgh Young Men's Society in Musselburgh Town Hall, 10 Jan., 1872, in Daily Review, 11 Jan., 1872. Provost Laurie of Musselburgh introduced Macfie, intimating that his father was an important merchant in Leith, and that Macfie himself had acquired a large fortune and spent a good deal of his time working to benefit the city of Liverpool.

2 See above, Chapter I, pp. 29- .

presented by an appointed committee in May, 1865, stress upon the advantages which would accrue to both Scottish and American Presbyterians from increased contacts with each other was rounded off by a pertinent reminder: "And let us ever realise the solemn fact that, humanly speaking, the Christian interests of the world hang mainly on the efforts put forth by Christ's people in Great Britain and America".[1] Three years later, the General Assembly heard the Free Church's Moderator, the Rev. William Nixon of Montrose, follow up his recommendation of Sella Martin's appeal for the evangelizing work of the AMA with an expression of pleasure at the good relations existing between the American and Scottish Churches, a statement which again placed emphasis upon the concept of a peculiar Anglo-American mission. Identifying the British and the Americans as "the people that jointly hold in their hands the key of the world's destiny, so far as it is in human hands at all", Nixon urged that the two countries should stand by each other in "improving the glorious opportunities of sending over the earth God's moral agencies to scatter the forces of darkness still covering the earth".[2] And personal experience of the vitality of American life and religion, gleaned from his three months' sojourn in the country as a member of the Church's 1870 deputation to the General Assembly of the reunited American Presbyterian Church, prompted the Rev. William Arnot, who during the 1860s had been a prominent figure on the platform at Edinburgh freedmen's aid meetings, to assure the Assembly in 1872 that America and Britain occupied a place no two nations of the world had ever occupied before, and that they "ought to learn what God meant" by placing them in that unique position.[3]

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1 Draft of an address to the Evangelical Churches of the United States read by Mr. Nelson, Greenock, at the Free Church General Assembly, 30 May, 1865, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1865, p. 272.

2 Report of speech by the Moderator, the Rev. William Nixon, Montrose, at the Free Church General Assembly, 26 May, 1868, in ibid., May, 1868, p. 100.

3 Report of speech by the Rev. William Arnot at the Free Church General Assembly, 30 May, 1872, in ibid., May, 1872, p. 234.

Accompanying Arnot to the United States as a Free Church deputy in 1870 had been the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie, and in the autumn of that year, he began in the Sunday Magazine a series of papers on his visit. In the very first of these, he made it immediately plain that the most important conclusion which he had arrived at as a result of his trip was that there must be a steady increase in friendship and goodwill between Britain and America in order to benefit the world through the dissemination of the political and religious influences of these two countries: "For the highest welfare of the world, few things seem to me more essential at the present time than a cordial understanding and friendly co-operation between Great Britain and America. Were these two nations... to direct their unrivalled energies to mutual destruction...the world would be thrown back a century in civilisation and Christian progress".[1]

Blaikie had been requested to write his articles on America by the Sunday Magazine's editor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie.[2] And perhaps the most persistent Free Church exponent of these views on the joint destiny of Britain and the United States was Guthrie himself. Certainly his was the most significant voice in terms of the occasions on which he chose publicly to deliver such opinions, for it was his custom vigorously to proclaim the mutual role of the two countries as guides for the world in the course of his

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1 Blaikie, "America and the Americans: Impressions of a Three Months' Visit in 1870" in Sunday Magazine, Oct., 1870, p.1.

On the occasion of the centenary of the American Republic six years later, the Sunday Magazine (editor by that time unknown) carried similar sentiments in an article by an anonymous author who declared that "America and this country, there is good reason to believe, will now go hand in hand together in promoting the Christian civilization of the world" - see "The American Centennial", in ibid., 1876, p. 789.

In giving consideration to comment upon America during the Reconstruction years published in the Sunday Magazine and in Good Words, it is worth noting that both magazines circulated widely in the United States from 1865 onwards, the publisher Alexander Strahan (of Edinburgh and London and a native of Tain, Ross-shire), having in that year established a house in New York from which he issued them and his Contemporary Review - see Frank L. Mott, A History of American Magazines 1865-1885 (Cambridge Massachusetts, 1957), Vol. 3, p. 278.

2 See Blaikie, "America and the Americans" in Sunday Magazine, Oct., 1870,p.1.

appeals on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause. We have already seen that he was one of the Scottish speakers readiest to offer the attractions of increased amity and co-operation with America as a stimulus for his country's support of the freedmen's fund.[1] What was particularly significant, however, about Guthrie's stress on the friendship aspect was the fact that he elaborated upon it to assert that the achievement of a permanently close working relationship between Britain and the United States was a matter of the most critical importance to the wellbeing and progress of the human race.

Thus, addressing the freedmen's aid meeting held in Edinburgh in December, 1865, he advised his listeners not only to demonstrate their happiness at the new post-emancipation links binding the British and Americans but also to show that they rejoiced in the "noble future" which lay before America and in the fact that, along with Britain, she could stand before the world as "a great, free, Protestant, enlightened country".[2] His hopes that Scottish participation in the freedmen's aid movement could significantly help to increase friendship between Britain and America and thereby advance the mutual mission of these two nations were yet more explicitly stated at a Free Church meeting for freedmen's aid in the summer of 1866. There (to thunderous applause) he concluded his appeal for generous contributions to the cause with the exhortation that it ought to be the concern of all present to "confound the hellish schemes of the wicked men who, fiend-like, can cooly contemplate a rupture between the two countries", and who would not hesitate to start a quarrel between "the two nations that are the very hopes of the world, to which the world

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1 See above, pp. 463-464.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in the Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 5 Dec., 1865, in Scotsman, 6 Dec., 1865.

looks panting for life, light and liberty - an event that were the greatest calamity that could befall this earth, and the greatest and the most cursed sin that any man could commit".[1] And at Dundee in 1868, he openly declared that by assisting in the work of educating and evangelizing the freedmen, Scotland would be doing its part in bringing America and Britain together to "fight God's battles for liberty and light against a whole world in arms".[2]

From the examples already considered, it would seem, then, that the Free Church had more to say on the concept of a joint mission for America and Britain than did the U.P. Church. In a sense, this was perhaps rather curious since the United Presbyterian was the great missionary denomination in Scotland. However, its scope would appear to have been restricted more to thinking in terms of practical missionary work in specific areas, with a concentration on the furtherance of objectives in that sphere rather than a concentration, after the fashion of the Free Church, on the establishment of a great Protestant force comprised of the combined strength of American and British Protestantism (and especially Presbyterianism), with the world as its missionary field.[3] But at the same time, the United Presbyterians were by no means totally disregarding of

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1 Report of speech by Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 2 July, 1866, in ibid., 3 July, 1866.

2 Report of speech by Guthrie at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 6 Jan., 1868, in Dundee Advertiser, 10 Jan., 1868

3 In this connection it is worth noting that the Free Church apparently had a tradition of "thinking big": see, for instance, Hanham, Scottish Nationalism, p. 72, where it is argued that the Free Church looked favourably upon the Union with England because "Free Churchmen, in particular, riding on the crest of a wave of religious fervour, felt that the Union gave them the opportunity to share in the management of a world-wide empire and to carry Free Church principles to the far corners of the earth". See also Hanham, "Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism", p. 149.

the notion that Britain and the United States had a common task to fulfil in spreading liberty and religion across the earth, For instance, in August, 1867, the Church's monthly magazine expressed the hope that the warm welcome given to Garrison would greatly help to improve Anglo-American relations and hasten the process of uniting the two nations in "a Christian crusade" against ignorance, oppression and immorality in the world.[1] And almost a decade later, the centenary of American independence prompted an extremely favourable comment upon the transatlantic Republic in which was included the conviction that a great force for good resided in the Christians of Britain and the United States. The "destiny of the world", it was decided, seemed to depend upon the British and American clergymen and missionaries who were working together.[2]

VI The preservation and strengthening of America as a bastion of Protestantism: the anxious concern to curb the influence of Roman Catholicism in the United States

The very kernel of all the vigorous advocacy of closer friendship and association with America (and, indeed, of the Scottish dissenting Churches' drive to establish closer relationships with American Presbyterians) for the purpose of developing a joint mission was Scottish recognition of the United States as a bastion of Protestantism, and a desire to see it maintained as such. Both Guthrie and Baxter, for instance, antedated their involvement in the freedmen's aid cause and their public calls for closer links between Britain and America during the Reconstruction years by firm approval of what they saw as the essentially Protestant base of the Republic. Speaking at a meeting held in Edinburgh in 1859 to express sympathy for the visiting New York abolitionist clergyman, the Rev. Dr. Cheever, Guthrie had made it plain that he contemplated the eventual achievement of emancipation in

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1 United Presbyterian Magazine, Aug., 1867, p. 383

2 Ibid., Aug., 1876, p. 381.

America not only in terms of a triumph for freedom and humanity, but as a triumph which would make for the glorification of transatlantic Protestantism. Professing his highest regard for the American people, he declared that if the blot of slavery were removed from their midst, "it would be a happy day for the world when they march south to Cape Horn with their Protestant truth and liberty".[1] His dominant pre-Civil War vision was therefore of the people of the United States successfully conducting a Protestant missionary effort through the whole American continent. And it becomes possible to see how, seizing the unique opportunities afforded by the freedmen's aid campaign, Guthrie was able during the Reconstruction era to extend that notion into a wider concept of a joint Anglo-American mission to spread Protestantism and its integral virtues of liberty and democracy all over the world.

His lengthy and exhaustive travels in the United States in 1853-1854 had given W.E. Baxter the happy reassurance that "New England influence carrie[d] the day everywhere" and that despite the unceasing immigration of Irish Catholics and German Rationalists, the great body of the people were "persuaded that the pillars of their national greatness rest on the Protestant faith".[2] Baxter's account of his American trip was in fact imbued with a very potent bias against Roman Catholicism, brought resoundingly to the surface by the heavy concentration on its progress and prospects which he had found throughout the United States at that time. Strongly denouncing it as a faith inimical to both religious and political liberty, he was thoroughly convinced that "neither zeal nor good policy can

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1 Report of speech by Guthrie delivered on 22 Dec., 1859, in Dr. Cheever and American Slavery...(Pamphlet), p. 12.
Guthrie informed his audience that he believed the American slaves were "as much entitled to rise against slavery, and burst their fetters, as are the Italians to resist the Pope of Rome" - ibid., p. 12.

2 Baxter, America and the Americans, p. 7.

obtain for Roman Catholicism a permanent ascendancy in any part of the United States. It is at variance with the institutions of the country; it is alien to the sentiments of the community...Political liberty and ecclesiastical despotism cannot well co-exist for any lengthened period". The United States, he went so far as to predict, would soon be the scene of Anglo-Saxon Protestants' most signal and important victory over Roman Catholicism.[1]

That this animus was still very much alive in the 1860s was demonstrated in remarks made by Baxter in the course of a lecture on the Civil War delivered in Dundee in 1862. Warning his audience against the tendency to be influenced into support of the Confederacy, he drew a parallel between the Protestant and Roman Catholic cantons of Switzerland and the Northern and Southern states of America. Travellers to the former country, he declared, often contrasted the energy, prosperity and industrial progress of the Protestant cantons with the "material blight" and the deadening and weakening of the people's activity in the Roman Catholic ones, and the difference between the Northern and Southern states was very much of the same kind.[2] Since for Baxter the society of the slaveholding South was anathema, the implied indictment of the effects of the Roman Catholic faith on the quality of life was in this instance very great indeed. Bearing these facts in mind, it must be noted that his subsequent appeals on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause were made not only with a sincere view to helping the freed slaves but also with an eye to aiding the Americans "as fellow Protestants, as those who enjoy the same religious and civil

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1 Ibid., pp. 155-157. Baxter devoted just over thirty pages (pp. 126-157) to religion in America - the greatest number given over to any one subject (slavery merited twenty-eight).

2 Baxter, The Social Condition of the Southern States of America (a lecture delivered in the Corn Exchange Hall, Dundee on 5 Nov., 1862, and published in pamphlet form London, 1862), p. 4.

privileges".[1]

There was, naturally, much satisfaction among Scottish Presbyterians that so strong and so huge a country should be, by and large, a stronghold of the true faith. And the abolition of slavery could only serve to tighten and consolidate the grip of that faith within the boundaries of the United States. Speaking on separate occasions at meetings to benefit the freedmen's fund, both Guthrie and the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod rejoiced over the fillip and the impetus for collaboration which the Protestant forces on both sides of the Atlantic had received from emancipation in America. In the course of his speech at a public lecture in early 1866, Guthrie jubilantly welcomed the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment at least partially "for the sake of our common Protestantism, which slavery disgraced in that country."[2] Somewhat earlier, at a public meeting for the freedmen's cause in Glasgow in the autumn of 1865, Macleod had raised a rather lonely voice from the Church of Scotland side to put forward his belief in the dawn of a new Protestant era for America and Britain, an era marked by the full measure of peace and amity "which ought to exist between two of the most Protestant nations of the world". To "loud and continued cheering", he predicted that there would be an "irresistible impulse" exerted on mankind by the two nations, "the most

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1 Report of chairman's speech by W.E. Baxter at a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Ward Chapel, Dundee, 26 Sept., 1865, in Dundee Advertiser, 29 Sept., 1865.
Of some significance is the fact that the same consideration weighed heavily with at least a portion of those Scots who donated large sums to aid the sufferers of the Chicago fire in 1871. Thus at a public meeting called to take steps to raise funds for that cause, Provost Leslie of Aberdeen included in his appeal for contributions the fact that the victims were "fellow-Protestants" - see report of a meeting in the Music Hall, Aberdeen 21 Oct., 1871, in Aberdeen Journal, 25 Oct., 1871.

2 Report of speech by Guthrie at a lecture by the Rev. A.L. Simpson for the benefit of the freedmen's aid cause, held in Edinburgh, 4 Jan., 1866, in Edinburgh Courant, 5 Jan., 1866.

Protestant and the most prosperous on the face of the earth".[1] And the bond of a common religious creed as one of the strongest of the bonds uniting Britain and America was an idea gladly and unhesitatingly accepted by Scots throughout the Reconstruction years. Visiting the United States just after the close of that era, for instance, Robert Pullar of Pullar's dyeworks, Perth (whose father, John Pullar, had chaired the meeting for freedmen's aid at Perth in 1865 and whose uncle Laurence had also attended[2]) came back urging that the British people extend fullest sympathy to their American kindred whose institutions, manners and customs were "far more like ours than those of the militarily oppressed and priest-ridden peoples of Europe".[3]

It was the recognition of the powerful Protestant character and ethos of America which in the years immediately prior to 1870 produced within the ranks of Scottish Presbyterian churchmen such euphoria over the moves towards reunion between the Old and New School Presbyterians in the United States. Thus, the Free Church's magazine, the Presbyterian, eagerly desired the accomplishment of a reconciliation between the two American sects not only for the salutary example which would thereby be set for union movements in the Scottish Presbyterian Church but also for "the blessed impulse and ascendancy to the Presbyterianism of the New World" which would result from it.[4] The existing Protestant ascendancy in

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod at a public meeting held on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause in City Hall, Glasgow, 22 Sept., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865.

2 See report of freedmen's aid meeting in Perthshire Courier, 3 Oct,, 1865.

3 Robert Pullar, Notes of an American Trip: An address delivered in Free St. Leonard's Church Hall, Perth, on Saturday, 22 November, 1879 (published in pamphlet form, Perth 1879), p. 32.
Robert Pullar had joined his father's firm as a partner in 1848 - see Laurence Pullar, Lengthening Shadows, p. 38.

4 Presbyterian, July, 1868, No. 3 p. 5. When the reunification of the Old and New School Presbyterians of America was finally achieved in 1870, the magazine hailed it as an occasion "unexampled in the history of Presbyterianism, perhaps of the Christian Church" - see ibid., July, 1870, New Series, No. 3, Vol. 2 p. 58.

America was something for which the Presbyterians of Scotland were profoundly grateful, a jewel bestowed by the deity which must be thankfully cherished and rigorously defended. Returning from his attendance at the actual reunion ceremony of the Old and New Schools at Philadelphia in 1870 with an almost overwhelming sense of "the hand of God" in the progress of American civilization, the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie stated with a fine directness and clarity sentiments which would appear to have been shared by a very considerable proportion of both churchmen and laymen in contemporary Scotland:

> We see the fresh foot-prints of Providence on all these American shores; their very prosperity is solemnising; it is so plain that God has specially prospered and multiplied the people, with a view to His designs; if they thwart these designs, who shall measure their guilt? If they fulfil them, who shall set the limits to their future?[1]

Inevitably, the conviction that America was a land chosen and favoured by the Almighty for His special purposes meant in effect the conviction that the nation was a pillar of the Protestant faith and destined as such to play a major global missionizing role. And more than that, the weight of the Protestant forces in the United States could be seen as a vital bulwark against the threatening advance of certain other dangerous creeds: hence Blaikie could not discuss the state of religion in America without strongly emphasizing the importance of transatlantic Protestantism in keeping at bay the forces of Roman Catholicism throughout the world. Gratefully giving consideration to the British origins of America, he speculated on the disastrous consequences which would have followed from a successful French or Spanish colonization of the country:

> How different would have been the relation of the world's Protestantism and Popery...It is the Protestantism of America that makes something like an equipoise between the

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1 Blaikie, "America and the Americans" in Sunday Magazine, Oct., 1870, p. 2.

> Protestantism and Popery of the world; or, at least, prevents its Popery from holding a preponderance so great as to overshadow its Protestantism.[1]

Blaikie's comments in that regard are very significant because the real root of all the laudations of American Protestantism, and the most dynamic factor behind the burning desire to see a union of American Presbyterian forces and the strengthening of Scottish and American bonds into "a happy Pan-Presbyterianism"[2] at that time, was the tremendous animus towards the spectre of Roman Catholicism in the United States and the fears in some quarters that it was beginning to gain ground there. It is unnecessary here to dwell at length on the extreme hostility manifested by Scottish Presbyterians (and by Evangelical and Voluntary Presbyterians in particular) to transatlantic Roman Catholicism since the sentiments expressed by them in that connection were essentially reflections of the well known sentiments which they evinced towards Roman Catholicism in Britain. At the same time, however, it is hoped to demonstrate that concern regarding the possible spread of the Roman Catholic faith in America was a direct and important factor in influencing certain Scots actively to encourage British support for the education and evangelization of the freedmen. In order to appreciate something of the general attitude out of which that specific stimulus for participation in the freedmen's aid cause sprang, in order, that is, to appreciate the intensity of the anxiety felt by Free Churchmen and other zealous upholders of Presbyterianism to keep America a Protestant country, it does therefore become necessary to note the opinions and fears of some of those surveying the American scene in the post-Civil War years.

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1 Ibid., p. 3.

2 See the Rev. Dr. John Edmond, "America and the Americans" in United Presbyterian Magazine, Dec., 1872, p. 540.

As we have already seen from the writings of W.E. Baxter, it did not require an alarmist belief that Roman Catholicism was on the upsurge in America to induce anti-Catholic Scots vigorously to condemn the influence which it exerted on United States society. Indeed, the comments and conclusions voiced by Baxter in the mid-1850s were still being substantially reiterated by observers almost two decades after. Following his 1871 trip to the United States, James Macaulay, for instance, was confident that the progress of America as a free country would continue apace paralleled by the progress of Protestantism and the decline of "Popery". He remained, however, bitterly critical of Roman Catholicism and of other religious "infidelities" which tended, he believed, to undermine God's truth in America.[1] Three years later, the Reformed Presbyterians, one of the most staunchly Presbyterian of all Scottish sects, turned their attention to a consideration of the relevant strength of the Catholic faith in the United States and they, too, pronounced themselves convinced that "Romanism" would not gain ascendancy in a land where freedom, education and Protestantism were destined to overthrow it. Nevertheless, they deeply deplored any sign, however ephemeral, that Rome might be recouping its losses in the Old World by gains in the New.[2]

Nor was the secular press totally unconcerned about the position of the Roman Church in America during the Reconstruction years. Preserving something of the religious bias and fervour which had been instilled into it by its late U.P. and later Baptist editor, William McCombie, the Aberdeen Free Press, for instance, carried in 1875 an editorial which, while confident enough that Roman Catholicism would not become a dangerous political force in the United States, loudly praised the Republican party

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1 Macaulay, Across the Ferry, pp. 365-379.

2 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, "Is Romanism on the Increase in America?", July, 1874, pp. 267-269.

for political wisdom in the measures it was taking to identify the Democrats with "the upholders of Vaticanism and its victims". The champion of religious dissent and political radicalism at home, the Free Press concentrated its focus upon the evils engendered by the influence of Catholicism in the political sphere. "Nothing", it declared, "could be better fitted to unite the different sections of the [American] Liberal Party (sic) than a movement against the aggressiveness and insolent assumptions of the party that takes its orders from Rome"; and it boldly identified the Republican party as the standard-bearer of liberty and progress, opposing a democratic party which had enjoyed the solid support of Roman Catholics through all its worst deeds, including the defence of slavery.[1] The basic contention of all these detractors was, of course, that Roman Catholicism by its very nature threatened the freedom and liberties on which the United States was founded and had its existence. It remained important to stress that point, to stress the evils and perils of "Popery" and the need vigorously to combat them, even while simultaneously retaining the conviction that Protestantism would maintain its rightful dominance in the United States.

Others however, were less confident that the pernicious forces of Roman Catholicism were being satisfactorily held in check in America during the Reconstruction era. The virulent passions which had been aroused among Presbyterian Scots by the large Irish immigration to Scotland after the famine had by no means entirely evaporated by the 1860s and 1870s, and directing their attentions to the United States in the post-Civil War period, a proportion of fervently Evangelical and Voluntary Scotsmen could detect a similar process of floods of Irish immigrants pouring into a predominantly Protestant land (and by virtue of its size and potential, a Protestant land vitally important to the extension of Protestantism) and threatening to swamp

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1 Aberdeen Free Press, "Vaticanism in the United States", 1 Dec., 1875.

the Protestant ascendancy. The Fenian movement greatly increased the Scottish emphasis upon what was seen to be the exceedingly detrimental effect of the influential "Irish element" within the United States by that time, especially with regard to the encouragement of political corruption and the stirring up of bad feelings between Britain and America.[1] And an extremely important aspect of the general disfavour with which mass Irish immigration to the United States was looked upon by Scots was the realization of the impact which it must have in boosting up the strength of the Roman Catholic Church there. Macaulay, in the midst of his optimism about the continuing place of Protestantism as the foremost form of Christian worship in America, recognized that cathedrals and religious symbols of similar nature were increasing in great number only where "Irish and other Popish immigrants" congregated.[2] The Reformed Presbyterian Magazine was similarly unhesitant in attributing the growth of Roman Catholicism in New York and Philadelphia solely to "the great Irish influx" over the previous forty years.[3]

Within the ranks of the Scottish Congregationalists, though, the impact of the Irish immigration gave cause for real concern that Roman Catholicism

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1 See, for instance, Blaikie, "War Scenes": Gettysburg and Petersburg" in Sunday Magazine, May, 1871, p. 475, where, in seeking to explain that many Britons had failed to support the North during the Civil War because they had believed certain American papers and politicians who said the North wanted to fight Britain, he stated "It is but recently that we have come to understand the prescriptive right of the Irish vote to shoulder the Decalogue aside"; Mackay, Forty Years Recollections, Vol., 2p.378; "Transatlantic Fenianism" in Blackwood's Magazine, Vol., 101, May, 1867, pp. 590-605; Inverness Courier, 8 Dec., 1870; 20 July, 1871; Elgin and Morayshire Courier, 29 March, 1867; Aberdeen Journal, 27 Sept., 1865, 20 Dec., 1876; Dundee Advertiser 7 Aug., 1866, 10 July, 1868, 9 Feb., 1869; Dundee Courier, 11 Oct., 1865, 25 April, 1871; Glasgow Herald, 24 Oct., 1866 13 March, 26 Aug., 1869; North British Daily Mail, 18 March, 1865.

2 Macaulay, Across the Ferry, p. 379.

3 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, July, 1874, p. 268.

might in due course become the predominant religion, and therefore also the governing force in politics and society, in the United States. The fears of that small Scottish sect were probably significantly aroused and certainly prominently brought to the surface in March, 1869 by a "remarkable article" which had appeared shortly before in the Atlantic Monthly. In it, the writer had argued that there was a "quiet confidence and success" about the Roman Catholics in America since they expected in around seventy year's time to be the prevailing and governing majority of the population". With obvious consternation, the Scottish Congregational Magazine repeated the author's conclusion that from 1800 onwards, the increase in the numbers of Roman Catholics had been much greater than the general increase of the country's population. And the sense of discomfiture was deepened by regard for his assertion, purportedly made on the basis of independent estimates, that by the turn of the century members of that faith would constitute one-third of the inhabitants of the United States and would perhaps control a substantial number of cities and states. The Congregational Church of Scotland did not propose to meet that transatlantic threat with denunciation and abuse but by "counter progress", a tactic which in practice was seen to involve the establishment of a vigorous, wide-ranging system of primary education. A remedy along these lines ought to be applied, it was felt, in both America and Britain: "If England and the United States would not lose their position as the two great Protestant nations of the world, they must devote themselves more than they have done to the work of primary education. Common schools and Sunday-schools, not polemics, are the true weapons of the Protestant Christian". [1]

No such analytical approach, however, characterized the attitudes

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1 Scottish Congregational Magazine, "The Roman Catholics in the United States", new series, Vol., 19, March, 1869, pp. 84-85.

contained in the virulently anti-Catholic magazines which were published in Scotland at that time. In these, "Popery" was constantly seen to be poised for an imminent attack on Protestantism both in Britain and throughout the world, and it was their main object to uphold and defend the reformed faith against the onslaught. A typical production in that genre was the Ark (published in Edinburgh), every issue of which was dominated by articles inspired by that spirit. America came into its reckonings largely through the upsurge in Fenianism, the Fenian Brotherhood being eagerly identified with the wider evil of mainstream Roman Catholicism in the United States.[1] Further through the Reconstruction period, in 1873, there was begun in Glasgow a new, vehemently anti-Catholic tract entitled The Protestant, the Organ of the Working Men's Evangelical Association. Like others of its kind, the Protestant was firmly dedicated to the task of helping to crush out "Romanism" and make the world safe for Protestantism; but it was also unique inasmuch as it aimed its appeal and its exhortations directly at the working class.

In its first issue it was at pains to assert that it would meet a real need, maintaining that up until then no magazine with precisely the same objectives had appeared in Scotland. Its purpose was easily enough stated, and the encouragement which it claimed to have received for its proposed policy could be cited as adequate justification for its existence. "Every Christian man", the Protestant declared, "ought now to excel himself in endeavouring to stem the rising tide of "Popery"; and it claimed that "masses of the working men have indicated their desire that we should enter upon this specific field of labour". At the very outset, a strenuous attempt was made to educate Protestants in Britain and America to an appreciation of the dangerous encroachments of Catholicism:

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1 See the Ark (printed and published for the proprietors by Thomas Paton, Edinburgh), issues for 1866 and 1867.

> Let Protestants, whether in Britain or America, awake to the danger of one of what is probably the world's last crises. Popery can never, in the twin lands of liberty, attain to the dignity of a ruling power; yet she has become a thorn in our flesh, and is ambitious of being a sword in our side. See how she troubles New York as to its institutions.[1]

Tracing the trouble back to the influence of the Irish after the Catholic Emancipation Act, the Protestant urged working men to "consecrate themselves entirely" to the battle against "Romanism".[2]

Perhaps one of the most important and influential of the Scottish ultra-Protestant journals in the 1860s and '70s was, however, the Bulwark or Reformation Journal. Launched in 1851, the product of the anti-Catholic riots and agitation of that year,[3] it was published monthly in Edinburgh and was from its inception until 1872 personally edited and conducted by one of the Free Church's most prominent personalities, the Rev. Dr. James Begg, minister of Newington Free Church, Edinburgh. Begg himself was fanatically anti-Catholic, with all the fervid intensity of what would appear to have been a purely emotional hatred. Recording that "everywhere and always, in and out of Church courts, he brought down his sledge-hammer on Popery", his biographer, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Smith, was bluntly to state that Begg had never sought to trace the gradual development of the Catholic faith in its doctrinal, ecclesiastical or political aspect: "Enough for him that

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1 The Protestant, the Organ of the Working Men's Evangelical Association (H.A. Long, ed., Glasgow), No. 1, 2 Dec., 1873, p. 1. The selling price of the magazine was one penny.

2 Ibid., p. 2.

3 By the early 1850s, the continuing stream of Irish immigrants into Scotland, unabated Scottish indignation over the Maynooth grant, and Pope Pius IX's restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in Britain had all helped to create a climate of intense anti-Catholicism in the country, and in July, 1851, incited by the oratory of an individual calling himself the "Angel Gabriel", the feelings of the mob spilled over into violence against Irish settlers in Greenock and in Gourock. The Bulwark or Reformation Journal, and another periodical entitled The Scottish Protestant dated from that time - see Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland, pp. 93-95, 99.

the Pope is Antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition".[1] Throughout the 1850s he took an immensely active part in spreading and intensifying Scottish hostility to Roman Catholicism in general and to the threat of "papal aggression" in particular,[2] and so strong was the nature of the sentiments which he voiced then and in later years that he came to be regarded even within Scotland itself as "the leader of a small body of very narrow-minded bigots".[3]

As will presently be seen, Begg displayed during the 1860s an interest in the spiritual and educational welfare of the American freedmen which clearly derived to a very large extent from an anxious desire to curb the growing influence of Roman Catholicism in the United States. The direct relevance of his anti-Catholic bias to that aspect of the American scene therefore makes it necessary to appreciate something of the temper of his animus towards the Church of Rome. And a fair enough example of his feelings in that regard would seem to have been communicated to the Free Church General Assembly when in 1851 he addressed it on the subject of "Popery":

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1 Thomas Smith, Memoirs of James Begg, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1888, Vol. 2, p. 166. Smith's own standpoint in commenting upon Begg's anti-Catholicism may to some extent be gauged from the fact that he had taken over the editorship of the Bulwark from Begg in 1872 - see ibid., Vol. 2, p. 176. Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland, p. 101, indicates that as editor, Smith gave more space to the printed word by terminating the policy of printing illustrations, and that in 1887 publication of the periodical passed to a Glasgow business man who totally altered its format.

2 As well as maintaining an editorial stranglehold over the Bulwark for two decades, Begg in the 1850s was actively involved, for instance, in a course of lectures held in Edinburgh on the various evil features and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, and he founded the Protestant Institute of Scotland, and the Scottish Reformation Society - see Thomas Smith, James Begg, Vol. 2, pp. 169, 218.

3 Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 220. Smith naturally sought to rescue him from that unflattering distinction.

> [H]ere is again the old enemy [Catholicism] thundering at our gate. We must tear out the bloody pages of history for a thousand years; we must erase the inscriptions from ten thousand monuments; nay, we must silence...even the voices of murdered saints...We must silence these voices before we forget that the triumph of Popery is the downfall of spiritual Christianity, the end of freedom, and perdition to all that is dear to us as men and Christians. [1]

From the outset, the Bulwark's vitriolic attacks on the Roman Catholic Church amply reflected the extreme attitudes of its editor.[2] And turning its focus in the 1860s upon the position of that institution in post-civil War America, the magazine tended to be unabashedly alarmist. Thus, in stressing Fenianism's Irish, Roman Catholic nucleus, it was prepared in the spring of 1865 to accept American reports which built the movement into a huge organization with immense funds.[3] Subsequently, it drew further on reports in the American press to push home to Scottish Presbyterians the message that Catholicism was by no means a minor, innocuous force in the United States. In June of the same year, for instance, it published an extract from an "alarming and instructive" article in the New York Christian World which "explains the virulence and danger of the American anti-British [i.e. Irish] party and the ultimate design of the present Romish tactics in regard to London. If Rome can control the two commercial capitals of the world, she may afford to smile at the credulity of those who think that her power for mischief is gone". The extract itself was an extreme propaganda piece which placed particular emphasis on the dangers of "Popery" in the political sphere, and within it was contained a quote from another American periodical, the Methodist, in which it was asserted that "Romanism" already controlled New York politics and aimed to control the whole of the

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1 Quoted in ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 174-175.

2 It is significant that Begg was very much a working editor who took a pride in emphasizing that every number of the Bulwark was genuinely edited and arranged by himself - see ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 175-176.

3 Bulwark, "The Fenian Brotherhood in America and Liverpool, Vol. 14, April, 1865, p. 279.

United States.[1] Prophecies of an impending Roman Catholic take-over in America if the struggle against it were not stepped up continued to appear in successive issues of the Bulwark through the years.[2]

It becomes evident, then, that the Scottish recognition of Roman Catholicism as a force still to be reckoned with in the United States was, during the Reconstruction years, manifested on two distinct levels. On one plane, there was the acknowledgement by such observers as James Macaulay and the Reformed Presbyterians that "Popery" was a highly disagreeable but not potentially dangerous element in the Republic. On another plane, the vehemently anti-Catholic periodicals detected a thoroughly alarming growth of Catholicism in America and warned that, if unchecked soon, it would become the dominant influence in the nation. But on either level, the recognition of the Roman Church's strength was, it might be suggested, of vital importance in helping to impel fervent Scottish Presbyterians into an involvement in the freedmen's aid cause. For the sudden emergence of several millions of recently emancipated slaves the vast majority of whom were totally without a significant measure of education and religious knowledge, was seen to present a situation which, unless vigorous Protestant missionary efforts were rapidly and effectively made, would be eagerly exploited by Roman Catholics with the objective of securing the adherence of a massive proportion of the Negro population to the Catholic faith. And playing a considerable part in fostering that particular Scottish view of prospects and realities in the post-war South were certain of the American freedmen's aid Societies' deputies

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1 Ibid., "Romanism Supreme in New York", Vol. 14, June, 1865, pp. 320-321.

2 See, for instance, ibid., Vol. 14, April, 1867, p. 269; Vol. 17, Jan., 1869, p. 188, where there was printed a "very suggestive" letter, dated 10 Nov., 1866, from an "eminent" American Congregationalist minister which declared that because of its "Protestant Establishment", Britain had a great advantage over America in organizing resistance to "Romanism" since the equality of religious faiths there meant that public men and politicians "kneel and pander to the Papists".

who expended their energies in Scotland during the Reconstruction years.

Hence, by the summer of 1866, the Bulwark was able avidly to seize upon the statements of an AMA representative, the Rev. Dr. W. Patton, to indicate the enormous importance in terms of combating the spread and influence of Roman Catholicism in the United States which attached to the movement to raise money for the freedmen. In early July of that year, Begg himself had been present at a public meeting in Edinburgh's Free Church Assembly Hall where Patton (accompanied by Sella Martin) had recommended to the audience the claims of the emancipated American Negroes,[1] and the August issue of his magazine carried an article which centred attention on a specifically relevant aspect of the American's address on that occasion. In advocating his "Society for educating the freedmen in America" Patton had, the Bulwark enthusiastically informed its readers, "intimated that a power may thereby be raised up more than sufficient to neutralise the pestiferous influence of the Irish Romanists in the great western Republic. This is a consideration of great weight."[2]

Heavy emphasis was placed upon his indication that British contributions to the freedmen's aid fund would help the American Negroes to be instructed and fitted for political and social privileges in such a way as to make them a badly needed counterbalance to the influence of the Roman Catholic voters - "a matter of no small consequence to America and Britain". And by way of

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1 See report of a public meeting on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, held under Free Church auspices in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 2 July, 1866, in Scotsman, 3 July, 1866. Also present was Begg's future biographer, the Rev. Thomas Smith (as he then was).

2 Bulwark, "American Negroes and Romanists", Vol. 16, Aug., 1866, p. 44. The significance which the magazine attributed to Patton's vision of the freed Negroes' role in politics was matched by its continuing belief that "Great Britain and America, so long as they unite, constitute an impregnable Protestant phalanx. The innundation of Irish Papists into both countries, however, constitutes a most mischievous and dangerous element" - ibid., p. 44.

impressing yet more fully upon Scottish Presbyterians the importance of Patton's observations and the worthiness of his cause, the magazine offered a salient extract from his speech as reported in the Edinburgh press:

> [A]s we have a population of four millions of Papists who have a voice, through the ballot-box, in the making of the laws, there lies there a great danger to our Republic. From that source comes the annoyance...which has arisen on the borders of Canada. We cannot control these people except by bringing in a few millions of negro voters - Protestant negroes every man of them. Thus we have a balance providentially prepared which will be the salvation of our country.[1]

Clearly, among Presbyterian Scots who were deeply concerned about maintaining the supremacy of Protestantism on both sides of the Atlantic, the suggestion that they could help positively in an educative process which would eventually tend to neutralise Catholic political influence in America must indeed have formed a strong incentive for them to support the freedmen's aid cause. Basic to the achievement of that ultimate situation in the United States was, however, the wholesale conversion of the Negro population to the Protestant faith. And within Scotland in the 1860s, more general expression was given to the vitally important initial consideration of forestalling the Roman Catholic Church from exerting its inimical influence among the newly freed Negroes and winning over large numbers of them before the Protestant forces could secure their allegiance. Fears that Catholicism might rapidly gather a massive following among the former slaves were increased by a widespread belief that the freedmen had a natural tendency to favour a highly emotional, symbolic form of Christian worship. This idea was reinforced by Scots - and especially by Scottish Presbyterian ministers - who visited the Southern states during Reconstruction; and in order to appreciate something of the nature of the views on Negro religion which influenced many

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. W. Patton, quoted in ibid., p. 45.

Presbyterians to fear the race's vulnerability in respect of Roman Catholicism, it is worthwhile to look briefly at the comments of some of these Scottish travellers.

Unquestionably, the aspect of Negro Christianity which most forcefully struck Scottish observers at that time was its intense emotionalism. We have already seen how at the Free Church General Assembly in 1867 a minister from the New School Presbyterian Church of America linked the descriptions of his denomination's educational work amongst the freedmen to the information that until properly instructed, the Negroes tended to be Methodists and to practice a form of religion dominated by "violent emotion and demonstration".[1] Accustomed to a rational, intellectual approach to religion, it was the witnessing (usually, indeed, in Methodist or Baptist chapels) of scenes totally alien to their concept of a service of worship which did most to astound Scots at the character of Negro Christianity. Occasionally, the sense of utter amazement was productive of an exceedingly derogatory attitude towards the worshippers, an attitude which implied that during the early post-emancipation years, a very great deal needed to be done in order to bring the black population more approximately to the educational and cultural level of the white. Nowhere was that manner of communicating the serious lack of sophistication and the impressionability of the Negroes more vividly displayed than in a report sent by the "Rambling Reporter" to the Glasgow Herald in mid-August, 1866.

This particular individual's accounts of his Southern travels did tend for the most part to be marked by highly derisive comments on the black race,[2] and certainly the record which he furnished for his newspaper of his attendances at Negro religious meetings in Richmond more than

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1 See above, p. 476.

2 See, for instance, above, Chapter V, pp. 628-631.

adequately represented his general tone of sentiment. Explaining that he had joined a congregation of about 1,600 at a religious meeting in a Baptist church, he indicated that he had found the whole experience "perfectly bewildering"; and his description of the proceedings at the meeting were clearly geared towards justifying these feelings of bewilderment. It emerged from the "Rambling Reporter's" account that once the sermon was over, all measure of "propriety" was abandoned at Negro religious services. The practice was for the singing of hymns (with"tremendous roaring") to commence, and also for the delivery of long, frenzied prayers by Negro preachers. The performance of one of these preachers provided the "Rambling Reporter" with scope for a descriptive comment which well reflects the quality of his response to what he regarded as an occasion rendered ludicrous by an excess of emotional fervour:

> He [the Negro preacher] talked and sometimes roared about the devil and the bottomless pit, and the lake of fire and brimstone, and the roasting of sinners, till the froth was dropping from his mouth and the tears from his eyes. He rocked himself backwards and forwards, groaned every two or three sentences, flung his arms wildly about, turned up his eyes to the ceiling, and seemed altogether the picture of a raving madman.[1]

The responses of the congregation were depicted in a similar vein, with fulsome references to the "groaning", the "moaning", the screaming", the "eyes almost bursting from their sockets", and so forth.[2]

That same evening, the writer had attended another Negro Baptist meeting, and his observations on the "mad excitement" which he again saw simply echoed those which he had offered on the earlier gathering. Deriving much amusement from the intimate terms on which the preachers addressed God and from their errors in vocabulary, the "Rambling Reporter" was plainly reinforced in his conviction that Negro worship hardly resembled

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1 "Rambling Reporter", in Glasgow Herald, 18 Aug., 1866.

2 Ibid.

anything which could validly pass as acceptable religious practice.[1] The practical manifestation of the black population's Christianity was something completely beyond the reporter's former realm of experience, and as an observer inclined to be critical and disparaging in his attitudes towards the American Negroes, he did not attempt in any way to analyse the basis for their adoption of that form of worship, but sought merely to register his overwhelming sense of amazement. Furthermore, it made good copy for the Glasgow Herald to report in an extremely graphic, spectacular fashion on the scenes which he had witnessed. As a result of these factors, then, the readers of Scotland's second largest daily journal were forcefully enlightened on the extreme emotionalism of the freedmen's Christian faith and, more indirectly, on their natural tendency to gravitate towards those religious denominations which offered positive opportunity for indulging in emotional and symbolic modes of worship.

Not all of the Scots who, in their visit to the Southern states, also noted the intensely excited and zealous manner in which the Negroes praised God were so contemptuous or so sensationalist in expressing themselves on the subject, however. A much calmer and more respectful statement of essentially the same basic information was presented by, for instance, David Macrae. During the course of his extensive travels through the South, Macrae was constantly in personal contact with the freedmen, and he formed a high and optimistic opinion of their innate religiosity.[2] Simultaneously, however, he readily recognized that

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1 Ibid.

2 At the outset of a long chapter on "Black Christianity", Macrae in the record of his 1868 trip to the United States asserted that "Something ought to be made of the negro on his religious side by good training. Nowhere in America does one find such simple and childlike faith, such a strong belief in the presence and power of God, such fervour and religious enthusiasm, as amongst the pious negroes. They seem to see God bending over them like the sky, to feel His presence on them and around them, like the storm and the sunshine" - Macrae, The Americans at Home, pp. 279-280.

> One of the most remarkable features of their piety is its tendency to excitement, which is probably one reason why so many of them belong to the Methodist and Baptist churches, where this tendency gets freer scope for development. Conversion with the Negro is a thunder-peal followed by a deluge of the spirit, and a bursting forth of the sun clearing the sky, and filling the world with gladness. This is called 'getting religion', and seems to excite irrepressible emotions.[2]

He took pains to make it clear that a strong current of emotionalism pervaded all aspects of the Negroes' Christianity in the Southern states. "All their religious exercises", he indicated, "partake of this exciting character; and in some of their churches a service seems to be regarded as a kind of failure unless the audience gets itself worked up into a frenzy". By way of giving some insight into the nature of the fervour displayed at many of the religious meetings, Macrae went on to describe an evening service which he had attended in Savannah. Purely in terms of relating the scenes which took place there - the prevalence of "writhing and shrieking", of "Swaying and groaning" - his account tended (perhaps inevitably) to follow the fashion of the "Rambling Reporter's" earlier one. But although Macrae did find the proceedings "most extraordinary", he certainly did not indulge in an extravagance of expression calculated to give the impression that the participants were all miserably ignorant individuals who had adopted a singular brand of "Christian religion" designed primarily to give them an outlet for exhibitions of unrestrained fanaticism. On the contrary, he was inclined to perceive an unfortunate misconception on the part of Negroes who led the services and to regret that "many of the coloured preachers evidently do their best to bring...[these emotional scenes] about, under the impression that they indicate the presence of the Spirit of God". Moreover, he eagerly emphasized that such occurrences did not take place in "the best churches", and indicated that in these, he had heard sermons which would have

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1 Ibid., p. 283.

been totally acceptable in white churches.[1]

As we have already observed, Macrae during his trip became deeply interested in the labours of the AMA, and it is evident that sympathetic acquaintance with the aims and activities of that organization directly influenced his outlooks on the exceedingly zealous character of Negro religion. It was particularly cheering to him that the Association was distinctively a missionary agency which incorporated Christian teaching in all its operations:

> The extreme importance of this will be manifest to every one who is acquainted with the negro character. The negro's strength, and also his weakness, lie in his emotional nature. I never saw such religious enthusiasm and such strong Christian faith in the midst even of ignorance and degredation as I saw amongst these freedmen. But this very feature of their character tends to make religion a matter of mere excitement, and convert their religious services into scenes of frenzy and confusion.[2]

He was tremendously encouraged by the unceasing efforts of the AMA to use the Negroes' religious exuberance for purposes beneficial to the race throughout the world. Describing the strong network of chapels, evangelists and evangelistic teachers which the Association had established throughout the South, Macrae stressed that it anticipated that "under proper training, the religious enthusiasm of the coloured man will contribute an important element to American Christianity. It is also of opinion that the best hope for the evangelization of the African race lies in the education of the freedmen".[3] Unlike the Glasgow Herald's "Rambling Reporter", David Macrae's acknowledgement of the Negroes' ultra-emotional approach to Christianity did not simply involve holding the race up to ridicule. Rather, it was his implicit conviction that that religious fervour, if properly cultivated and channelled into the best religious direction by the AMA, would be a positive force for good in the United States and beyond.

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1 Ibid., pp. 284-285.

2 Ibid., p. 173.

3 Ibid., p. 174.

Macrae had made his trip to America and written his account of it less than five years after the end of the Civil War - that is, at a comparatively early stage in Reconstruction, when an observer predisposed, as he was, to be sympathetic to the country in its trials and to the struggles of the freedmen might certainly have found himself able optimistically to believe that certain agencies would effectively make use of the excessive enthusiasm which characterized Negro Christianity. It might be suggested that by the mid-1870s, however, the situation would have significantly changed inasmuch as it would have become progressively more difficult with the lapse of time to look without unqualified criticism upon the continuing spectacle of extreme emotional demonstrations at the freedmen's religious services. One of the more famous Scotsmen to visit the United States in that later period was the prominent Church of Scotland minister, the Rev. Dr. John Tulloch, Principal of Theology at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews. And while there is no reason to suppose that he was ever particularly understanding or compassionate in his attitudes towards the freed Negroes of America, he certainly took the trouble to register a positive disgust at the religious aspect of their behaviour as he observed it in 1874.

It was during a stay in Washington that Tulloch attended a Negro service, and as well as being thoroughly frightened by the experience,[1] he found it totally appalling. Recording his immediate impressions in a letter to his wife, he moved from an attack on the performance of the preacher to a description of how the congregation had "ranted and roared in turn, some of them literally bellowing", and of the manner in which one woman had taken convulsive fits and had ended having to be held down "just like a maniac". Before it finished, "the whole affair was like Bedlam, and I was really glad to get away".[2] Writing a few months later in the Church of Scotland Home

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1 See above, Chapter V, pp. 633-634.

2 The Rev. Dr. John Tulloch to his wife, Washington, 3 May, 1874, quoted in Oliphant, A Memoir of the Life of John Tulloch, pp. 293-294.

and Foreign Missionary Record (of which he was editor), he very significantly elaborated upon his distaste for emotionalism in religion. His article in the July, 1874 issue of the magazine was one in a series on American churches, and concentrating in it upon "the great strength" of Methodism in the United States, Tulloch stressed that there were features of that faith with which he was completely out of sympathy. Like most Presbyterians, his Christian training had, he stated, placed much less emphasis upon the enthusiastic and excitable element in Christian worship: "I make no pretence of enjoying fervours which I do not understand, and which my intellectual taste rather repels. Especially I own to very considerable repulsion to what I saw and heard in a Negro Methodist congregation in Washington".[1] He found "no pleasantness" in religious excitement by itself: "People should not show their souls in undress, any more than their bodies, save in the retirements of home".[2]

Despite the very substantial popular appeal exerted both in pulpit and on platform by such gifted orators as Guthrie and Candlish, the Presbyterians of the Free Church were just as opposed to excessive displays of emotion in religious practice as were their counterparts in the Church of Scotland. Hence, when the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie visited the United States in 1870, he was perturbed to discover that most of the freed Negroes were Baptists or Methodists and adherents of a purely "emotional" religion. But as if the lure of Methodism and sects of broadly similar principle were not enough, he detected a yet more alarming force threatening, with some hopes of success,

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1 John Tulloch, "Notes on the American Churches" in Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record, Vol. 9, New Series, July, 1874, p. 77.
In an address on American religion delivered at St. Andrews University in November, 1875, Tulloch praised the general standard of preaching in the United States and declared that the only sermon which he had found "offensive in its coarseness or extravagant in doctrine" had been one given in a Negro church - see report of an address by Tulloch on "American Churches, and Theological Schools in connection with them" delivered at the opening session of the Divinity Hall of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, in Glasgow Herald, 12 Nov., 1875.

2 Tulloch in Church of Scotland...Missionary Record, Vol. 9, July, 1874 p. 77.

to win the spiritual allegiance of the black population. This was the Roman Catholic Church. In his article for the April, 1871 issue of the Sunday Magazine, Blaikie indicated that in America there were "well known" Catholic attempts to gain converts among the freedmen, and that it was the belief of certain intellectual men that these efforts could succeed. Such a startling possibility was seen to derive once again from the uninstructed Negroes' natural predilections with regard to religious ceremony:

> Some things about Romanism touch feelings that in the negro are easily roused. The sensous, gaudy displays of Romanism, and its appeals to the imagination and the tender feelings, are not ill-adapted to the negro's propensities.[1]

The worried Free Churchman could only hope that education of the former slaves was doing its work and that so potential a danger to the Protestant forces of America would soon pass.[2]

That the freedmen's inherent preference for an emotional, symbolic form of religion was liable to render them particularly susceptible to the practices of the Roman Catholic Church was a fact also recognized and publicized by David Macrae. With a certain concise directness, he advised his readers that

> The imposing ceremonials of the Romish Church, its system of Absolution, its worship of the Virgin, and its repudiation of distinctions of race and colour, are all likely to make it popular amongst the negroes.[3]

And from information gathered during his American trip, he presented evidence which aimed to show that the freedmen were in fact being given ample opportunity to become acquainted with and won over to the attractions of Roman Catholicism. Active efforts for that purpose were being made, he suggested, by the Catholic hierarchy in America and in Europe. Critical

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1 Blaikie, "Richmond" in Sunday Magazine, April, 1871, p. 403.

2 Ibid., p. 403.

3 Macrae, The Americans at Home, p. 298.

to the development of these endeavours had been (in Macrae's opinion) a Plenary Council of the Catholic Church which had taken place at Baltimore in 1866[1] and at which "the position of the emancipated negroes was discussed, and measures inaugurated for securing them to the Church of Rome". In the following year, "nearly a hundred priests landed at New Orleans", and Macrae had been led to understand that the Society for Propagating the Faith had been appropriated $600,000 for undertaking Roman Catholic mission work among the former slaves. He himself had been told by a priest there that the Catholics had over 50,000 Negro children in their schools.

But profoundly disturbing though each of these revelations of Roman Catholic activity must have been for Scottish Presbyterians, perhaps most alarming of all was Macrae's discovery that "it is said that upwards of a hundred black students are now being educated at Rome in preparation for this new and promising [missionary] field".[2] Clearly, the prospect of the Roman Church training Negro freedmen for teacher-missionary labour amongst the black population in the Southern states was one bound to provoke serious concern in interested Presbyterian circles in Scotland, more especially since it was conceivable that the scope of such instruction might eventually be extended to embrace the concept of employing black Roman Catholic missionaries to evangelize the peoples of Africa. Such, after all, was the nature of the ultimate objective of certain Protestant freedmen's aid organizations in America. It may even have been partly because he believed that the AMA's vigorous commitment to these long-term aims would help to discourage Roman Catholic aspirations in the same direction that

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1 For further reference to the Plenary Council, see below , pp. 532-533. Macrae, ibid., p. 297, wrongly gives its date as 1867.

2 Ibid., p. 298. In sum, Macrae decided that of all the various influences then working to modify the future relation of the American freedmen to Christianity, "chief amongst these is the influence of Popery" - ibid., p. 297.

David Macrae himself worked so assiduously on behalf of that Association after his return to Scotland.

But it was not only through the writings of fellow countrymen who had gained personal insight into the state of Negro Christianity in the South that Scotsmen derived information concerning the threat of widespread Catholic influence on the freedmen at that time. We have already observed the way in which the Bulwark was able to augment its fund of anti-"Romanist" diatribes by citing the Rev. Dr. W. Patton's anxiety to see the Negro population securely established as a new Protestant element in America.[1] Three years later - in the spring of 1869 - one of Patton's colleagues in the AMA, Professor Humiston, conveyed to the Scottish public in much more direct terms the sense of a positive danger respecting the activities of the Roman Catholic Church among the ex-slaves, and the likelihood of their attachment to it. Concentrating his appeal at Edinburgh on the need for Scottish aid to help Christianize the freedmen,[2] Humiston energetically raised the bogey of American Catholicism. His audience having been reminded that almost one-third of the population of the United States were of the Roman Catholic faith, he indicated that about two years previously, the Pope had sent more than £120,000 "to be expended in Catholicising the freedmen". Subsequently, a "shipload" of priests had arrived at New Orleans and several "important Conventions" had been held. Humiston, too, found it pertinent to emphasize that the Negro "in his ignorance" was fond of show and that the "showy regime" of Catholicism was therefore well calculated to impress him. On the basis of these facts, he urged Scottish and American Protestants to "set themselves to work" to save the black population of America and to "make use of the lever God [has] put into [our]

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1 See above, pp. 512-513.

2 See above, p. 471.

hands to save Africa through Anglo-African agency".[1]

It seems clear that at least in some Southern states (and probably in all of them since AMA policy would appear to have been well co-ordinated) the AMA strenuously used its influence among the Negroes against the Roman Catholic Church, officially deploring that institution for "making extraordinary efforts to enshroud forever...the unfortunate race in Popish superstition and darkness".[2] And certainly, Professor Humiston was not alone among agents of that Association in pointing out to the Scottish people the very great threat which was posed by strong Papal efforts to indoctrinate the freedmen. At the 1868 General Assembly of the Free Church, the best known AMA deputy of all, the Rev. Sella Martin, put much stress on the means employed by Roman Catholics to influence the Negro mind, and emphasized the urgent need at that time to meet the "tide of Popery" in America.[3] Martin's adherence to and expedient acknowledgement of the virtues of the Protestant (and especially the Presbyterian) faith has already been noted.[4] As well as being himself sincerely attached to the principles of Protestantism and desirous of curbing the spread of Roman Catholicism in America, he would obviously have been fully aware of the very strong impact which his warning would have on a Free Church General Assembly, and of the

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1 Report of speech by Professor Humiston of Ohio at a public meeting on the condition of the freedmen in America, held in Saloon No. 5, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, 22 March, 1869, in Daily Review, 23 March, 1869.

2 See extract from House Report No. 121, 41st Congress, 2nd Session, quoted in W. L. Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama (Gloucester, Mass., 1949; originally published Columbia, 1905), p. 646. Fleming, ibid., p. 646, has indicated that so far as the state of Alabama was concerned the AMA was substantially supported by money from the Freedmen's Bureau in its campaign of educating the freedmen to shun Roman Catholicsism.

3 See report of speech by Sella Martin at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 26 May, 1868, in Procs. Free Church G. A., May, 1868, p. 99.

4 See above, p. 470, and Chapter III, pp. 314-315.

stimulus which could thereby be provided for that denomination's continued support of freedmen's aid.

By the mid-1870s, an awareness of the efficacy of publicizing the staunch Protestant affiliations which had by then been assumed by the Negro freedmen was being very keenly displayed by those seeking to raise further contributions in Britain for schemes connected to the freedmen's aid drive of earlier years. When, under the auspices of the AMA, the Jubilee Singers came to Britain in 1873, they were accompanied by a manager and adviser in the person of Gustavus D. Pike. In his principal account of the fund-raising tour, Pike recorded how in October of that year the company had gone to Ireland and had performed, among other places, at Londonderry. Intimating that they had all been greatly interested in the information concerning "the conflict between Protestantism and Popery" fought out there, he offered eulogies on the apprentice boys' defence of the city and the sufferings endured by the people of Derry while the seige lasted. Both Prentice boys and the general Protestant population were acclaimed as heroes: "Londonderry", he insisted, "will ever be remembered as a battle ground where sufferings were experienced that accomplished wonders for the overthrow of Roman Catholicism". With a touch of singular inspiration, Pike even contrived to identify the efforts of the Jubilee Singers with the activities of the Prentice Boys: "The Jubilee Singers were esteemed by the citizens of Derry as another company of young people turning back a tide of ignorance, cruelty, and prejudice".[1]

His book was published in the year following the British trip - at a time, that is, when recollection of the Jubilee Singers could be presumed to be still fresh enough for a printed reminder of their tour to have the effect of re-activating British sympathy and support for their cause. And certainly,

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1 Pike, The Singing Campaign, p. 129.

strategically sandwiched as the Derry episode was between accounts of the Singers' appearances in Scotland, Pike's allusions to the sturdy Protestant bias of the company might have been guaranteed to win a modicum of further contributions to the Fisk University appeal from approving Scottish Presbyterian philanthropists.

Having therefore observed how, against a wider background of constant unease about the growth in strength of Roman Catholicism in the United States, Scotsmen could be influenced to fear that millions of the freed Negroes in the South might become converts to the Church of Rome, it remains necessary to consider whether there was in fact any valid basis for their apprehension on that score. Throughout slavery times, certain scattered and unco-ordinated attempts had indeed been made by Roman Catholics to promote religion and education among the black population of the Southern states. In Louisiana, for instance, Jesuits had begun labours in the early eighteenth century; and helped in their task of teaching and Christianizing by the liberal attitude of the French towards them, they had so successfully instructed and baptized the slaves in the Roman Catholic faith that the city of New Orleans eventually acquired a considerable community of French-speaking Roman Catholic Negroes. And the consolidation and propagation of Catholicism had been given a fillip there in 1818 through the formation by a Capuchin Father of the Christian Doctrine Society of New Orleans. In Maryland, too, the Jesuits had early applied themselves to looking after the spiritual welfare of the Negroes and had made good progress in spreading their doctrines. Evangelistic work by priests had from the late eighteenth century also been centred around the slaves of another border state, Kentucky. These three states were, however, the only ones in which Roman Catholicism gained any appreciable influence, and even in these, the efforts had necessarily been somewhat isolated and the achievements limited by the insignificant numbers engaged in the work, by the lack of priests, and by the difficulties of teaching at a time when the

education of slaves was forbidden.[1]

There can be little doubt but that the deputies from the American freedmen's aid Societies were fully aware of the essentially modest scale of the activities and progress which had been made amongst the Negroes in the South by Roman Catholics down through the years. But perhaps of more immediate importance as a focus of attention for the workers in the AMA during Reconstruction was the recent erection in Baltimore of the Church of St. Francis Xavier, the first Roman Catholic Church in the United States designed for the exclusive use of Negroes. A concept deriving largely from the enthusiastic endeavours of Father Miller, a zealous labourer on behalf of the black population in Maryland, the church was begun in 1863[2]; and for those Protestant Americans who were at that very time in the process of embarking on a comprehensive programme of evangelistic freedmen's aid, its construction might well have represented an alarming indication that the forces of Roman Catholicism also aimed to make a serious bid to provide for the spiritual welfare of the emancipated slaves.

But despite such occasionally impressive (though still extremely sporadic) manifestations of a continuing Catholic interest in the American Negro, it is clear that there were no real grounds for visiting American deputies to voice to Scottish Presbyterians the disconcerting inferences that the Church of Rome was poised to make tremendous inroads among the freedmen and win large numbers to its banner. On the contrary, its activities in respect of the Southern Negroes after the Civil War would appear to have been conducted for the most part on basically the same haphazard level as before. Lamenting the

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1 See John T. Gillard, The Catholic Church and the American Negro, (Baltimore, 1929), pp. 11 - 23.

2 Ibid., pp. 29-30.

opportunities missed by the Church in the post-war years, a twentieth century authority was, indeed, to judge the Reconstruction period as "disgraceful", a time when "little attention was paid to...[the freedmen's] material welfare and less to their spiritual".[1] A critical lack of organized enthusiasm and incentive continued to characterize the Roman Catholic approach to evangelization in that sphere, and achievements continued to be correspondingly restricted. Thus, the "zealous efforts" of a few bishops to spread the faith among freedmen in predominantly Protestant sections of the South foundered on the usual pitfalls of insufficient priests and insufficient money. In the Reconstruction era, no less than in earlier times, only a small number of priests felt inclined to devote their energies to such work, and those who did enjoyed once again only meagre success.[2]

Nor did the failure to establish a vigorous, sustained, and far-reaching missionary campaign represent the full extent of the Roman Catholic Church's relatively insignificant achievements in gaining and maintaining the religious affiliations of the freedmen. For far from Catholicism in America effectively increasing its strength through recruitment from the ranks of the free black population, the trend was rather for Negroes who had been Roman Catholic in slavery times to forsake that denomination during Reconstruction. It has been persuasively suggested that "thousands" left the hierarchical Church of Rome after the Civil War to join more open sects such as the Baptists and Methodists, in which requirements for the ministry were much less demanding and much more readily attainable: "The Negro preacher of little education had no place in the Catholic Church, and since there was better prospect for promotion in the Baptist and Methodist Churches, to these they went, and with them the majority of their people".[3]

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1 Ibid., pp. 32-33.

2 Ibid., pp. 33-34.

3 Ibid., pp. 34-35, 283-284. See also W. Fleming, Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama, p. 646.

Clearly, at no point in the immediate post-war years was the Protestant influence among the freedmen ever greatly threatened by Roman Catholicism. Perhaps the only conceivable source of justification for a slight growth in Protestant apprehensions along these lines was the commencement in 1871 of the first truly organized Roman Catholic effort to Christianize the Negro freedmen. Significantly, this labour was undertaken by a group of British priests, for it was in the autumn of that year that Pope Pius IX assigned Father Herbert Vaughan (later Cardinal Vaughan) to send from his missionary college at Mill Hill, England, a contingent of missionaries who would "consecrate themselves to special service" among the Negro population of the United States.[1] Accompanied by Vaughan himself, four priests accordingly went forthwith to America, and a centre for their activities was rapidly established at Baltimore. Having seen his missionaries settled there, Vaughan for his part proceeded on a fact-finding tour of the Southern states and was strongly convinced of the need for Roman Catholic missionary work in that section by his shocked discovery of how little was being done for the Negroes there. In a visit which encompassed many of the principal cities of

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1 See J. G. Snead-Cox, The Life of Cardinal Vaughan (London, 1910), Vol. 1, p. 168; also Gillard, The Catholic Church, pp. 39-40.
Cardinal Vaughan was born in 1832, and from 1851 - 1854 studied for the priesthood in Rome, where he was ordained in the autumn of 1854. He was always interested in missionary work and had early wished to work as a missionary in Wales, but was diverted from that purpose to become, in 1855, Vice-Principal of St. Edmund's College where he was involved in training students in the Ecclesiastical Seminary of the Archdiocese of Westminster. Unhappy in his appointment, he cherished the hope of introducing some form of missionary work at St. Edmund's, and when that prospect faded, he became increasingly out of sympathy with the authorities. The missionary impulse remained dominant: "he thought of England's influence in the world...and he knew what the great Protestant Missionary Societies were doing, and it seemed a reproach that the Catholics of this country should be content to do just nothing at all". In 1863, with the Pope's blessing, he made a definite decision to devote his life to Foreign Missions and to found a training college for missionaries. To raise funds for the latter project, he went to South America and made extensive appeals there, being prevented from going first to the United States because of the Civil War. In 1866, he was able to establish on an operative basis St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill - see Snead-Cox, Cardinal Vaughan, Vol. 1 pp. 56-158.

the South, he was deeply disturbed by the continued discrimination against the freedmen in churches, and by social factors such as the bad conditions in which they were frequently forced to live; and it would appear that he was as much annoyed with Roman Catholic priests and sisters for their neglect as at the Protestant denominations.[1] By the end of 1871, his missionary group had taken possession of Baltimore's coloured Church of St. Francis Xavier and were labouring to organize within it a "good school". From their base there, it was Vaughan's aim to open "School Chapels" in parts of the city where the coloured population was most numerous, and eventually to develop these rudimentary institutions into permanent Missions. In addition, he intended to send his priests into the country during favourable seasons to travel amongst the "neglected" freedmen, holding catechisms and founding Sunday Schools.[2]

Before returning to Britain, he engaged in a fund-raising campaign in the North-Eastern states of America, and it is of some importance to note that in the course of it he did not confine himself to recommending Catholic missionary work merely in the context of promoting efforts among the Negroes in the South but presented also a wider dimension precisely similar to that envisaged by eager Presbyterian forces in Scotland and America. His Southern tour had encouraged Vaughan to hope that the liberated slaves would become effective missionaries for the evangelization of Africa, and during at least one meeting in New York, he eloquently voiced that idea, along with the concomitant notion that it was the duty of Anglo-Saxons to spread light and civilization across the earth:

We have come to gather an army on our way, to conquer it for

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1 See ibid., p. 171.

2 See Father Vaughan to Lady Herbert of Lea, Baltimore, Christmas, 1871 in Shane Leslie (ed.), Letters of Herbert, Cardinal Vaughan to Lady Herbert of Lea 1867 to 1903 (London, 1942), pp. 240-241.

> the Cross...Nation is dependent upon nation, and we have to carry on the light...The mission of the English-speaking races is to the unconverted, especially to the uncivilised nations of the world.[1]

Despite the ambitious objectives of Vaughan and his priests, and the fact that their activities did constitute the most organized attempt by the Roman Catholic Church during Reconstruction to educate and evangelize the American Negroes, they made little practical headway in their endeavours. Throughout the later 1870s, other groups of priests did continue to keep their Church's missionary spirit alive in the South. Notable among these forces were several priests sent in 1872 from Europe by the Society of the Holy Ghost to establish an agricultural and industrial school at Kentucky (soon abandoned); a number of Benedictine Fathers who started a school for the freedmen at Charleston in 1874; and Benedictines from Pennsylvania whose achievement it was at the very close of the Reconstruction era to open an industrial school in North Carolina.[2] The total impact of all of these labours remained minimal, however, and in the mid-1880s, it was the recognition that "The vast majority of...[the Southern Negroes] were still untouched by...[Vaughan's] Josephite missions and by other Catholic missionary efforts" which induced the Third Plenary Council to appoint a sub-committee to draw up proposals for the establishment of effective Negro (and Indian) missions in the United States.[3]

Obviously, then, it was not from evidence of any solid, significant success by Roman Catholics in missionizing the emancipated slaves that there derived among American Protestant freedmen's aid workers and Scottish Presbyterians the real and haunting fear that the impressionable freedmen would be won over in their thousands to the Church of Rome. It therefore

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1 Father Herbert Vaughan, quoted in Snead-Cox, Cardinal Vaughan, p. 178.

2 Gillard, The Catholic Church, p. 41.

3 Albert S. Foley, Bishop Healy: Beloved Outcasts (Dublin, 1956), pp. 158-159.

becomes possible to conclude that it was simply an awareness of the basic potential which existed for the spread of Catholicism among the Negroes of the South, and a recognition of the possibility that the potential could at any time begin to be fully exploited, which constituted the main sources of consternation for Protestant elements on both sides of the Atlantic during the Reconstruction era. Such a manner of outlook certainly meant that Father Vaughan's organized efforts would have made Scottish Presbyterians extremely uneasy; and it is just conceivable that knowledge of the American activities and objectives of the first batch of trained Roman Catholic missionary priests from St. Joseph's College, Mill Hill, may in some measure have helped to stimulate the generally impressive contributions for freedmen's aid which continued to be forthcoming from the membership of the United Presbyterian Church throughout the 1870s.[1]

Indeed, probably the most frightening consideration of all for interested Presbyterians was the fact that the endeavours of Vaughan and others like him, irrespective of their lack of real success, demonstrated that the Roman Catholics in America and Europe did realize the scope which their Church had for winning large numbers of converts among the freed Negroes in the Southern states, and did as a result make at least some positive missionary attempts in that field. And these attempts were always liable to become more concerted and more dangerous to the Protestant evangelization programme. We have already observed how with a tinge of apprehension David Macrae identified the proceedings at the second Plenary Council of the Catholic Church at Baltimore in 1866 as critical to the encouragement of

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1 The volume of U.P. contributions over the years is considered below, Chapter IX, pp. 221-224.

While no actual reference to the United States missionary scheme of Father Vaughan and his priests has been discovered in Scottish comment and observations upon Roman Catholic influence amongst the American freedmen at that time, it may fairly be assumed that a mission of that nature, setting our from a British base, would not have escaped the notice of wary Scottish Presbyterians.

Roman Catholic activity amongst the emancipated slaves.[1] Certainly, emanating from that body's deliberations there had been presented surely one of the most alarmingly straightforward indications of Catholic appreciation of the chance for increasing the strength of the faith in America at that time. In line with the Council's appeal to priests to turn their attention to the freedmen, Archbishop Spalding wrote: "We have a golden opportunity to reap a harvest of souls, which neglected may not return".[2] The realization that the Roman Catholic Church had no intention of standing inertly by and allowing the wealthier, more highly organized missionary drive of the Protestant forces to enjoy a free field for the evangelization of the American Negroes was in itself sufficient to invest with an alarmist tone all snippets of information which reached Scotland regarding the Catholics and the freedmen. Thus when it was stated in a periodical of the stamp of James Begg's Bulwark that "probably not less than" one hundred coloured men were preparing in Rome for the priesthood and that the majority would become teachers of the Negroes in the Southern states,[3] that information carried the implicit warning that on a general scale, the forces of Roman Catholicism were increasingly offering a mighty challenge to the supremacy of Protestantism in the United States of America.

As the Reconstruction era moved on and the initial post-war necessity of providing for the material welfare of the former slaves waned, the freedmen's aid movement in America and in Britain became, as we have noted, increasingly concerned to promote the education and evangelization of the freedmen. Within the specifically Scottish ambit of the campaign, it becomes plain that the importance of this latter phase was immensely

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1 See above, pp. 521-522.

2 Gillard, The Catholic Church, p. 36.

3 See Bulwark, Vol. 17, Nov., 1869, p. 126.

heightened by the inextricably inter-related aims of positively spreading and consolidating Protestantism in America (thereby strengthening it for the fulfilment of its mission to bring "light and liberty" to the world) and of checking the ever-threatening growth of Roman Catholic influence among the impressionable black population (and therefore curbing Catholic expansion in the United States as a whole). Certainly, in contributing to the AMA and to the freedmen's aid appeals in general, the Presbyterian Scot was made keenly aware that he was contributing not only to a philanthropic cause eminently worthwhile in itself, but also to a movement the success of which would greatly help to reinforce the Protestant supremacy in the United States and to forestall the drift of millions of susceptible Negro freedmen into the fold of the Roman Catholic Church.[1] The incidence of four millions of ex-slaves existing in poverty and widespread spiritual darkness in the Southern states represented for very many supporters of the freedmen's aid cause in Scotland not only a vast field for the charitable alleviation of material want and educational deprivation but also - and as importantly - a vast missionary field which, if sedulously and timely cultivated, would yield great rewards for the forces of international Protestantism.

There is every reason to suppose that considerations of that nature would to some significant extent have animated several of the prominent Scottish personalities who were amongst those most actively involved in advocating appeals for the freedmen from public platforms. We have already observed how W.E. Baxter, for instance, was deeply committed to recommending support for the freedmen's aid cause and how he also nurtured a strong

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1 Gillard, The Catholic Church, p. 5, observed that the Protestant Missionary Societies had won over great numbers of Negroes by skilfully combining social and religious welfare in a way which the Roman Catholics had never mastered.

hostility towards Roman Catholicism in general and the American manifestation of it in particular.[1] But perhaps it was the ministers of Scotland's dissenting Presbyterian sects who were likely to have been the most substantially encouraged to champion the freedmen's aid movement through contemplation of its missionary objectives and its vehement anti-Catholic bias. It has repeatedly been seen that that venerable Free Churchman, Thomas Guthrie, considered the evangelization and education of the Negroes to be a major priority of the American freedmen's aid Societies; and it goes without saying that he was thinking in terms of a strictly Protestant evangelization and education. That most popular and persistent Scottish clerical advocate of the cause would undoubtedly have been extremely anxious to see the freedmen educated into the Protestant (and preferably, of course, the Presbyterian) faith before they had a chance to be indoctrinated in Roman Catholicism, because Guthrie was, personally, an exceedingly zealous adversary of the Roman Catholic Church.

The intense suspicion and antipathy with which the famous Edinburgh minister was wont to regard the forces of Roman Catholicism had, indeed, been amply demonstrated to his fellow countrymen as early as the late 1840s. In 1847, Guthrie had succeeded in establishing in Edinburgh his Original Ragged Schools where the children of the poor and the waifs of the city might receive food, clothing and instruction. It had been the intention of the sponsors of the project that the teaching would be entirely undenominational; but presented with a situation where a substantial number of the pupils were the children of Catholic Irish immigrants, Guthrie had swiftly dispensed with that concept. Effectively checking Roman Catholic participation in the running of the schools, he condoned a policy of religious instruction for all the scholars based exclusively on Protestant

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1 See above, pp. 497-499.

tenets. Such a blatantly prosleytising approach to the curriculum did have the effect of arousing a measure of vocal protest within the city, and this was eventually given practical shape in the founding of the United Industrial School - an inter-denominational institution which was strenuously opposed by Guthrie.[1]

Several years later, a public utterance which served well to betray the vigour of his antagonism towards the Catholic Irish and Highlanders of Scotland helped to bring Guthrie once again under attack. On this subsequent occasion, the criticism was voiced by Donald McLeod of Sutherland, who in his famous Gloomy Memories in the Highlands of Scotland sought to castigate Guthrie for the obsequious self-interest which, he alleged, formed the basis of the minister's close association with the Duchess of Sutherland and her family. In that context, McLeod issued a scathing denunciation of a speech delivered by Guthrie at a soiree which had been held for Harriet Beecher Stowe at Edinburgh in 1851: and a central part of his attack hinged on the revealingly derogatory remarks on Celtic Roman Catholics made by Guthrie in the course of his panegyric on America. "Take an Indolent Celt", he had declared on that occasion, "let him go to America, he becomes active - take a wild Irishman, he becomes civilized - a blind bigoted Papist, his eyes are opened, and he turns his back on Rome".[2]

There are no indications that Guthrie's early, fervent anti-Catholicism mellowed to any significant extent with the passing of time. In seeking to mitigate somewhat the charge of narrow-minded bigotry frequently made against the Rev. Dr. James Begg, the latter's biographer interestingly attempted to put him in the mainstream of influential Free Church attitudes

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1 See Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland, pp. 198-201.

2 Extract from speech by Guthrie at a soiree for Harriet Beecher Stowe held in Edinburgh, 1851, quoted in McLeod, Gloomy Memories, p. 85.

towards the Roman Catholic Church by declaring that "It ought to be stated ...that the anti-Romanist zeal of the men who might be regarded as the leaders of the Free Church remained unabated. It was impossible that men like Cunningham and Candlish, and Tweedie and Guthrie, could ever be ignorant of, or indifferent to, the devices of Rome".[1] And at least so far as Guthrie is concerned, it would appear that he did indeed preserve intact into the 1860s his strong hostilities to Roman Catholicism.

We have already noted how, in a morose reflection upon the current condition of the United States and the nature of its expansion, he communicated to the Duchess of Argyll in 1862 his deep regret over the fact that "floods of low Irish" had poured into the country and had largely swamped the national increase and influence of the "original settlers".[2] Three years later, his hatred of Roman Catholicism remained vital enough to form a direct contributory factor in an unprecedented participation in politics. In 1865, Guthrie determined not only openly to support Duncan McLaren in his bid to be elected M.P. for Edinburgh, but also to actually vote for him. The decision meant that the minister went to the polls for the first time in his life. Writing to the Earl of Dalhousie, who had taken exception to his stand on the electoral contest, Guthrie attempted to explain his attitude:

> [W]hat has moved me who never gave a vote at the poll all my days to do so now...is that I have never had to fight Free-thinkers for the sacredness of the Lord's day, publicans for the interests of virtue, decency, and sobriety, or Papists for the Word of God but I have found Duncan McLaren at my side, foremost in the good fight.[3]

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1 Thomas Smith, James Begg, p. 220.

2 See Guthrie to Duchess of Argyll, Edinburgh, 8 Sept., 1862, Guthrie MSS., fol. 90-93.

3 Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie to Earl of Dalhousie, 4 July, 1865, Dalhousie MSS., GD45/14/662, SRO.

Recalling amongst other things "the manner in which he stood by me and others when we had to fight a battle for the Bible in our Ragged Schools", Guthrie informed Dalhousie that he had not intended voting until he had seen "the papists and publicans" combining and "taking 'counsel together' to keep McLaren out". It was under these circumstances that he felt it his duty to give support to "the man against whom my country's morals and faith were making such active opposition".[1] Expressing similar sentiments to McLaren himself, he wrote "when I saw that all the Catholics and all the publicans were against you, I asked myself how could I, as a Protestant Christian minister and an avowed Temperance man, shirk my duty as a citizen and withhold my vote?"[2] Nor when writing in a more public dimension did Guthrie seek during the 1860s to dim his persistent antipathy to the Church of Rome. Thus, in reminiscences set down during his retirement, he did not hesitate to revive recollections of the "fight" which he had had with the Roman Catholics over religious teaching within the Ragged Schools, and to stress that many priests had"preferred to let the children perish" rather than allow them to be indoctrinated against the principles of the Roman Catholic faith.[3] In 1869, statements on criminal and destitute

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1 Ibid.

2 Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie to Duncan McLaren, quoted in Mackie, Duncan McLaren, Vol. 2, p. 49.
Duncan McLaren himself was, of course, a frequent platform figure at freedmen's aid meetings, and actively involved in receiving and dealing with public contributions to the cause in Edinburgh - see below, Chapter IX, p. 107.

3 Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie, Out of Harness (London, 1867), pp. 13-14.
In early 1866, Guthrie wrote to the Rev. George Caie of New Brunswick (formerly a tutor in the Duke of Argyll's family) expressing his delight at Caie's establishment of a Ragged Schools project. In the course of the letter, he significantly declared: "Better... for many a poor child to have been born in the heart of Africa - barbarous, heathen Africa - than in our own civilised and so-called Christian cities" - see Guthrie to the Rev. George Caie, 5 March, 1866, quoted in Guthrie and Guthrie, Thomas Guthrie, p. 718.

children made by him to the Select Committee on Poor Law (Scotland) clearly revealed that the bias which he had for so long maintained against the Catholic Irish in Scotland continued to flourish as vigorously as ever.[1]

VII. The strengthening of ties between the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and of America, and between the various Scottish sects.

It is easy to appreciate, then, how the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie's avid detestation of Roman Catholicism and his desire to see its doctrines curbed throughout the world could be a paramount influence in encouraging him to persuade fellow Scotsmen to provide generously for the evangelization and education of a large community of freed slaves in America. At the same time, the virulence of his anti-Catholicism would obviously have borne a close relationship to the vigour of the pronouncements which he made at freedmen's aid meetings regarding the vision of an Anglo-American Protestant mission to Christianize and enlighten the world. We have noted the widespread popularity which the idea of a joint missionizing role for Britain and America enjoyed in Scotland at that time. In order for such a concept to take practical shape, there naturally needed to exist a solid phalanx of Protestant forces on both sides of the Atlantic prepared to work in harmony with each other and within themselves. And so far as Scottish and American Presbyterianism was concerned, the 1860s and '70s were in fact a period when tremendous activity was taking place over the question of strengthening the bonds between the Presbyterian Churches of the two countries. For Presbyterian churchmen in the United States, and especially for their counterparts in the dissenting denominations in Scotland, the issue of closer transatlantic association and fraternity was in the years immediately after the Civil War an extremely important one, and one which gave rise (particularly in the first half of the Reconstruction era) to an assiduous

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1 See statements by Guthrie, quoted in Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland, pp. 248-249.

increase in communication and cordiality between the two branches of the faith.

The campaign by deputies from the American freedmen's aid Societies to interest the Scottish people in their appeals thus coincided with this desire and drive within Presbyterian church circles to achieve greater Scottish-American contacts. Since the mechanics of the freedmen's aid movement in Scotland operated to a very considerable extent in association with Scottish churches and Scottish churchmen, there is a distinct possibility that the movement helped in its own right to provide something of a cementing force between Scottish and American Presbyterians. It remains, therefore, to look at the position of the American deputies' appeals for aid in the wider perspective, that is, against the wider background of this transatlantic bid to strengthen Presbyterian goodwill and unity, and to consider, by estimating the importance of that bid, how far it might have been the case that Scottish ministers became involved in the freedmen's aid cause because they recognized it as a means of advancing this wider aspect of Presbyterian friendship.

Thomas Guthrie's consistent emphases in the course of his speeches on behalf of the freedmen's fund on the desirability of a closer union of effort between the Protestant forces of Britain and America actually form a convenient enough starting point for consideration of this particular question since of all the Presbyterian denominations in Scotland, the Free Church was perhaps the most persistently enthusiastic in its attempts to cultivate during the 1860s and '70s a deepening relationship with its Presbyterian brethren in the United States. It is clear that from its inception in 1843, this relatively formidable breakaway sect cherished hopes of a close fraternal affiliation with American Presbyterian churches, founded as these were on the principle of strict separation from the State. Hence, a matter of months after the Disruption, the Rev. Drs. William Cunningham and Burns

had embarked on the celebrated excursion to the United States to try to raise money for the new Church's "Sustentation Fund".[1] Throughout the 1840s and '50s, a steady trickle of ministers had continued to visit America;[2] and the tremendous value which the Free Church early placed on the formation of ever closer ties between itself (and, indeed, between the whole of Britain) and the United States was evidenced in, for instance, the report of the trip there undertaken by the Rev. Dr. Alexander Duff in 1854.[3] The exceedingly warm welcome accorded to Duff on that occasion, and the kindness and cordiality with which his colleagues had also invariably been received, helped to encourage Free Churchmen to believe that the Americans reciprocated in full their desire to strengthen the bonds which connected the Presbyterian Churches on both sides of the Atlantic.

It was, of course, the most important and famous of the Free Church's early ventures in establishing close associations with American Presbyterianism, namely, the fund-raising visit of Cunningham and Burns, which had had the effect of arousing vehement objections from specific elements in both countries to the apparent insensitivity of the Church's approach to American benevolence and goodwill. By accepting for its Fund a considerable sum[4] of

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1 See Thomas Brown (ed.), Annals of the Disruption, Vol. 3, pp. 137-139.

2 Notable amongst those who spent some time in America during these decades were the Rev. Dr. James Begg who visited Canada and the United States in late 1845 - early 1846 and for whom the experience was "an epoch-forming period" in his life, introducing him to new currents of thought on many ecclesiastical and social themes - see Thomas Smith, James Begg, Vol. 2, p. 72; and the Rev. William Arnot, who in 1845 was minister for some months in the newly organized Free Church in Montreal, acting also as chaplain to the 92nd Regiment stationed there, and who made a quick tour through the United States in late 1846 - see A. Fleming, William Arnot, pp 165, 172, 190.

3 See above, pp. 483-484.

4 This has variously been estimated as about £3,000 (Rice, The Scottish Factor, p. 275), and £9,000 with some thousands more to come (Thomas Brown, Annals of the Disruption, Vol. 3, p. 139, citing a report to the General Assembly by the Rev. Dr. William Cunningham).

American money in which was included a substantial contribution from slave-owning Old Presbtyerians in the Southern states, the Free Church brought down upon itself the mighty wrath of the British and American abolitionists. The anti-slavery advocates' sense of anger and outrage was given strident public voice in Scotland through the vigorous Send Back the Money campaign;[1] and it was, significantly, in the light of the blistering attack on Free Church ethics in approving receipt of the Southern donations that one of the denomination's leading spokesmen, the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish, had been prompted to issue a revealing statement on the comparative importance to his Church of preserving firm, amicable links with all Presbyterians in America.

Meeting in the early summer of 1846, when the Send Back the Money agitation was raging at its strongest, the General Assembly of the Free Church included in its proceedings a debate on its relationship to Presbyterian Churches in the United States which admitted slaveholders as members. In reality the debate of course concerned the position which the Free Church could honourably adopt with regard to the Old School Presbyterians' contributions to the Sustentation Fund. But in an extremely significant move, Candlish, commencing the discussion in the Assembly, had defined an altogether different priority by stressing that the question really turned on whether or not the Free Church was justified in keeping up friendly intercourse with the Presbyterian Church of America. From that base, he had gone on to give his personal opinion on the matter, and it was one which may in fact validly be accepted as broadly representative of the view held by the majority of his colleagues at the Assembly. For his part, Candlish had declared, he could not see that any valid issue existed. It was his firm contention at that time that "having been brought

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1 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 275-341.

by circumstances into friendly relations with the American Presbyterian Church", no matter how guilty certain sections of it might be on the slavery question, the stage had not been reached where Scottish Free Churchmen required to feel that they ought to cease friendly association with it. He had even gone so far as to declare that the relationship achieved with the Presbyterian Church of the United States was already in 1846 of such a strength that the Free Church could not easily renounce it: "She [the Free Church] has a variety of duties incumbent on her to that Church with which she has been brought into connection, and she may not even listen to the proposal of breaking off all friendly intercourse, except as a last resort, and after she has discharged all her duties to that Church".[1]

In the course of his address, Candlish had also issued a vehement condemnation of slavery, but had at the same time urged upon the Assembly the need to recognize the circumstances in which the Southern churches were placed and to make allowances for the difficulties of their position.[2] The apparent readiness of Free Church ministers to thus extenuate in some measure the Old School Presbyterians' criminal complicity in slave-holding doubtless helped to keep alive in succeeding years a spark of the abolitionist animosity which had been vented on that denomination in the Send Back the Money campaign. There is at least some slight indication that throughout the mid-century the Free Church, by virtue of the unrepentant policy which it pursued in purposefully seeking to maintain

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1 Extract from speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 1846, quoted in William Wilson, Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1880), p. 379.
In a speech before the same General Assembly, Begg had more positively declared "We will not send back the money. The money is not the worst thing that has come across the Atlantic", and had suggested that the more constructive idea was to co-operate with "the good Christian men of America" who wanted to end slavery - see Thomas Smith, Annals of the Disruption, Vol. 2, pp. 86-87.

2 William Wilson, Robert Smith Candlish, p. 380.

friendly, harmonious relations with all American Presbyterians, came under continuing censure from Scottish emancipationists for its close associations with American churches and churchmen, both South and North, who were condoning slavery. Thus although her complaint against clerical acquaintance of that nature was couched in a broader British context, it was against the background of an exceedingly active, instrumental role in the Send Back the Money agitation and, incidentally, also against the immediate background of the Rev. Dr. Duff's highly successful American visit, that Sarah Wigham, President of the ELES, wrote in late November, 1854, to the organizers of the imminent Anti-Slavery Conference, drawing their special attention to the guilt of the American churches in regard to slavery, "and the danger of being involved in their guilt which British churches incur by receiving them on terms of perfect religious fellowship, associating in their reciprocity schemes, and recognizing them as true Christian brethren".[1]

Yet more positive evidence that there existed during the 1850s among Scottish abolitionists a persistent suspicion of the nature and extent of Free Church liaison with American Presbyterians was contained in a letter written earlier in 1854 by Sarah Wigham's sister Eliza to L.A. Chamerovzow, secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. In that, the secretary of the ELES expressed her personal consternation regarding the British and Foreign Bible Society's action in sending the Rev. Dr. Duff as a representative to attend the annual meeting of the American Bible Society: "Should it not be looked to? We have been jealous of Dr. Duff for some

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1 Sarah Wigham to the Anti-Slavery Conference to be held in London, 29 and 30 Nov., 1854, Edinburgh, 27 Nov., 1854, A-sl.P., C160/222.
Sarah Wigham indicated that her Society would be glad to see measures adopted to impress on British Christians the injury incurred to the anti-slavery cause by allowing "considerations of expediency and Christian union" to take the place of Christian and moral principles.

time, believing he goes, though not ostensibly, to collect money for the [F]ree[C]hurch - but this of course is a surmise of our own and may have no foundation so should not be given forth".[1]

Despite the continuing coldness towards it of Scotland's leading emancipationists, it would nevertheless appear, however, that the Free Church did increasingly emerge during the 1850s as an anti-slavery force in its own right.[2] The development of a more pronounced and concerted commitment to abolitionism was demonstrated in, for instance, the prominent part assumed by Free Church ministers (included amongst whom was Robert Candlish) in according an extremely warm welcome to the Rev. Dr. Cheever during his fund-raising visit to Scotland in 1859.[3] This new involvement meant not only that there came about a new rapproachment with the United Presbyterian and smaller unendowed Presbyterian denominations within Scotland based on an ending of the sectarian bitterness so virulently intensified by Send Back the Money and on co-operation in working together for the anti-slavery cause:[4] it meant also that there opened up a new

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1 Eliza Wigham to L.A. Chamerovzow, Edinburgh, 15 May, 1854, ibid., C37/64.

2 Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, p. 85 has argued that the "chief new feature" of that period was the emergence of the Free Church as a champion of emancipationist activity.

3 See Dr. Cheever and American Slavery. Report of Public Meeting... Edinburgh...December 22, 1859; Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, p. 34; G.C. Taylor, Some American Reformers, pp. 146-147, in which it is suggested that leading men of the Free Church such as Candlish, Guthrie and Buchanan staunchly supported Cheever partly because he had earlier stressed the need to get rid of State supported churches in Britain, partly because, as individuals who had experienced the Disruption split, they sympathized with the atmosphere of discord Cheever was subjected to, and partly because the Free Church wished to shake off its image of involvement with slavery.

4 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, p. 34; and, for some indication of the inter-denominational support for anti-slavery sentiment in Scotland by the middle phase of the Civil War years, Report of Proceedings of public meeting held in the Free Church Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, 14 Oct., 1863, to hear Henry Ward Beecher (pamphlet).

avenue of sympathetic association with an increasingly vocal element in Northern society in the United States.

With the abolition of slavery and the ending of the Civil War, Free Church moves to consolidate a firm friendship with American Presbyterian Churches naturally acquired much greater, freer scope; and those who sought to reflect and to articulate, as well as to guide, the general spirit of Free Church members lost no time in taking full advantage of the changed circumstances. Thus, at an early session of the 1865 General Assembly, a number of those present supported an overture urging the Assembly to consider addressing the Evangelical Churches of America with regard to "the probable restoration of peace" and the achievement of abolition in the United States.[1] In reply, Candlish expressed his confidence that the suggested move would be agreed to without discussion, and he did indeed gain unanimous support for his subsequent motion that the overture be approved and a committee appointed to draft an address.[2]

As we have already had occasion to note,[3] the draft of the address to the Evangelical Churches in the United States of America was duly read before a later sitting of the General Assembly. Its entire tone admirably reflected the immense importance which Free Churchmen of the time placed upon the advancement of good relations with American Presbyterians. In sending greetings to the American churches on the victory which had lately been won for emancipation, the address rejoiced that the old "divergence of sentiment and action" between Britain and America on slavery had gone; and clearly taking its cue from an optimistic conviction that abolition afforded brighter prospects for future association between Protestant churches on the

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1 See report of overture read on 20 May, 1865 at the General Assembly of the Free Church, in Scotsman, 22 May, 1865.

2 See ibid.

3 See above, pp. 491-492.

opposite sides of the Atlantic, it pressed the logicality and desirability of closer friendship amongst the forces of transatlantic Presbyterianism. The General Assembly of the Free Church had every cause, the address contended, to communicate sentiments of "brotherly kindness and charity" towards members of the same Presbyterian family. It was held desirable that Evangelicals in America and in Scotland should come as quickly as possible to appreciate the necessity for the cultivation of a deeper relationship between churches possessing a common language, ancestry, and faith: "Presbyterianism would thereby become vastly more influential for good". And turning briefly to consideration of practical means whereby the grand pan-Presbyterian design could be fostered and encouraged, the special committee's address stressed the advantages which could accrue from reciprocal visits by deputies from the churches in both countries. While Scotland had much to learn from "the varied schemes of Christian usefulness" in the United States, the Americans, it was suggested, might also profit from a study of the functioning of Presbyterianism in Scotland.[1]

The task of concluding the Assembly's proceedings relative to American affairs devolved on the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, and in his speech he broadened the dimension of the outlook on efforts to increase goodwill with American Presbyterians by depicting the church as an institution which could - and must - help to repair the recently strained relations and cement a new friendship between Britain and America as a whole. Buchanan envisaged the importance of a developing close association between Scottish and American Churches as pertaining not to the religious and evangelistic sphere only but also to the secular, political sphere, where he believed the connection would work to ensure peace between the two nations.[2]

By the following year, the Free Church was already able, presumably,

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1 Draft of an address to the Evangelical Churches of the United States, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1865, pp. 271-272.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Buchanan, in ibid., p. 276.

to claim some success for its drive to establish closer affiliations with its Presbyterian brethern in the United States since at the 1866 General Assembly there was present a delegate from the controversial Old School Presbyterians of America. Reciprocating in full measure the expressions of goodwill which the Scottish Evangelicals had earlier sent across the Atlantic, the Rev. Richard Lea stressed the closeness and similarities of worship which existed between his Church and the Free Church, and to loud applause, he concluded his address to the Assembly by stating that he had come before it with the primary purpose of "extend[ing] the hand of fellowship" to the Free Church.[1] The theme of goodwill, closer ties and reconciliation was immediately continued in the speech of another visiting American, G. H. Stuart, former chairman of the much vaunted Sanitary and Christian Commission. Having furnished graphic details of the functioning of the Commission in war-time, Stuart ended by issuing an appeal for Federal union between the various Presbyterian bodies in Scotland and America and for the mutual and regular appointment of delegates by one country to the other.[2]

Amid this atmosphere of harmony and the urge to consolidate warm, close relations between Presbyterians on both sides of the Atlantic, the Rev. Sella Martin and the Rev. William Patton took their places as speakers on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause. They themselves could scarcely have failed to have been affected by the mood of the 1866 General Assembly: and not least important was the fact that they were appearing alongside a representative of the Old School Presbyterians, the group whose position in America on the slavery question, as much as its position on more exclusively theological issues, had of course been instrumental in bringing about the split in the ranks of American Presbyterianism in 1837-38.[3] Perhaps the communication and

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Richard Lea at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 2 June, 1866, in ibid., June, 1866, p. 322.

2 Report of speech by G. H. Stuart, Philadelphia, in ibid., pp. 322-323.

3 See Staiger, "Abolitionism and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-38". pp. 391-414.

contact which the Rev. Richard Lea and the AMA deputies had with each other (as fellow Americans, if nothing else) at the 1866 General Assembly helped also in some small measure to bring together the divergent strands of religious affiliation which existed within America itself.

Certainly, the mission of Martin and Patton would not only have coincided with, but would also significantly have helped to advance the drive towards closer ties between the Presbyterian churches in the two countries. It was after all not feasible for Free Churchmen to consider and deal with the individual members of the various American deputations in isolation. These inevitably tended to be seen, it would appear, as "the American delegation", and in winding up the Assembly's concentration on United States matters, Candlish had to convey his approval and advocacy of Martin and Patton's appeal in virtually the same breath as he indicated that the Free Church would send deputations to visit the Old School Presbyterians and other American churches, and in combination also with his sentiments regarding the Christian Commission. The freedmen's aid appeals fitted into a general mood of great new interest and enthusiasm in building up a warm relationship with American Presbyterians, and must be seen in that context. A significant part of their impact lay in the opportunity which they provided for Scottish Presbyterian churches to do something practical to facilitate closer links with America.[1] The freedmen's aid fund was a truly humanitarian, philanthropic, Christian scheme which commanded the support of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches for its own sake but which in so doing also became (and consciously for those Scots who spoke for it) a vehicle for advancing general goodwill between Britain and the United States. And sharing to a very large extent in this goodwill and increased communication would have been, of course, the Free Church and, indeed, the other Scottish Presbyterian Churches which actively exerted themselves on behalf of the American freedmen.

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1 The Free church was apparently restricted by its rules from launching an official collection for the freedmen's aid appeals (see below, Chapter IX, p. 24), but its leading lights did, as we have repeatedly seen, tend to be deeply involved in public advocacy of the cause

In the following year, at the 1867 General Assembly of the Free Church, tremendous strides forward were taken in ennunciating the urge for unity between the Presbyterian Churches of America, between the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland, and between the Churches of America and Scotland. Foremost in promoting these sentiments were the American delegates, present in much greater number than at the previous Assembly. Whereas on that occasion only one minister from the Old School Presbyterian Church had attended, in 1867 that sect sent two; and for the very first time, the New School Presbyterians were also represented, two delegates from the more liberal wing of American Presbyterianism being received with all due cordiality by the Free Church in its assembled might and splendour. Completing the contingent of visitors from the Presbyterian Churches of the United States was a minister from Pennsylvania whose prime purpose in visiting Scotland was to attend the United Presbyterian Synod but who was identified at the Free Church General Assembly as being associated with the delegates from the Old School Presbyterian Church.[1]

In the course of their addresses, both Old and New School representatives were at great pains to stress the vital connections and similarities between the Presbyterian ethos of Scotland and America. But of all the speakers, none dwelt more heavily upon the theme of their Church's close affinity with Scottish Presbyterianism than did the leading deputy from the Old School Presbyterians, the Rev. Dr. M. Judson Hickok. It is important to note here that around that time (this is, by the later 1860s), the Free Church, according to its organ the Presbyterian, saw the Old School Presbyterian Church of America as broadly equivalent to itself "in spirit, doctrine, and modes of action".[2] Doubtlessly fortified by the Free Church's view, the Rev. Dr. Hickok boldly placed overwhelming emphasis on the Scottish roots of Old School Presbyterianism and on the manner in which his sect had stuck rigidly

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1 See Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867, p. 58.

2 See Presbyterian, No. 11, March, 1869, p.12.

by the spirit of these origins in the face of constant potential pitfalls and temptations.

It was, Hickok declared at the outset of his speech before the Assembly, the "highest honour" of his life to be the bearer of a message from the "great Free Old School Presbyterian Church in the United States to the great Free Church of Scotland". Inasmuch as it was ruled by Scottish ecclesiastical laws and precedents the denomination to which he belonged had, he asserted, always looked on Scotland as the mother country and especially as the mother Church. Vigorously approving of intensified communication and closer co-operation between the Presbyterians of America and Scotland, he intimated that an increased "interchange of Christian courtesy" would definitely be profitable to the Old School since its wide geographical separation from the Scottish community and the peculiar, inimical pressures exerted on American religious practice by the continuation of frontier conditions presented a constant danger that the American Presbyterian Church would "drift...off to new experiments of religious activity, if not from the old landmarks of Protestant theology". [1] At the same time, however, Hickok clearly inferred that the Old School Presbyterian Church was the last body likely to succumb to such an undesirable course of development. With a thinly disguised jibe at the doctrines of the New School Presbyterians, he stated that the Old School gloried in the fact that it "walks in the old ways wherein you and your fathers have delighted to go. Ours has been denominated 'Scotch Theology', and Scotch Presbyterianism, in distinction from some prized improvements called American Presbyterianism". Because its adherents had clung so steadfastly to Scottish Presbyterian tenets, "We desire a living connection with you, that the old stock may impart its root and fatness to the swift growths three thousand miles away". [2]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. M. Judson Hickok at the Free Church General Assembly, 27 May, 1867, in Procs. Free Church G. A., May, 1867. pp. 59-60.

2 Ibid., p. 60.

Speaking in relatively more general terms, the Rev. Mr. Parke, the minister from Pennsylvania who had been deputed to visit the Scottish U. P. Synod and who was also connected to the Old School sect in the United States, emphasized the sympathetic bond which all American Presbyterians felt with Scotland, and the knowledge of the country which they and the American people as a whole psssessed. Recalling how he personally had been educated in the ways of the old Scottish Presbyterian Church, and how down through the years he had heard most of the great Free Church orators, Parke went on to explain that in contemporary times, the religious and ecclesiastical journals in America still continued to provide detailed information relating to the Church in Scotland.[1]

The delegates from the New School Presbyterian Church of America were scarcely less eager to profess their awareness of and reverence for the very special connection which existed between their denomination and the land which they recognized as the seat of their Presbyterian faith. Enthusing over the fact that it was his first visit to Scotland, the Rev. Dr. Ezra Eastman Adams demonstrated his absorption with the culture and traditions of the country by lapsing into praises of Ossian, Burns, Allan Ramsay and the metaphysicians, and by paying fulsome tribute to the Scots' celebrated reputation as logicians, debaters and pulpit orators.[2] Still more explicit in expressing the respectful interest of the New School in the abiding influence of Scottish Presbyterianism and Scottish mores on America was the Rev. Dr. H. M. Field. As an American, Field stressed, he did not feel himself a stranger in Scotland, since apart from certain geographical similarities in the two countries and a likeness in character between the people of Scotland and America ("you would find [in the United States] the same domestic scenes described in Burns"), he personally had a thorough knowledge of Scottish history and therefore of the debt which

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Mr. Parke, in ibid., pp. 62-63.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Ezra Eastman Adams, in ibid., p. 66.

America owed to the old country. He did not consider it a forced comparison to state that there was a "great resemblance" between the Scottish and the American (and especially the New England) mind, particularly in the mutual fondness for metaphysical discussion. While acknowledging that Scotland had provided a large number of the early, influential Presbyterian ministers in America, Field suggested that through the contributions to Presbyterianism of such men as Jonathan Edwards, the United States had also given Scotland something in return. It was his basic conviction, indeed, that the "great thinkers and writers" of both countries, strengthened immensely by the specific vein of Presbyterianism, had established a tie that drew Americans to Scotland more than to any land in Europe - including England. Acutely conscious that delegates from the New School Presbyterian Church had never before attended a Free Church General Assembly, Field earnestly voiced his hopes that there had begun a long, close association with the Evangelicals of Scotland.[1]

In his address, Field did not seek to avoid the issue of the 1838 split in American Presbyterianism. Bringing it straight into the foreground, he contended that while there had been many contributory causes, the theological differences had not in themselves been sufficient to produce separation. The great principal troubles of the American Presbyterian Church at that time had, he declared, centred around slavery and it had been the New School's opposition to that institution, an opposition judged radical and extreme by its detractors, which had offended the churches in the South and precipitated the schism.[2]

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. H. M. Field, in ibid., pp. 69-70. Field and Adams definitely represented the New School Presbyterian Church - see ibid., p. 72, but were wrongly described as delagates from the Old School in the published proceedings of the General Assembly - see ibid., p. 58.

2 Report of speech by Field, in ibid., p. 72.

Appreciably more acrimonious and provocative however had been the Rev. Dr. Adams' observations on that theme. Having listened to Hickok's euology on Old School principles, Adams stressed that he personally had been drawn into support of the other sect mainly because of its exemption from association with slaveholders. The New School Presbyterians were freer, he argued, because "we were delivered from the burden and curse of slavery before our honoured brethren of the other branch had the power or the courage to achieve their emancipation".[1]

Thus, while its delegates at the Scottish Free Church General Assembly eagerly stressed the Old School's righteousness in adhering strictly to the rigid tenets of Scottish Presbyterianism, the New School just as eagerly stressed its righteousness in embracing a creed which exonerated it completely, as the Old School could not be exonerated, of guilt over the question of slavery. This vying to outdo each other in their chosen spheres of virtue did not, however, prevent either of the American branches from emphasizing the desirability of union of the Presbyterian forces in the United States. On behalf of the Old School, Hickok illustrated how the Scottish Free Church General Assembly could become a platform from which to announce to Presbyterians in Scotland (and in America, whence his speech would certainly have been communicated) the willingness of his denomination to appreciate the need for unity within the American Presbyterian Church, and its readiness to move in that direction. He was even prepared to ask the Free Church to help in welding together the disparate forces of American Presbyterianism.[2] Echoing Hickok's sentiments, Adams for the New School saw no real bar to Presbyterian unity in the United States, considering as he did that "the vast majority of our laymen regard the difference [between Old and New Schools] as an old quarrel of ministers, and feel that it ought to be forgotten". In

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1 Report of speech by Adams, in ibid., pp. 66-67. Original emphasis.

2 Report of speech by Hickok, in ibid., p. 62.

view of the ending of a clear-cut distinction between the two groups, he called for all Presbyterians to unite "in some grand plan of Christian work". Field, although not overconfident that union could immediately be achieved, also welcomed the idea in principle and conceded that old animosities had largely withered away.[1]

It was, therefore, against a background of intense concentration upon the links between Scottish and American Presbyterianism, and the possibility of reunion and reconciliation between estranged Presbyterian sects in the United States that the Rev. James A. Thome addressed the 1867 Free Church General Assembly on behalf of the AMA. The Rev. Dr. Adams had earlier in the same day urged that American Presbyterians get together "in some grand plan of Christian work", and it might be suggested that the freedmen's aid cause, brought so expeditiously to mind by Thome's appeal, would have presented itself to at least some of the American delegates and the Free Churchmen present as an admirable Christian labour in which all Presbyterians in the United States could unite and find a new spirit of harmony in philanthropic endeavour. Furthermore, it could also be looked upon as a project which might help to establish even closer co-operation and goodwill between the Presbyterian communities in America and Scotland. Certainly, in warmly recommending the freedmen's cause as one worthy of the Free Church's deepest concern, the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish tended to identify the churches in the Northern states, as well as the American freedmen's aid Societies, as playing a major role in providing for the spiritual and material welfare of the emancipated slaves.[2]

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1 Report of speeches by Adams and Field, in ibid., pp. 68,72.

2 See report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish, in ibid., p. 77. Candlish on this occasion expressed his "exceeding delight" at the resumption of close Free Church relations with the American churches.

The 1868 General Assembly saw the continuation of the exceedingly heartening and congenial atmosphere which had by then come to surround the discussion of American business. In attendance as a delegate from the New School Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Dr. P.H. Fowler of Utica made it plain that the goodwill which the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie felt towards America, and which he so assiduously strove to cultivate in the Scottish public in his speeches on behalf of the freedmen's aid cause, was reciprocated in full measure by the Americans towards the famous minister himself. Regretting that Guthrie had been unable to visit the United States, Fowler informed the Assembly that there was around his name "a halo in the eyes of the Presbyterians of America".[1] For their part, the Scottish Free Churchmen rejoiced over the good relations existing between the Scottish and American churches, and over the manner in which a recent trip to America by Principal Fairbairn had reinforced the bonds of sympathy in that regard.[2] Having clearly taken due note of the Assembly's active preoccupation with Presbyterian unity and the good Christian fellowship which would come about through an increased commitment to strengthening the faith in America, the Rev. Sella Martin shrewdly styled his appeal for freedmen's aid to fit the prevailing mood by stressing the duty which the Scottish people had as <u>good Presbyterians</u> to give assistance in the task of providing for the spiritual education of the freed Negroes.[3]

In the following year, the extent of work being undertaken amongst the

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. P.H. Fowler, at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 26 May, 1868, in <u>ibid.</u>, May, 1868, p. 97.
Guthrie was certainly famous and revered in America although he had never visited it - see, for instance, Oliphant, <u>Memoir of John Tulloch</u>, p. 293.

2 See report of speeches by Principal Fairbairn, the Moderator (Rev. W. Nixon), Charles Cowan, in <u>Procs. Free Church G.A.</u>, May, 1868, pp. 96-97, 99-100.

3 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin, in <u>ibid.</u>, p. 99.

freedmen in the Southern states formed a theme within the content of the address delivered to the Free Church General Assembly by a member of the visiting delegation from the Old School, the Rev. Dr. Davidson. As well as the usual professions of reverence and filial regard for Scottish Presbyterianism, Davidson in his speech provided the Assembly with details of the position of the Old School Presbyterian Church in the United States. As we have already noted, included in the general survey was the information that the Church had 165 missionaries engaged in labouring among the emancipated slaves. The Old School Presbyterians, Davidson declared, had felt that an "increasing obligation" rested on them to look after the spiritual interests of the freedmen.[1] The importance of the Old School's efforts in the home missionary sphere did not pass unappreciated by the ministers of the Free Church. In his address acknowledging the contributions made to the proceedings by the United States deputies, the Moderator, the Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff, not only put on record his delight at the expressions of friendship voiced by the Americans but also, significantly, indicated his great pleasure at the fact that American Presbyterians were exhibiting a missionary zeal which, in his opinion, could play a critical part in removing the differences and animosities which existed in all sections of society between North and South.[2] And testifying to the continuing rapproachment within Scotland itself of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches at that time, and to the way in which the freedmen's aid cause could advance closer communication and co-operation between the two sects, was the fact that David Macrae, a prominent U.P. personality (although not yet ordained as a minister), attended the 1869 Free Church General Assembly and spoke on behalf of the AMA.[3]

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1 See above, p. 480.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrieff, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1869, p. 218.

3 See ibid., p. 217.

Something of the tremendous importance which the Free Church attached to the concept of union within the Presbyterian family on both sides of the Atlantic was reflected in the July, 1868 issue of the Presbyterian. In its columns, the Free Church members who conducted the magazine exuberantly welcomed the moves for union between Old and New Schools in America as steps towards a goal which, if accomplished, would "give a blessed impulse and ascendancy to the Presbyterianism of the New World, and could not fail in some measure to soften down the opposition to similar movements amongst ourselves".[1] When the Old and New Schools' unity was finally achieved in 1870, the Presbyterian enthused over it as an occasion of unprecedented import for the Presbyterian Church.[2]

In that year (1870), no American deputies were present at the Free Church General Assembly: but in a gesture which more than compensated for the temporary absence, the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie and the Rev. William Arnot went as Free Church representatives to the grand American Presbyterian reunion in Philadelphia. That event was formally constituted by a General Assembly comprising churchmen from both bodies of the erstwhile divided Church. And significantly, the visiting Arnot and Blaikie came to learn through the actual proceedings at the Assembly of the scale of work at that time being undertaken by American Presbyterians among the black population in the Southern states. On 3 June, there was presented the report of the Standing Committee on Freedmen - an account which was presumably based on a combination of the statistics of the missionary activity engaged in by the pre-union Old and New Schools,[3] and which conveyed an extremely heartening survey of

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1 Presbyterian, No. 3, July, 1868, p. 5.

2 See ibid., No. 3, New Series, Vol. 2, July, 1870, p. 58.

3 As we have seen (pp. 474-476 above), the New School Presbyterians had been significantly involved in organized labours among the freedmen through the Home Mission, and Old School efforts, though possibly of a later vintage, had been inaugurated by 1870 (see above, p.557).

Presbyterian achievement in that sphere up until 1870. It was intimated that for the year 1869-70, the Committee had received contributions totalling $49,029.10 as against an expenditure of $42,668.79, and had had under its care 157 missionaries (105 of whom were Negroes), 69 churches with 5,264 communicants and 76 schools with 5,220 pupils. Over the previous four years, the report stated, the number of missionaries had more than doubled; the number of schools, Sabbath Schools, and pupils had increased threefold; and the communicants tenfold. Working in connection with the Presbyterian Committee of Home Missions was an organization termed the Department of Freedmen, and the two agencies together had in 1869 raised $86,201.82 and spent no less than $88,439.32. Their combined missionary/teacher strength was 355, and in their schools were 9,220 pupils.[1]

In addition to these encouraging figures, the report indicated that the American Presbyterian Church planned to streamline and expand its activities among the freedmen in the coming years. A committee designated "The Presbyterian Committee of Missions for Freedmen" was to be established in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, which would take over the papers, the funds and the work of the earlier diverse committees and would intensify the effort to provide for the religious and educational welfare of the Negroes. And it was also resolved at the General Assembly that each Presbytery be required to appoint a committee of one to bring the cause before each Presbyterian church in the United States. The notable concentration on the task of educating and evangelizing the freedmen clearly sprang from a heightened sense of duty on the part of the reunited Presbyterian Church. Stressing that without "elevation", the freed Negroes would become a prey to "intemperance, religious deception, and political chicanery", the report declared that "if our Church shall fail to come up to the help of the Lord in elevating this people, we

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1 Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (New York, 1870), p. 104.

2 Ibid., p. 105.

shall have reason to fear His frown".[1]

Following the report of the Standing Committee, the General Assembly heard from a Permanent Committee on Freedmen. Also plainly aware of an obligation resting upon American Presbyterians to do their utmost for the former slaves, that body informed the Assembly that God was calling on the reunited Presbyterian Church to prosecute the mission among the freedmen with "renewed vigour". Certainly, there appeared to be some positive need for an incitement to greater support for the cause since the report of the Permanent Committee did focus upon certain limitations on the success and achievements attained by American Presbyterianism in that particular sphere of mission work. Hence it stated, for instance, that the Presbyterian effort had been unable through inadequate contributions to expand the work into new mission fields in the Southern states. But such restrictions notwithstanding, the resumé of the committee's work which was presented to the General Assembly still conveyed an impression that healthy enough progress has been made by American Presbyterians in attending to the spiritual education of the freedmen. Thus the report indicated that in the five years of the committee's existence, the total contributions by churches and individuals had reached $135,263.54, with excess expenditure being met by the United States government and the Board of Domestic Missions and Church Extension. Over the same period, missionary numbers had increased from 77 to 157 (including an increase in Negro missionaries of 41 to 78), while the total of churches had risen from 6 to 75.[2]

For the Scottish ministers who were present at the 1870 General Assembly of the newly reunited Presbyterian Church of America, therefore, there was palpable reassurance that any efforts made in the past by their own churches

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1 Ibid., p. 105.

2 Ibid., p. 185.

on behalf of the freedmen had been, and were still being, amply paralleled by efforts by Presbyterians in the United States. It is likely that that knowledge was particularly welcome to the Rev. William Arnot. Along with Principal Fairbairn and the Rev. James Wells of Glasgow, he had previously in 1867 visited the United States as a Free Church delegate to the Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church, replacing Thomas Guthrie who had become too unwell to undertake the journey.[1] His decision to accept for a second time the request that he form part of the Free Church deputation was principally influenced by the fact that he looked upon the 1870 reunion as an opportunity for strengthening the Presbyterian Church at a critical point in its history: "It is a great crisis for the Presbyterian Church throughout the world, and some good may result from our intercourse. It is an advantage that, so far as I am known in America, I am known as a sympathiser".[2] Arnot could, indeed, claim that he had been "a fast friend to the North, in public and private, throughout their darkest days",[3] and immediately prior to his trips to the United States during the Reconstruction years, he had taken a consistent and relatively prominent part in public activities in Scotland on behalf of freedmen's aid, attending (and occasionally speaking at) meetings,[4] and sponsoring Sella Martin,[5] for instance. He was still actively recommending the cause to the generosity of the Scottish people as late as 1869.[6]

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1 See A. Fleming (ed.) William Arnot, pp. 412-413.

2 Ibid., p. 429.

3 Arnot, quoted in ibid., p. 414.

4 See, for instance, Scotsman, 6 Dec., 1865; 3 July, 1866.

5 See North British Daily Mail, 19 Sept., 1865; Sella Martin to unidentified correspondent (probably Aspinall Hampson), Glasgow, 18 Aug., 1865, A-sl.P., C159/68; James Sinclair (secretary, Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society) to Dr. F. Tomkins, Glasgow, 17 Aug., 1865, ibid,, C160/70.

6 See Daily Review, 23 March, 1869.

Especially in view of the information which he gained at the reunifying American General Assembly of 1870 on the impressive scale of Presbyterian work among the freedmen, it is possible, then, that Arnot would have detected some complementary aspects in his twin involvement in furthering the cause of the liberated American slaves and furthering the cause of closer relationships and goodwill between the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and America.

By contrast, his companion on the important 1870 visit to the United States, the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie, would appear to have had no direct close involvement with the freedmen's aid movement in Scotland. At the same time, however, his sentiments on the recent conflict in America were at least firmly in keeping with those of Arnot, for he had definitely supported the North during the Civil War,[1] and he believed that the ending of armed hostilities and the abolition of slavery had very greatly deepened British regard for America.[2] Furthermore, he was prepared at the time of his attendance at the American Presbyterian reunion in Philadelphia to recognise slavery as a major cause of the schism of 1838.[3]

If, after the removal of the divisive force of slavery, staunch Presbyterians on both sides of the Atlantic eagerly wished to see a complete reconciliation and unification between the Old and New School branches of American Presbyterianism, their concurrent zeal in also promoting ever closer links between Scottish and American Presbyterianism likewise stemmed in part from the knowledge that the vanished institution of slavery had in the recent past created a break in the Scottish Free Church's harmonious relations with

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1 See Blaikie, "War Scenes"; Gettysburg and Petersburg" in Sunday Magazine, May, 1871, p. 475.

2 Blaikie, "America and the Americans" in ibid., Oct., 1870 p. 2.

3 Blaikie, "Philadelphia" in ibid., Jan, 1871, pp. 220-222.

one section of the American Presbyterian Church. The basis of the rift had been plainly illustrated in 1860 when the Free Church decided to exclude from the celebrations of the tercentenary of the Scottish Reformation all visiting American ministers who were "pro-slavery" in their views.[1] Throughout the Civil War years the estrangement had naturally persisted, and it was only with abolition and the cessation of hostilities that there could conceivably appear prospects for remedying the unhappy situation. During the Reconstruction era, the attendance of American Presbyterian ministers at the Free Church General Assemblies did provide convincing evidence that old differences between Scottish Evangelical Presbyterians and certain of their transatlantic brethren would rapidly be patched up, and the sense of relief and pleasure with which Free Churchmen welcomed that development was reflected in remarks made by Candlish relative to the American deputation at the 1867 General Assembly. Expressing his "exceeding delight" at the resumption of relations with all branches of the American Presbyterian Church, Candlish stressed that he deeply regretted the "interruption of friendly intercourse" with one part of the Church in the United States which had taken place several years earlier. At the same time, he significantly observed that "The point turned upon slavery, that curse which, wherever it exists, destroys all human feelings, and almost all Christian sympathies".[2]

In recognizing the South's peculiar institution as the wedge which had driven the Free Church and a section of the American Presbyterian Churches apart, Candlish claimed that he personally had played an instrumental role in urging his colleagues to break off fraternal associations with the errant "pro-slavery" contingent of American clergymen.[3] In yet an earlier period,

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1 See Botsford, Scotland and the American Civil War, pp. 92-97.

2 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Robert Candlish at the Free Church General Assembly, May, 1867, in Procs. Free Church G.A., May, 1867, p. 76.

3 See ibid.

however, the prominent Scottish minister had certainly not shown himself so anxious that his Church totally dissociate itself from the slaveholding Presbyterians and their clerical champions in America.[1] Antedating the Scottish Evangelicals' adoption in the 1850s of a healthy anti-slavery stance, the Free Church's general conduct over the acceptance of money from slaveowners had, as we have observed, helped to earn for it the distrust of American emancipationists - including, presumably, a proportion of those who were at that time members of the New School Presbyterian Church. It might be suggested that the Free Church, in bringing down upon itself a spirit of animosity strong enough to produce the Send Back the Money campaign, would also to some extent have soured and disappointed the illusions of many liberally-minded New School Presbyterians who under happier circumstances might have been expected to form amicable, valuable connections with the Scottish Evangelicals in the 1840s. The harsh realities of the recent past meant that for all its later denunciations of the Presbyterian clergy of America who condoned slaveholding, the Free Church could not totally obliterate the recollection that, while always condemning actual human bondage, it had itself at one stage profited directly from the fruits of slavery.

Although, admittedly, no concrete evidence has been found which could back up the assumption, it may nevertheless be valid to suggest that the energetic and enthusiastic response which Free Churchmen gave to the freedmen's aid cause was at least partly due to a desire (perhaps, in some instances, an essentially subconscious one) to atone for the earlier acceptance of Southern money. Active public commitment to the cause of the emancipated American slave was after all a splendidly fitting way in which to redress the Free Church action of 1843, and thereby to reinforce

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1 See above, pp. 542-543.

better fellowship with the traditionally "anti-slavery" wing of American Presbyterianism.

On the other hand, however, there are signs that on the American side at least, there had evolved by the Reconstruction era a completely and startlingly different attitude to the funds which had been contributed by the United States to the newly formed Free Church, an attitude which, so far as the American freedmen's aid movement was concerned, meant that involvement of Free Churchmen in the cause could be interpreted not as expiatory action for earlier Free Church misdemeanour but as natural reciprocal action for earlier American help. Thus, in his appeal on behalf of the AMA addressed to the 1866 Free Church General Assembly, the Rev. Dr. Patton made it plain that he considered that a positive obligation to assist in providing for the freedmen devolved upon Scottish Evangelicals not only on account of the American aid which had been given during the famine in Ireland and the distress in Lancashire, but also because of the help received by the Free Church itself "in the great emergency of the Disruption".[1] When circumstances dictated that some cause might be served to advantage by representing the American financial donation to the Free Church in a certain uncontroversial manner, the previous furore over the source of a sizeable proportion of the United States contribution was therefore apparently easily forgotten.

This practice of selective recollection for a specific purpose was perhaps yet more vividly demonstrated at a subsequent Free Church General Assembly, meeting in the early 1870s. By 1873, the tremendous will to re-establish the closest of relations between American and Scottish Presbyterians was still very much alive. And it was in that connection, by

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. W. Patton at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 2 June, 1866, in Procs. Free Church G.A., June, 1866, p. 320.

way of illustrating the deep fraternal bonds which had long existed between Presbyterian Churches in the two countries, that an American deputy, the Rev. Dr. Irving, told that year's General Assembly of how, as a student at Princeton College at the time of the Disruption, he had had the task of collecting "material aid" for the new Scottish Evangelical body. Recalling that he had raised nearly £100 which he had sent "with other contributions" to Scotland, Irving with unabashed candour stated that he had afterwards heard of a great "Send Back the Money" campaign, and that he personally had been happy that the Free Church had displayed "the heart and grace not only of getting but of keeping".[1] With a span of three decades between the actual episode and his open reference to it, Irving was therefore able deftly to circumnavigate the original, real nature of the difficulties over "Send Back the Money" by putting emphasis firmly on the Northern contributions to the Free Church and discreetly (if somewhat ludicrously) ignoring those from the South. The clear implication in his speech was that the "Send Back the Money" campaign was directed against all the money from all the states, rather than against merely the large contributions from the Southern slaveholders. In retrospect, it perhaps seems strange that any American minister seeking to promote goodwill and co-operation between the Presbyterians of Scotland and the United States should have chosen to dredge up so sensitive and potentially thorny an issue at all. But it may have been that Irving's astoundingly forthright reflections represented an attempt to prove that by the early 1870s, there was nothing that the two branches of Presbyterianism on either side of the Atlantic needed to keep quiet or to be embarrassed about. In the interests of furthering Presbyterian friendship and harmony, no less than in encouraging Scottish contributions for freedmen's aid, even a suitably distorted vision of one

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Dr. Irving at the General Assembly of the Free Church, 30 May, 1873, in ibid., May, 1873, p. 245.

of the most divisive intervals in the past relationship between Scottish Evangelical Presbyterianism and its American opposite number could be put to audacious good use by visiting Americans.

When this has been recognized, however, it nevertheless remains an undeniable reality that slavery was at the bottom of the strained relations which had existed between the Scottish Free Church and various sections of American Presbyterianism throughout the mid-nineteenth century. And perhaps more important than the actual construction which they liked to put upon it was the basic fact that American speakers at the Free Church General Assemblies during the Reconstruction years clearly had kept in mind the occasion on which the Scottish denomination had received funds from the United States. Thus although Patton's reference to that episode was in no way provocative or overtly designed to stir up uncomfortable memories in an effort to rally still more Free Churchmen to active support of freedmen's aid, at the same time, it would just have been possible for some members of the Assembly to interpret that part of his speech as containing a broad hint to them that Free Church support of the appeal was no more than due recompense for the financial contributions from the Northern states which had helped the Church at its inception. With every allusion, then, tending to point back to slavery as the pivotal theme of discord between Scottish Evangelicals and their American brethern, and with leading Free Churchmen readily acknowledging Southern slaveholding as the source of all their unhappy past relationships with American Presbyterians, it seems likely that the Free Church would have been particularly grateful to discover a tangible way of re-establishing friendship and communication which was directly connected with the old source of alienation. Precisely such an outlet was presented in the freedmen's aid movement.

The peculiar circumstances surrounding the associations between the Free Church and American Presbyterians throughout the mid-nineteenth

century therefore made the ministers of that denomination especially eager during the Reconstruction era to cultivate close bonds of friendship with the Presbyterian Churches in the United States and to follow every possible avenue open to them (including the highly propitious freedmen's aid movement) in pursuit of that objective. It would, however, be misleading to assume that of all the Presbyterian sects within Scotland, only the Evangelicals were significantly and consistently concerned with establishing more satisfactory links with transatlantic Presbyterianism. Throughout the years immediately after the Civil War, the Scottish United Presbyterian Church also took great pains to express its fundamental fondness and esteem for the American branch of the Presbyterian faith.

For Scottish United Presbyterians, with their prime commitment to Voluntary principles, the great ideological attraction of the Presbyterian Church in America was that it presented "free and self-supported Christianity on trial", the success or failure of which would have an extremely important effect on other parts of the world. It was recognized that the experiment along these lines which was being conducted in the United States had not had a fair trial in Europe, and that if the Americans could show self-supported churches to be competent to meet all demands, even the strongest arguments for endowments would be discredited.[1] Nor was it merely liberty of and for the church and religious forms of worship which delighted the U.Ps. in the nature of United States society and institutions: as we have already noted,[2] immense admiration was also given to the inter-related existence of wide political and individual liberty and equality. Hence the Rev. Dr. John Edmond, minister of the U.P. Church in Regent Place,

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1 United Presbyterian Magazine, "America and its churches", Oct., 1867, p. 475.

2 See above, Chapter III, pp. 282-284.

Glasgow, reflected the attitude of the majority of his denomination when in his comments in the United Presbyterian Magazine on the large numbers of freed Negroes who had made their way to the city of Washington and its environs during the Civil War, he lyrically declared that "There is no paradise on earth as yet for either white or black man. Yet, surely, liberty is nearer to it".[1]

Concentrating attention specifically upon opinions on American churches and their position in society, however, the observations made by David Macrae during his visit to America in 1868 give some insight into the pleasure with which the U.P. mentality viewed the religious framework in the United States. Macrae's father had been a minister in the United Secession Church before becoming affiliated to the new U.P. denomination at the Union of 1829, and he himself was to be ordained as a U.P. minister in 1872. Naturally displaying a strong interest in all aspects of American Christianity, he was just as predictably full of enthusiasm for the conditions governing organized religious sects in the United States. It was Macrae's basic contention that "in America a broader distinction is drawn between the Church and the world than here"; and while his entire account of his transatlantic excursion is commendably free of malice on all subjects, he did offer the pointed statement that

> There is [in America] no such distinction...as Churchman and Dissenter - no sect lifted up by the civil power to a position from which it can look down on others. The State secures to no American clergyman that glorious independence which a minister of the Establishment enjoys here, and which is always so comfortable a thing for him, and sometimes so uncomfortable a thing for his flock.[2]

Previously influenced, perhaps, by the exceedingly energetic and

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1 Rev. Dr. John Edmond, "Washington" in United Presbyterian Magazine, Oct., 1872, p. 445.

2. Macrae, The Americans at Home, p. 463.

pioneering character of his father's approach to Christian duties,[1] David Macrae was also particularly favourably struck by the tremendous activity and sense of involvement which he found amongst Protestant congregations in the United States. "In religion, as in politics," he explained, "the Americans are go-ahead, full of work, plans, and projects, preferring the risk of rushing into errors to the irksomeness of standing still".[2] Indeed, so impressed was he with the vigour and general character of American Presbyterianism that once he had become minister at Gourock, he introduced certain aspects of it into his own church services for children. The move had the effect of causing a considerable controversy. And it was a controversy which brought to the surface rare displays from rank and file Scottish United Presbyterians of both implicit opposition to and open support for procedures in American Presbyterian churches, as well as being one which served to demonstrate the importance attached by some members of the Church to the concept of spreading Presbyterianism over the globe. As such, then, it merits passing attention as a useful glimpse of the climate of opinion which existed amongst ordinary members of the U.P. denomination towards innovatory transatlantic Presbyterianism, and therefore also as an indication of the background against which the influential figures of the Church strove to establish closer relationships with their American brethren.

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1 The Rev. David Macrae, sen., had been inducted in 1838 to the United Secession Church of Oban, an extremely small charge which in six years he had succeeded in building up to a much more considerable one. From there, he went on to undertake mission work in the Gorbals, Glasgow, becoming the first minister at a U.P. preaching station opened in 1852 "in a very poor, populous, and needful locality". The area contained 2,000 non-church going inhabitants, and Macrae began with only sixty-four members in his congregation. The scale and intensity of his efforts can be gauged, therefore, from the fact that in one year he had increased the membership to 104, and that by 1860, the congregation numbered 468 and was self-supporting - see Small, History of the... United Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, pp. 203-205.

Macrae dedicated The Americans at Home to "my revered father who has ever stood on the side of civil and religious liberty".

2 Macrae, ibid., p. 463.

It would appear that public attention was first directed towards Macrae's experimental Sunday services for children by a letter which appeared in the North British Daily Mail in the autumn of 1874. Written by a woman who had recently visited his church to observe the mode of worship followed on these occasions, it not only recorded her extreme disapproval of the proceedings but also furnished a detailed description of them. From that account, it becomes clear that Macrae had modelled his children's service exactly on Sunday School techniques which he had seen in America, and most especially, on those in use at a Sunday School in Lee Avenue, Brooklyn and at a Progressive Lyceum (or as he termed it, a "Spiritualist Sunday-school") in Philadelphia.[1] Thus, one of the main unique features in evidence at the service were flags or bannerets of different colours, each embroidered with a symbol. These flags constituted an order of merit among the scholars and were borne into and out of church by standard bearers, alongside whom the children marched in their appropriate places. Other distinctive characteristics included the frequent use of a hand-bell by Macrae, the procedure whereby he chose children at random to read verses of hymns and so forth, and the manner in which he would stop in his own exposition to ask questions and speak to the children about subjects not strictly connected with biblical religion.[2]

All of the methods and ideas employed by Macrae would appear to have produced a sense of outrage within the volubly critical lady observer. Even the hymns were denounced as being of "a most undevotional character", while the music to which they were sung was shamelessly secular: "one whole tune was nothing else but 'We'll hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree'".

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1 See Macrae, ibid., pp. 467-468.

2 See description of Macrae's service in "Mr. Macrae's Sunday School": letter printed as "Notes by a visitor" in North British Daily Mail, 19 Oct., 1874.

Having found that there were no Scripture readings, no questions on the Shorter Catechism and that "no moral lesson [was] inculcated", she dismissed the entire proceedings as reminiscent of "a week-day soiree", and professing her great sadness at the "display", declared that "I have grave misgivings as to how far the spread of Protestantism can be served by ceremonies such as [those] ...in Gourock U.P. church".[1]

David Macrae himself lost no time in vehemently rebutting the heavy criticism levelled against his departure from conventional Scottish forms of indoctrination. Pointing out in a letter to the North British Daily Mail that his detractor had witnessed not a Sunday School session but a "children's service of song", he went on to deal with specific attacks and comments, ending up by boldly declaring that he had never troubled about whether the services would help to spread Presbyterianism or not: "There is something better than either Presbyterianism or any other 'ism', and that is a robust and cheerful Christianity".[2] Macrae's vindication of his scheme was so totally unacceptable to his critic that she was prompted publicly to reject it, significantly reserving her sharpest censure for his "confession" that he was not concerned about spreading Presbyterianism: "He is a Presbyterian minister; he was ordained to further the spread of Presbyterianism, and he should be one of the last men to imply that Presbyterianism may not, in itself, be a robust and cheerful Christianity."[3]

The spirited opposition registered by the casual observer to both the outward procedure and the governing principle of Macrae's children's service may be accepted as a demonstration of the fact that even within a Scottish sect deeply attached to the American concept of religious freedom, there

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1 Ibid.

2 Letter from the Rev. David Macrae, in ibid., 21 Oct., 1874.

3 Letter in ibid., 24 Oct., 1874.

were those who looked upon the progressive form of worship actually practised in the United States as anathema. It is of at least equal significance, however, that Macrae's novel break with Scottish tradition did also enjoy a measure of support among members of the U.P. Church in Scotland. There were those who were prepared to offer their partial approval of the project, who credited Macrae with having formed and adopted his plans only "after mature consideration and comparison of systems applied both at home and in America", and who welcomed the idea of the minister and the congregation meeting the children on a Sunday evening but who remained unhappy about the actual format of the service.[1] Others were willing to give their unreserved praise to the experiment, finding the service attractive and highly educational,[2] And in his letter to the North British Daily Mail, one such champion of Macrae's methods even cited the views of the U.P. Church's Professor Calderwood on the good features in the American Sunday School system which might be incorporated into Scottish teaching: "all the points which the learned Dr. commended for our adoption were already in operation at Gourock". With around two hundred children benefiting from it, the value and success of Macrae's service was, the correspondent argued, unrivalled.[3]

Macrae's efforts to introduce into the religious instruction of Scottish children a little of the informality which characterized American practice certainly derived largely from a strong personal liking for the Sunday School procedures which he had observed in the United States. But to some extent, perhaps, his experiment was also a product of the times, being inaugurated as it was near the end of what had been almost a decade of consistent endeavour

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1 See letter from "A.C.A." in ibid., 21 Oct., 1874.

2 See letter from "J.M." in ibid., 21 Oct., 1874.

3 Letter from "A.F." in ibid., 27 Oct., 1874.

on the part of leading U.P. ministers to draw their Church into ever closer friendship and understanding with American Presbyterianism. Included amongst the proliferation of Presbyterian sects which existed in the United States by the end of the 1860s there was one officially entitled the United Presbyterians. The denomination was of considerable size, being catered for in 1868 by 539 ministers and three theological seminaries.[1] During the Reconstruction years the U.P. Church in Scotland therefore possessed a direct and encouragingly healthy transatlantic counterpart. At the same time, however, it would appear that Scottish United Presbyterians were not restricted to identifying their brand of Presbyterianism with that of only the one American body: for according to the assessment of the Free Church, the New School Presbyterian Church also tended to be similar in its doctrines and modes of action to the U.P. Church in Scotland.[2] And certainly the Scottish U.P.s who kept their attention fixed on the strengthening of links with America showed no predominant inclination to cultivate a specially deep relationship with their immediately affiliated Church at the expense of neglecting relationships with the other branches of American Presbyterianism.

In the autumn of 1867, for instance, the United Presbyterian Magazine carried an article which reflected the Church's sense of fellowship with all Presbyterians in the United States. The United Presbyterians of Scotland, it asserted, could not but feel a great interest in American churches because the founders of the Presbyterian denominations in the United States had been Scottish or Scots-Irish: "our regard for their descendants is akin to the love that an affectionate mother bears to her children". Most significantly, the solid historical connection between Scotland's religious influence and

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1 See statistics from the Presbyterian Historical Almanac, 1868 edition, quoted in Presbyterian, No. 11, March, 1869, p. 12.

2 Ibid., p. 12.

all areas of the Presbyterian faith in America gave cause for particular rejoicing over the fact that "even the temporary estrangement which was produced because of the position taken up by the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland on the question of slavery has now happily been removed, and, like lovers after a quarrel, we are prepared with increasing fondness to rush into each other's arms".[1] In this instance the "temporary estrangement" referred to presumably related to an earlier break in cordial associations between the Scottish U.P. Church and the Old School Presbyterians of America since the U.P. denomination in the United States had at no time admitted slaveholders as members.

Irrespective, however, of the actual nature of the stance which the American United Presbyterians had adopted on the question of slavery, the ending of that institution provided an excellent opportunity for the parent Scottish Church to take action towards creating closer bonds with its direct offshoot on the other side of the Atlantic. Hence a move in the direction of establishing sympathetic communication with its American counterpart was made in May, 1865 through an address to the Moderator of the U.P. Church in America containing formal expressions of satisfaction over the abolition of slavery and regret over the assassination of Lincoln.[2] There was behind the U.P. Synod's transmission of the message clearly an impetus within the denomination to convey fraternal feelings of joy and commiseration with the American branch. But, recalling to mind the disapproval of American forms of Presbyterianism which still existed among some Scottish United Presbyterians in the mid-1870s, it is important to note that the proposal to send a communication to the United States at the time of Lincoln's death also had the effect of demonstrating that even then opinion regarding the basic

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1 United Presbyterian Magazine, "America and its churches", Oct., 1867, p. 475.

2 See above, Chapter II, p. 115.

closeness of affiliations between the U.P. denomination in Scotland and the U.P. denomination in the United States of America was by no means unanimous within the Scottish U.P. Church.

We have already observed that when the idea of preparing an address to the U.P. Church in America was mooted at the May, 1865 meeting of the Glasgow U.P. Presbytery, spirited objections were raised to it by the Rev. Dr. John Taylor.[1] Governing Taylor's objection to the proposal was his basic contention that the U.P. Church in America knew nothing about the Scottish one. In his initial burst of protestation he even went so far as to declare that if such a message were sent, it would require to be accompanied by an explanation to the Americans as to who exactly the Scottish United Presbyterians were. Brushing aside the assurancesby one of the elders present that the Synod corresponded regularly with the U.P. Synod in the United States, Taylor insisted that although it bore the same designation as their own denomination, the U.P. body in America had no more connection with their Scottish Church than had any of the other Presbyterian Churches there. On the contrary, he went on to suggest - with a hint of warning - that the American sect was a "thoroughly evangelical" one.[2]

As well as the elder from the church which had put forward the proposal, others, including the Rev. Dr. Wallace of that same church (East Campbell Street U.P. Church), vigorously disputed Taylor's assertions regarding the lack of association between the Scottish and American United Presbyterians, and urged adoption of the overture. And in the end, Taylor's view was defeated by seventeen votes to nine.[3] It can be suggested here that those who joined Taylor in sounding a sour note on closer liaison with American

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1 See ibid., pp. 115-116.

2 Report of the monthly meeting of the Glasgow U.P. Presbytery held in Presbytery Hall, 9 May, 1865, in North British Daily Mail, 10 May, 1865.

3 Ibid.

Presbyterianism were probably of the small minority within the U.P. Church in Scotland who were also undesirous of an early reunion with the Scottish Free Church.[1] Noteworthy in this connection is the fact that Taylor's conspicuous lack of enthusiasm for the U.P. Church of the United States was at least partially based upon his belief that it was "thoroughly evangelical". Yet it is important to recognise that his was an attitude of ossification and denominational introversion which was not shared by the vast majority of the U.P. Church in the 1860s and '70s, either in respect of the American Presbyterian Churches or in respect of the Free Church in Scotland. In 1871, for instance, every U.P. presbytery in Scotland voted for reunion with the Free Church.[2] And it was in fact the U.P. Church which, in 1863, had first set in motion the protracted decade of union negotiations between the unendowed denominations in Scotland.[3]

The eagerness to foster deeper relations with fellow Scottish Presbyterians at that period was certainly paralleled by an urge to establish closer associations not only with the transatlantic branch of the United Presbyterian Church but also with all the Presbyterian Churches in the United States. The content of the United Presbyterian Magazine throughout the 1860s and '70s plainly indicated that such was the predominant trend within the Church.

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1 In this connection, see reference to Taylor's attitude as a U.P. Professor in Canada, Chapter II, p. 117.

2 See J. Fleming, A History of the Church, p. 183.

3 W. Blair, The United Presbyterian Church: A Handbook of its History and Principles (Edinburgh, 1888) p. 129, indicates that in May, 1863 the Synod of the U.P. Church appointed a committee to confer with any committee which might be appointed by the Free Church or any other dissenting Scottish denomination to consider the question of Union. See also J.R. Fleming, Church Union in Scotland, pp. 30-31, where in addition to confirming that the U.P.s took the initiative in 1863, it is also shown that overtures in favour of immediate action for union had been passed in several U.P. Presbyteries in 1862, and that by then one of the foremost advocates of the movement, John Cairns of Berwick, was already hoping for a union of Presbyterian forces extending beyond Scotland - "a great Presbyterian Church as wide as the English language and as comprehensive as Episcopacy, and a Church which, while separately organised in different countries, should be one in basis and spirit, taking the Reformed Faith as its creed".

And tangible evidence of it was provided by the Synod's action in sending two deputies - the Rev. Drs. Edmond and McLeod - to the reunion of the Old and New School Presbyterian Churches of America at Philadelphia in 1870.[1] That move was indeed in itself of some considerable importance since it did apparently constitute something of a new departure in U.P. relations with the general run of American Presbyterian Churches. Thus, the ministers of the 1870 General Assembly of the newly reunited American Presbyterian Church recorded that the U.P. Church in Scotland had not until then been in correspondence with either branch of the reunified body (that is, with neither Old or New School). As a result of the Scottish gesture of goodwill, a committee was thereupon appointed to nominate delegates from America to the United Presbyterian Synod in Scotland the following year.[2]

The disclosure in the records of the American General Assembly of the previous lack of Scottish U.P. contact with the more influential sections of transatlantic Presbyterianism inevitably raises the question of how near the actual truth the Rev. Dr. John Taylor's remarks had been in 1865. It may perhaps have been that in the prevailing climate of desire to forge closer Scottish-American connections in the mid 1860s to 1870s, the majority of U.P. churchmen in Scotland were ready to play down somewhat the true extent of the gulf which had been allowed to develop between themselves and the American Presbyterian Churches (including, perhaps, even the American U.P. Church itself) over the earlier decades of the century. At all events, it would seem clear that there was considerable leeway to make up in establishing close bonds of fraternity with American Presbyterians. Hence in the account of his visit as U.P. deputy to the United States in 1870,

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1 See United Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 14, Aug., 1870, p. 381.

2 Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (New York, 1870), 20 May, 1870, p. 18.

the Rev. Dr. John Edmond took care to stress "the common ancestry in blood and name of the Scottish and American United Presbyterian Church",[1] and to voice his hopes for both growing fellowship with the American churches and reunification of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches so that the two trans-atlantic arms of Presbyterianism might fuse into a strong federalised force.[2]

Once communications had been satisfactorily commenced, of course, it remained simply to build upon the early groundwork of friendly relations. And prominent U.P. ministers were more than ready to undertake that task. The Rev. Dr. John Eadie, for instance, who was chosen along with Professor Calderwood to go in the spring of 1873 as a deputy to the Presbyterian Churches in America, made the essential unity of Scottish and American Presbyterian Churches the central theme of a powerful speech delivered at the United States General Assembly.[3] He and Calderwood evidently attended the Assemblies of practically all the various Presbyterian Churches in America, and without exception, they found that their efforts to stimulate a sense of brotherhood and common purpose were fully reciprocated. At the General Assembly of their own Church's direct counterpart, the American U.P. Church, the Moderator had expressed to them the interest which Americans felt in the Scottish Church and the value which the Churches in the United States attached to such delegations, prompting Calderwood to record that "Here, as in all the Assemblies, it was clear that there exists among the Presbyterian churches of America a deep spiritual interest in the Presbyterian

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1 Rev. Dr. John Edmond, "America and the Americans" in United Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 16, March, 1872, p. 105. The article and those on Edmond's trip which appeared in subsequent issues of the Magazine were compiled from notes made shortly after his return in 1870 - see ibid., p. 104.

2 Edmond, "General Impressions" in ibid., Dec., 1872, p. 540.

3 James Brown, Life of John Eadie, D.D., LL.D. (London, 1878), p.312. The information on the American trip is in fact derived from Calderwood's account of the visit.

Churches of Scotland".[1]

It becomes obvious, then, that during the Reconstruction years there was every reason for Scottish United Presbyterians, no less than Free Churchmen, to feel inclined to support the freedmen's aid cause as a movement which was bound to facilitate closer relationships between Scotland and the United States and, ipso facto, between Scottish and American Presbyterianism. But to imply that such considerations formed the principal basis for the large sums which were contributed to the cause by Voluntary congregations throughout the later 1860s and the 1870s is seriously to misrepresent the essential character and spirit of the U.P. Church in Scotland. It seems valid to assume that the major impulse for the denomination's remarkably generous and sustained response to appeals on behalf of the freedmen derived, in fact, simply from its particularly heavy commitment to missionary work, and from its impeccable reputation as an uncompromising critic of American slavery.

The United Presbyterian Church regarded itself as founded on a long tradition of zealous missionary effort,[2] and in the 1860s and '70s it continued to look upon concentration on that sphere of Christian endeavour as one of its primary functions. Naturally, therefore, concern to help provide for the requirements of the unevangelized freed Negroes of the United States could be - indeed, to some extent probably had to be - accommodated within the straightforward wide-ranging missionary framework. A logical involvement with the American freedmen in their capacity as a people requiring missionary labour was boosted by a long-standing record of outspoken U.P. condemnation of slavery in America. It has been observed that the U.P. Church of America (along with the Reformed Presbyterian Church) had never accepted slaveholders as members: on his return from his visit in

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1 Ibid., p. 320.

2 See Blair, The United Presbyterian Church, pp. 89-90.

1870, Edmond had proudly recalled that fact, relating also with a conscious pride that during the Civil War there had been some U.P. congregational migration Northwards in order to be outside the Confederacy, and that the Church's Moderator in 1870, having been "maltreated in youth" by Southerners for his anti-slavery convictions, had been "elevated now partly in recognition of his sufferings in a noble cause".[1] Within the parent Scottish Church, even allowing for the abolitionist wrath which it incurred over the Old Calabar episode, there had been an impressive traditional involvement in anti-slavery activity, particularly in respect of the continued existence of slaveholding in the Southern states of America.[2]

By way of illustrating the total commitment to abolitionist principles which had characterized certain leading Voluntary ministers during the earlier decades of the century and which could have been expected to filter through in some measure to their congregations, it is worth noting here that one of the U.P. Church's most famous and popular public figures, the Rev. Dr. William Anderson of John Street church, Glasgow, had been one of the most fervent and persistent anti-slavery advocates in Scotland. An individual with "a dash of eccentricity about him"[3] and a uniquely personal,

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1 Edmond, "America and the Americans" in United Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 16 March, 1872, p. 105.

2 For an indication of the role of U.P.'s in the Scottish anti-slavery movement, see Rice, The Scottish Factor, pp. 70-76.

3 See obituary notice in Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept., 1872.
It would seem that the Glasgow Herald was in fact politely discreet in its assessment of Anderson's character. Throughout Glasgow he was widely known as "Daft Willie Anderson"; and it was on record that in reply to an English traveller's query about whether there were any "crack preachers" in the city, a Glasgow ostler once pointed to Anderson's church and declared "I dinna ken what ye mean, Sir, by crack preachers, but if ye want to hear a crackit ane, ye have just to step in yonder" - George Gilfillan, Life of the Rev. William Anderson, LL.D. (London, 1873), p. 59. His good friend Gilfillan found "much of the bizarre" in some of his actions, and concluded that he was "a character, distinguished as much by outreness and oddity as by originality and power" - see ibid., pp. 58, 253.
For a biographical note on Anderson, see Appendix I.

flexible approach to theological doctrine and practice, Anderson had early got into dispute with the then (in 1821) Glasgow Relief Presbytery, and only the advice of a friend had won him out of a firm resolve to emigrate to the United States. According to another friend, the equally famous George Gilfillan, Anderson, with his "fearless spirit of independence, his daring originality of style, his constitutional Republicanism, his contempt for conventionalities, his strong practical purpose" would have been "triumphantly successful" in America. Maintaining that he would have been "in the Beecher mould", Gilfillan estimated that if he had gone to the United States, there would probably have been "an earlier pulpit crusade against the 'Peculiar Institution' than actually took place".[1]

Certainly, Anderson's anti-slavery activities in Scotland help to substantiate Gilfillan's suggestion. "A warm and an early friend" of the movement to secure the freedom of the American slaves, he was from at least as early as the mid 1830s appearing as a speaker at abolitionist meetings in Scotland alongside such personalities as George Thompson.[2] In 1833, he was, indeed, already closely enough identified with the nascent Scottish campaign to be chosen as one of the deputation which Glasgow's Anti-Slavery Society sent to London to represent it on the national anti-slavery platform.[3] A measure of the sincerity as well as the zeal which clearly pervaded his labours in the anti-slavery cause can be gauged from the obvious respect with which the staid Glasgow Herald paid tribute to his efforts in that connection: "He stood on the anti-slavery platform

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1 Ibid., p. 45. Original emphasis.

2 Ibid., p. 97.

3 Ibid., p. 148. On that occasion, Anderson appeared on the same abolitionist platform as Daniel O'Connell, and an idea of the force of Anderson's eloquence in denouncing slavery can be gained from the fact that the great Irish orator was so impressed with his speech that he requested that Anderson be allowed to continue beyond his allotted time - see ibid., pp. 148-149.

and advocated emancipation with a courage which only those who knew how largely the trade of Glasgow depended on slave labour can appreciate".[1]

Looking back in 1873, a close U.P. colleague, the Rev. Dr. George Jeffrey of London Road U.P. Church, Glasgow, recalled not only that Anderson had attended practically every anti-slavery meeting in Glasgow from 1844 until the end of the American Civil War, but also that he had been, apart from Jeffrey himself, virtually the only minister in the city to retain active association with the Garrisonian Glasgow Emancipation Society after the split of 1841. "On account", Jeffrey related, "of circumstances connected with 'Woman's Rights', etc., he and I were left almost the only ministerial members of the Emancipation Committee...[H]e was the only minister with whom I found myself on the Emancipation platform for many long years, and on whom Mr. W[illia]m Smeal, its trusted secretary, could ever depend".[2] William Smeal himself was ready to remember Anderson as "one of the most ardent, zealous, and uncompromising friends of the slave, whether in our own colonies or in any other quarter of the globe".[3]

With the outbreak of the American Civil War, Anderson "sided with the North and was, perhaps, in Scotland its most enthusiastic partisan";[4] and if not that, then at least "one of the few public men of Glasgow who were brave enough to stand by the North through evil and through good report".[5] Curiously, there is, however, no evidence to suggest that he followed up this life of intense participation in Scottish anti-slavery agitation by becoming actively involved in the freedmen's aid cause in the

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1 Obituary notice in Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept., 1872.

2 Letter from the Rev. Dr. George Jeffrey, dated 18 Feb., 1873, quoted in Gilfillan, William Anderson, pp. 98-99.

3 Note from William Smeal, dated 24 Feb., 1873, quoted in ibid., p. 100.

4 Ibid., p. 98.

5 Obituary notice in Glasgow Herald, 16 Sept., 1872.

years after the American conflict.[1] But despite his apparent slide from prominence in the later period, there can be little doubt but that Anderson's exceedingly vigorous and sustained public advocacy of abolition in the United States, coupled with the simultaneous efforts of a proportion of his eminent U.P. colleagues (including the Rev. Dr. George Jeffrey and - until the Civil War confused his priorities - the Rev. Dr. George Gilfillan), had a positive impact in encouraging the Voluntaries to regard their sect as one singularly deeply concerned about the wellbeing of the American Negroes.

Accordingly, in publishing extracts from an appeal on behalf of the freedmen prepared by a Synod committee, the July, 1866 issue of the Missionary Record commended to its readers' attention a reminder that the U.P. Church would be "untrue to its past history" and to its "steady testimony against slavery" if it refused the chance to help the emancipated millions in the Southern states.[2] Having been drawn up by a committee which had itself been appointed as a direct result of the Synod's "great interest" in and "cordial sympathy" for the work of the AMA as explained by visiting deputies Patton and Holbrook,[3] the U.P. appeal was in its own

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1 It should be noted that in 1855, Anderson had become badly afflicted by deafness and that from 1865, when an acceptable junior pastor joined him at the John St. church, his connection with his charge was merely nominal - see Gilfillan, William Anderson, p. 183. But although he preached only once a month, he did continue to lecture regularly in churches of all denominations, and to take an active interest in matters related to the welfare of the Negro race and to old anti-slavery activities. Thus, he was a member of the Jamaica Committee organized in December, 1865 to co-ordinate opposition to Eyre's handling of the insurrection - see Semmel, The Governor Eyre Controversy, p. 64. And in the summer of 1867 he was main speaker at the Glasgow Emancipation Society's Public Breakfast to the visiting William Lloyd Garrison - see Glasgow Herald, 20 July, 1867.

2 See Missionary Record of the United Presbyterian Church, New Series, Vol. 1, July, 1866, p. 142.

3 See report of the proceedings of the May, 1866 U.P. Synod in United Presbyterian Magazine, June, 1866, p. 276.

right something of a testimony to the Church's particularly strong commitment to the cause of the former slave population of America since it laid down recommendations for comprehensive involvement in the freedmen's aid scheme which were considerably more precisely formulated than the responses of other Scottish denominations.[1]

But when the significant tradition of persistent U.P. attention to the plight of the black population in the United States has been acknowledged as probably the major stimulus for the sect's concerted effort on behalf of freedmen's aid, it would nevertheless appear that for at least some of its members, the prospect of the movement as a unifying force for disparate segments of Presbyterianism was a fairly important factor in determining the volume of their enthusiasm for it. A clear indication that certain individuals approached the appeal with such considerations very much in mind is provided in the exhortations to his fellow Voluntaries of the Rev. Joseph Corbett,[2] minister at the U.P. church at Camphill, Glasgow.

It was at the remarkably late date of April, 1875 that Corbett contributed to the United Presbyterian Magazine a lengthy article entitled "Presbyterian work Among the American Freedmen". The central purpose of his essay was not only to give information on the work still being carried out amongst the freed Negroes by the Presbyterian Church of America but also to make Scottish United Presbyterians aware of the fact that they were not giving sufficient attention, far less a satisfactory response, to the urgent appeal

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1 The nature of the appeal and of the entire U.P. response to the freedmen's aid movement is considered below, Chapter IX, pp. 29-38, 207-227.

2 The Rev. Joseph Corbett was ordained in 1862 as the first minister of the U.P. church at Kilcreggan, having moved from Blackett Street U.P. church, Newcastle. In 1869 he accepted a call to Coupland Street U.P. church, Manchester, and he remained there until 1874, when he became minister at the new U.P. church at Camphill, Glasgow. He was made a D.D. by Glasgow University in 1884 - see Small, History of the... United Presbyterian Church, Vol. 2, pp. 206-207, 715.

which the American Presbyterian Church had issued in respect of these labours. In a determined effort to dispel the apathy by stirring up a sense of definite neglected duty, Corbett declared that since the American Presbyterian deputies had always received warm receptions at Scottish Synods, they must have felt they could rely on Scotland for assistance in their domestic missionary efforts. But the appeal had "unfortunately...not received a publicity at all proportionate to the excellency of the work of which it speaks, and disregard of...[it] would be a painful disappointment to our brethren in America, and certainly not an honour to the Presbyterians on this side [of] the Atlantic".[1]

Corbett certainly was prepared to recognize that the members of his denomination and the Scottish people generally had never really been given a proper chance adequately to appreciate the scale of American Presbyterian operations in the South and the urgent need for support which these entailed. After the Civil War there had, he stated, been two organized efforts made in America on behalf of the freedmen. One of these had been under Congregational auspices, and the claims for support for that undertaking had been prominently and consistently put forward in Britain. The other effort had been by the Presbyterian Church of America, and its claims had <u>not</u> been emphatically presented, and never met by "fair recognition". While its work throughout the Reconstruction years had been laudable, it had never been represented in Scotland by any regularly appointed agent; and it was only at that comparatively late stage that the American Presbyterian Church was asking for "a share of the sympathy and the assistance" given for so long to the Congregational effort by British churches.

Presumably by way of helping to provide some of the information necessary

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1 Rev. Joseph Corbett, "Presbyterian Work Among the American Freedmen" in <u>United Presbyterian Magazine,</u> Vol. 19, April, 1875, p. 167.

as a basis for Scottish support for the American Presbyterians' activities, Corbett drew on the figures of a report to the preceding year's Presbyterian General Assembly in America to show that in 1874, the Presbyterian Church had had 115 missionaries in the South. Of these, seventy-three had been Negroes, and in addition to that, he indicated from the report that a very high proportion of the freedmen were by then employed as ordained ministers or catechists. In all, the Presbyterian Church had up until that time established 115 churches and secured 1,045 communicants, and it continued, he stressed, to place special attention on the training of coloured ministers and teachers.

Having furnished these facts, he felt at liberty to insist that the work of the American Presbyterians must have a great call on Scottish Presbyterian sympathies since their methods were "admirably fitted" to provide the freedmen with an able Presbyterian ministry drawn from members of their own race, and to "stamp upon the civilisation into which they are now entering a pure and healthy character. This is just one of those forms of philanthropic effort that require no other argument than the simple statement of their aims".[1] And while the cause was in itself seen to be eminently worthy of support, Corbett nevertheless backed it up by presenting an additional incentive based on a reminder of the Scottish tradition of missionary Presbyterianism. It would be a bad reflection on the Christian church, he suggested, if it did not satisfactorily assist the "tremendous labour" of those involved in educating and evangelizing the Negroes in the South, especially considering that the American Presbyterians "must have in them not a little of the tough, untiring perseverance that has ever distinguished the heroes of the missionary cause, and ought to awaken the sympathy of the

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1 Ibid., p. 168.

Scottish Presbyterianiam that is marked by very kindred qualities".[1]

Yet in the context of the article, this last reminder may be regarded as more than merely an apposite encouragement to Scots to contribute generously to a worthwhile appeal. Despite the acknowledgement that the American Presbyterian Church's work amongst the freedmen had received inadequate publicity in Britain, there was runnihg through Corbett's writing, just below the surface, a distinct inference that Scottish Presbyterians (and, perhaps, most especially Scottish United Presbyterians) were badly failing their American co-religionists on the issue of assistance in that field of endeavour. Related to this, and also an underlying feature of the article, was an insinuation that the indifferent Scottish response was hardly the way to help form closer, friendlier relations with the Presbyterians of the United States, or to advance the cause of pan-Presbyterianism. Thus, demolishing the possible argument that America could easily manage on its own to finance the cost of Presbyterian missionary labour in the Southern states, Corbett firmly asserted that "objection will not be raised by any who have learned to regard it as a privilege to be permitted to lend a hand in any work that is for the weal of man and for the glory of Christ". Reminding his readers that Scottish churches were already aiding work identical in character and aim to that of the American Presbyterian Church, he significantly suggested that positive Scottish support for all such freedmen's aid schemes would have an immense effect in furthering Christian unity:

> The cause is one all the world over; and they who labour in it shall find us brethren who can do something more for them than applaud their eloquent representatives in Queen Street Hall, or reciprocate their courtesies by the lips of equally eloquent deputies in Philadelphia or New York.[2]

Still more specifically (and, indeed, perhaps even more importantly),

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., p. 169.

he also voiced the straightforward conviction that the American appeal provided a superb opportunity for drawing tighter together the fraternal bonds which existed between the various Scottish Presbyterian Churches. Clearly, he desperately wished that churchmen and laymen within the still sadly divided sphere of Scottish Presbyterianism might realize that their mutual relationships could and would be substantially improved through common participation in the truly humanitarian cause of freedmen's aid. Writing two years after the final breakdown of the negotiations which had at some stages seemed to promise real prospects of an early unification of the unendowed Presbyterian sects in Scotland, Corbett hoped for a generous Scottish response to this fresh American clamour for help at least partially because he believed such a response would show United States Presbyterians that although the Scots had "unhappily failed" in accomplishing a denominational union to reflect the American reunion of 1870, "there still breathes in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland that spirit of love out of which the Union will grow at last."[1]

Bearing in mind Corbett's hopes that the American Presbyterians' appeal would act as a solder for the sentiments of disparate strands of Scottish Presbyterianism, it would appear that in its basic effect upon the Scottish Churches' relationships with each other (insofar as it had a limited effect in that area), the freedmen's aid movement created a pattern the complete opposite of that which had been produced by the earlier impact of the Scottish anti-slavery campaign. Thus, whereas during the abolitionist agitation the American situation in respect of slaveholding was used (and, as significantly, was usable) as a tool for deepening and highlighting existing jealousies and animosities between the Scottish sects, during the post-Civil

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1 Ibid.

War years, attempts were made to use the American situation in respect of its freedmen's aid movement as a welding force for the union of the separate Presbyterian Churches of Scotland.

The total change in approach was, of course, primarily attributable to the fact that, as we have seen, the vigorous controversies and paralysing suspicions which had characterized relations between the different denominations in the 1840s and '50s had in the succeeding two decades been replaced by a climate of accommodation and conciliation, and a positive, persistent quest after Presbyterian unity. Furthermore, it should be recognized that at least so far as Scotland was concerned, the freedmen's aid movement itself came over as being of an essentially unifying rather than a divisive nature. For instance, the deputies of the AMA and of other similar American organizations moved with complete freedom and impartiality from one Scottish Presbyterian General Assembly to another, delivering at each the same appeals to the spirit of compassion and charity common to all Christians, the same informative messages which sought by various means to give all Scottish Presbyterians, whatever their denomination, a common interest in supporting the cause.

Yet, the fact that there never did emerge a strong, integrated Scottish Presbyterian response to freedmen's aid betrays the fact that "secular" American affairs which impinged upon the relationships of the various Churches were comparatively more effective in their old role as exacerbatory, divisory forces than in the role of providing a focus for harmonious co-operation which would lead to the union of Scottish Presbyterians. That union, when it came, was essentially a movement from within - as it had to be. At the same time, however, there remains the distinct possibility that the frequent appearance together of influential ministers from different Scottish Presbyterian sects on public platforms at freedmen's aid meetings <u>did</u> contribute

towards producing the warmer, friendlier climate in which the union negotiations of the 1860s and early 1870s took place.[1]

When in 1862-63 these negotiations were initiated by the U.P. Church, a favourable response had been accorded to them not only by the Free Church but also by one of the minor Scottish dissenting sects, the Reformed Presbyterians.[2] Because the transatlantic offshoot of that denomination had occupied throughout the nineteenth century a comparatively rare stance on the question of slavery, it is worth giving some consideration here to the nature of the Scottish parent Church's response to the appeals launched on behalf of the American freedmen. Like the United Presbyterian Church in America, the Reformed Presbyterian Church there had from its earliest days firmly adopted a policy of practical as well as theoretical opposition to slavery. Organized in 1798, its Presbytery had ruled two years later that no slaveholder could be a member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the decision had been immediately carried into effect by a committee appointed to settle the affairs of the Church in the South.[3] There would thus appear to have been laid within Reformed Presbyterian ranks in the United States a solid foundation upon which the Church on both sides of the Atlantic could, after the Civil War, build up together an impressive contribution to the material, educational and spiritual welfare of the freed Negroes.

By the Reconstruction era, however, having displayed the usual Presbyterian facility for schism, both the American and the Scottish branches of the Reformed Presbyterian Church were split. The American division dated from 1833 when as a result of a controversy mainly centred on the Church's

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1 In striking contrast to the general mood of concord and co-operation which would appear to have prevailed in Scotland, Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 320, has suggested that in England, inter-denominational hostilities significantly helped to cripple the response to the freedmen's aid cause.

2 See Blair, The United Presbyterian Church, p. 129.

3 See Hutchison, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 406.

attitude to civil government there had emerged two distinct Synods - the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (or Old Lights), and the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (or New Lights). In 1806, the Presbytery had drawn up and published a Testimony, "Reformation Principles exhibited by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of America", which had clearly set forth the Church's relationship with the government, declaring amongst other things that the American Constitution "violated the word of God and the principles of the Covenanted Reformation" in several important points and that therefore no Reformed Presbyterian must swear allegiance to it, or vote at elections, or form any part of the executive.[1] It was this strict adherence to the creed of the old Scottish National Covenants which precipitated the American schism of 1833, for by that time, several of the country's leading Reformed Presbyterian ministers were prepared to modify their views regarding associations with civil government and also to cultivate a more understanding connection with other Presbyterian Churches. Hence, although the Church had promulgated in 1821 that it did not forbid connection with the law and its officers or with an order of the State, except in cases which "truly involved immorality", it was the hallmark of the New Lights that they went beyond the confines of that gesture of liberalization to insist that the exercise of the rights of citizenship did not necessarily involve immorality.[2]

The fragmentation within the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian body was of more recent vintage, having occurred in 1863 over the decision by the majority of the Church to enter into union discussions with the U.P. and Free Churches. As in the United States three decades earlier, the relationship of the Reformed Presbyterians to the government of the State

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1 Ibid., 405-406.

2 Ibid., p. 408.

formed the critical central issue of the dispute. At least partially in order to ease the path of the inter-denominational negotiations, by far the greater proportion of the Church's membership agreed in 1863 to the relaxation of the strict rule which had ordered excommunication for all members who took an oath of allegiance to the British government or who voted at elections. The move outraged a small remnant of Scottish Reformed Presbyterians, however, and these promptly formed themselves into a breakaway group which continued to function in accordance with the uncompromising tenets of the Old Covenanters.[1]

It was therefore in a mutually unhappy, splintered condition that the Reformed Presbyterian Church in both Scotland and America faced the 1860s and '70s. There was clearly much need for internal differences to be patched up in both countries; and with the sound anti-slavery record of the two antagonistic American sections providing at least one sure common ground on which to begin collaborations, joint effort on behalf of freedmen's aid could conceivably have helped to draw the divergent strands closer together. But such an impulse was apparently still lacking amongst both Old and New Lights, and even after the reunion between the main streams of American Presbyterianism (that is, between the Old and New School Presbyterians) was accomplished in 1870, the old antagonisms and divisions continued to survive within the American Reformed Presbyterian body.[2]

Faced with the persistence of intransigent hostilities among its transatlantic brethren, and a very recent schism within its own ranks, the majority element of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church probably had

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1 See J.R. Fleming, Church Union in Scotland, p. 31.

2 Hutchison, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 408, indicates that in 1872 the Old Lights were still insisting that all civil and political transactions requiring an oath of allegiance to the Constitution and government were forbidden by Church Law.

less incentive, therefore, than either of the two main unendowed denominations (that is, the Free Church and the U.P. Church) to seek to bind up wounds and to strengthen relationships with its American counterpart through displays of sympathy for the freedmen's aid cause. Furthermore, there was the very practical consideration that it was a relatively small body, almost certainly unable to sustain a campaign for the cause which would produce worthwhile results on the lines of the huge returns collected by the U.P. Church, for instance. To be sure, individual ministers of the denomination did take some public part in supporting the movement;[1] and in August, 1865 the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, the organ of the majority which constituted the official Reformed Presbyterian Church after 1863, carried an article giving news of the "Freedmen's Mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church" in America. This venture, Scottish readers were informed, had been in operation amongst the black population of Alexandria, Virginia, since 1864, and there had been established flourishing day and night schools, and regular religious services on Sundays. In recording the success which the missionaries had enjoyed in winning freedmen to membership of the Church, the magazine took a conscious pride in stating that the Negro congregation was to be organized as a church, thus constituting the first church within the Reformed Presbyterian denomination in America to be composed of "coloured persons" and also the first to have a congregation drawn almost exclusively from emancipated slaves.[2]

There clearly did exist among Scottish Reformed Presbyterians, then, a degree of interest in freedmen's aid, born to some extent of an awareness of direct efforts in that sphere on the part of their counterparts on the other side of the Atlantic. Yet there was no active, co-ordinated campaign within

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1 See below, Chapter IX, passim.

2 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, Aug., 1865, p. 316.

the parent Church to stir up from its members tangible support for American labours among the freedmen, no instances, even, of individual ministers fired with a singular vocal enthusiasm for the cause, equivalent to Thomas Guthrie for the Free Church and Norman Macleod for the Church of Scotland. In part, the undemonstrative response may have been attributable to neglect of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian denomination by the deputies of the several American freedmen's aid Societies. There was apparently no appearance at the Reformed Presbyterian Synod meetings of Americans such as the Rev. Sella Martin and the Rev. J.A. Thome. Nor, indeed, is there any indication that there were frequent visits even from representatives of the freedmen's aid workers within the American branch of the Church. The Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States being separate from the Presbyterian Church organization to which both the Scottish Free and U.P. Churches regularly sent delegates, it is possible that there was during the Reconstruction years perhaps less general transatlantic communications and visits among ministers of that Church than among ministers of the two larger Scottish dissenting denominations.

At all events, it <u>is</u> certain that the American Civil War itself had helped to drive a wedge between the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church and a section of its American brethren. Amongst the Old Lights in the United States, the outbreak of armed hostilities between North and South caused a very considerable upheaval since despite the faction's strict adherence to its principles regarding oath-taking and associations with the civil government, many of its members and ministers, impelled by their strong anti-slavery convictions, joined the Northern armies and took the ordinary soldier's oath. Although eventually the Synod did refuse to censure those fighting for the North, the decision had not been made without heated discussions and the voicing in some quarters of strong condemnation of the action.[1] It was

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1 See Hutchison, <u>The Reformed Presbyterian Church</u>, p. 409.

with the minority's reinforcement of this hard-line viewpoint in the midst of the exceptional exigencies of the Civil War that the majority of the Reformed Presbyterians in Scotland disagreed. Hence, in the April, 1865 issue of the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, an article entitled "The Recalcitrant Minority of the Old Light American Synod" recalled that readers were aware that the majority of the Old Light Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the American Church had "from the first" given its "cordial support" to the United States government in the war; and from there it went on to stress that Synod action reflecting that attitude had all along been restricted by a minority "corresponding in every essential particular to the party which lately left our Synod". Indicating that they had recently examined a Review drawn up and published by that minority within the Old Lights, the compilers of the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine declared: "We must acknowledge that the perusal of it has only deepened our conviction that the majority of the [Old Light American] Synod have, in the main, done their duty in strengthening the hands of the President and his government in this dreadful war against the slave-power of the South".[1]

The Scottish Reformed Presbyterians' demonstration of support for the actions of the more enlightened majority of what nevertheless did, however, remain the less "liberal" wing of the American Reformed Presbyterian Church was not inconsistent with earlier outlooks towards the transatlantic factions. It has been shown that following the split of 1833, the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church had been basically inclined to favour the Old Lights' standpoint, although not prepared to repudiate the New Lights.[2] Yet it is by no means clear that by the Reconstruction period the Church in Scotland

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1 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, April, 1865, p. 131.

2 See Hutchison, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 279.

had in fact established a particularly close relationship with the Old Light Synod of America. In recording its complete sympathy with the action of the majority of the Old Lights regarding the Civil War, for instance, the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine felt itself obliged to recognize that it did so "despite the lukewarm relationship of this American Synod with the Scottish one".[1] Considering this admission, it is just possible, indeed, that as much as the Civil War issue itself, the breakaway in 1863 of the more diehard minority faction of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterians, a faction which, as we have observed, was henceforth seen by the majority Scottish element to approximate exactly to the deplorably inflexible "recalcitrant minority" of the Old Lights in America, was a prime factor in encouraging the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church openly to express closer sympathies with the less ossified wing of the Old Lights.

It might be suggested that the apparent ambivalence of the Scottish Church in choosing not to outlaw the New Lights but rather to pursue a course of amicable relations with all American Reformed Presbyterians paradoxically lessened its chances of establishing through the mid-decades of the nineteenth century a really close association with the Old Lights. For forty years after the schism, Scottish Reformed Presbyterians continued to maintain a fairly regular correspondence with both Old and New Light American Synods,[2] and there was, indeed, a distinct tendency to preserve the general harmonious, if somewhat dispassionate, dual relationship following the Civil War period. An indication of the standard attitude was provided at the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, meeting in May, 1865, when one of the resolutions passed on the "American question" sent "warm fraternal congratulations" to both branches of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of the United States on the

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1 Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, April, 1865, p. 131.

2 Hutchison, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, p. 279.

ending of slavery.[1]

It is in fact apposite at this point to recall the tremendously enthusiastic manner in which the Scottish Synod went about transmitting to its transatlantic counterparts its extreme satisfaction at the ending of slavery in the United States because the scale of that enthusiasm naturally matched the scale of the importance attached by the denomination to the abolitionist victory. Judging from that specific basis and from the mood as reflected in the Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, it seems clear that for the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland, the most significant, exhilarating feature about the immediate post-Civil War years in America was not the opportunity which seemed to be afforded at that time to forge fresh, active links with the fragmented Reformed Presbyterian Church in America, and thereby to increase, perhaps, the hopes of reunion between the warring Reformed Presbyterian factions both in the United States and in Scotland. Rather, it was the opportunity afforded simply to rejoice over the ultimate achievement of abolition - a cause which the Reformed Presbyterian Church, from its very inception on American soil, could justly pride itself on having supported by deed as well as word. Hence in the early days after the end of the Civil War, the Scottish sect constantly reiterated the singularly deep sense of joy and thankfulness which it felt regarding the recent turn of events in the United States.[2]

Apart from a mutual strong, sincere and consistent opposition to the institution of Negro slavery, therefore, there was, it would appear, little enough of a really positive nature linking the recently divided Reformed Presbyterian denomination in Scotland with its even more distressingly

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1 See report of proceedings at the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, 9 May, 1865, in North British Daily Mail, 10 May, 1865.

2 For examples of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian reflections on this theme, see ibid.; Reformed Presbyterian Magazine, May, 1865, p. 185; June, 1865, pp. 190, 195-197; Aug., 1865, p. 310.

fragmented counterpart in America. As a consequence, the possibility, far less the motivation, for the establishment of a joint, co-ordinated effort on behalf of the freedmen by Reformed Presbyterians on both sides of the Atlantic never materialized. Moreover, by 1868 it required only about two hundred ministers to serve all the Reformed Presbyterian churches (both Old and New Light) in the United States,[1] so that unless the divided sections had been able to make an effort out of all proportion to their size, the forces of transatlantic Reformed Presbyterianism could not have hoped to make a large contribution to the freedmen's aid movement. For all these reasons, then, the main Scottish element of the Church placed during the Reconstruction years less emphasis on a cause which could not wax strong enough to help unite the disparate groups on both sides of the Atlantic than on rejoicing over the ending of an American evil to which the American and Scottish branches of the Reformed Presbyterian Church had always stood totally opposed.

Interestingly, the small minority section of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church would seem to have taken a more direct interest and concern in the condition of the American freedmen than did the majority one. In view of the breakaway Scottish group's own standpoint on the issue of oaths of allegiance to the British government and participation in politics by its members, there can be little doubt of the substantial validity of the mainstream Scottish Reformed Presbyterian claim that it was equivalent in outlook to the fiercely intransigent minority within the American Old Light Synod. Certainly, with specific regard to United States affairs, as late as July, 1864 one of the section's ministers was writing on behalf of his Synod to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of America sympathizing with it in its "dilemma" of being totally opposed to the Confederate cause while unable to declare itself totally in favour of the Constitution, and (most importantly)

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1 See statistics from the Presbyterian Historical Almanac for 1868, quoted in the Presbyterian, No. 11, March, 1869, p. 13.

expressing satisfaction over the Americans' "unanimous" decision that no oath binding them to the Constitution must be taken by Reformed Presbyterians.[1]

Because they had not been altogether happy, due to the oath-taking involved, about American members of the denomination actually fighting on the Northern side against slavery, then, perhaps the adherents of the small Scottish faction were the more ready to welcome the opportunity afforded by the freedmen's aid cause to reaffirm their continued intense concern for the wellbeing of the American Negroes. Through the medium of their monthly magazine, the Reformed Presbyterian Witness, the influential voices within the group were by July, 1865 strongly recommending to the "prayers, sympathies and liberality" of members a scheme by American Reformed Presbyterians to found a "Collegiate Institution for the Coloured Freedmen in the United States of America".[2] Emphasizing that the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church wished its American brethren every success in "carrying the gospel and civilization to the freed slaves",[3] the magazine indicated that there were in Scotland at that time three ministers and an elder of the American Reformed Presbyterian Church who had been sent as delegates to interest the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian community in the project. These representatives had drawn up a circular delineating the needs of the freedmen, and in an effort to secure "generous aid" from Scottish members, the Reformed Presbyterian Witness took "much pleasure" in calling its readers attention to this document, conveniently publishing it in its entirety.[4]

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1 Letter from the Rev. W. Anderson, writing on behalf of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland (minority section) in reply to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of America, 10 May, 1864, printed in Reformed Presbyterian Witness, Vol. 1, July, 1864, p. 34.

2 Ibid., Vol. 1, July, 1865, p. 275.

3 Ibid., p. 279.

4 Ibid., p. 280

The content of the circular demonstrated that there did exist a certain degree of acute awareness among Reformed Presbyterians in the United States both of the desirability of eliciting a measure of Scottish support for their labours on behalf of the freedmen, and of the most effective manner in which to go about securing it. Thus, much stress was placed upon the Reformed Presbyterian Church's tradition of freedom from taint over the question of slavery. Along with these happy recollections went information on the impressive scale of missionary and educational work undertaken amongst the emancipated slaves by the American Church during the Civil War, and the intimation that with the ending of the armed conflict, the need to intensify the "successful" efforts in that sphere had been greatly increased. The major task was identified as centring on the problem of how best to provide for "the permanent culture and religious instruction and elevation of the Negro race"; and the principal method by which the American Reformed Presbyterians proposed tackling it was in the familiar manner, so agreeable to the Scottish Presbyterian mentality, of rapidly training freed Negroes to serve as teachers, preachers and missionaries for their own race. It was for that purpose that the proposed Collegiate Institution was to be founded. And having astutely presented the scheme in a fashion calculated to appeal to the sympathies of a Scottish sect which had consistently registered the most unabating animosity towards slaveholding in the Southern states, the American delegates stressed that the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States would be unable to finance it without British help.[1]

The Reformed Presbyterian Witness certainly did its part to arouse its readers' interest in the scope of activity being engaged in by their transatlantic counterparts on behalf of the freedmen, carrying in the same July, 1865 issue, for instance, an extract from the Boston Weekly Journal

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1 Ibid. p. 280.

which described how the Reformed Presbyterians had done much to help the freed Negroes in Washington by erecting a large chapel and a school-room for the use of children and adults.[1] Two years later it was still persevering in the attempt to instil into the minds of the minority Scottish Reformed Presbyterian sector a measure of responsive appreciation of the efforts being made by members of the Church in the United States. Perhaps it was mainly in order to indicate that Scottish support for these efforts could yield a rich missionary harvest for the Reformed Presbyterian Church that the Reformed Presbyterian Witness in early 1867 quoted from the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter three "Freedmen's Stories" which illustrated the Negroes' desire to learn, their religiosity, and their quickness of thought.[2] It may well have been that on an individual basis, respectable contributions to the American Reformed Presbyterian labours were forthcoming. But despite the exhortations and enthusiasm of the Reformed Presbyterian Witness, there is nothing to suggest that collectively the small breakaway group of Scottish Reformed Presbyterians, any more than the larger, official body, ever became sufficiently earnestly committed to the freedmen's aid cause to mount a co-ordinated sectarian effort on its behalf.

In view of the particularly ardent and uncompromising nature of the opposition shown by every branch of the Church to American slavery, the demonstrably unimpressive (at least in practical terms) Scottish Reformed Presbyterian response to the appeals for assistance in providing for the spiritual and intellectual welfare of the former bondsmen during the Reconstruction years is perhaps somewhat surprising. Yet it would probably be wrong to attribute any apparent apathy or even indifference in that regard as symptomatic of a significant diminution in Reformed Presbyterian concern

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1 Extract from Boston Weekly Journal, in ibid., p. 307.

2 Extract from Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter, in ibid., Vol. 2, March, 1867, p. 50.

and sympathy for the Negro race in America. In seeking a basic explanation for the essentially modest Scottish Reformed Presbyterian involvement in current freedmen's aid activities, it might be more tenable to bear in mind the debilitating schisms which crippled the Church on both sides of the Atlantic and which indubitably restricted the scope for really wide-scale action in support of the freedmen's cause.

If the intensity of the hostility openly displayed in earlier decades to American slavery, and the positive actions taken to protest against it may validly be considered as yardsticks against which to judge ultimate responses to the freedmen's aid movement, then compared with the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church, there is relatively less reason to wonder at the comparatively poor scale of the Church of Scotland's participation in the campaign to improve the general condition and prospects of the freed Negroes. The Church of Scotland would appear to have made no significant showing, either as an ecclesiastical body or at the level of individual clerical representatives, in the Scottish abolitionist movement:[1] and beyond that era, its general position regarding the American Civil War is extremely vague.[2] During the Reconstruction years, accusations were occasionally levelled against Scottish ministers of all denominations for not having spoken out clearly and boldly in proclaiming their attitude towards the combatants in the war,[3] but those within the Established Church would seem to have remained the most silent of all. This said, there is, however, no evidence to suggest that the vast bulk of the Church of Scotland ministers had been rabid supporters of the South, as the Church of England clergy are shown to have been.[4] And

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1 See Rice, The Scottish Factor, p. 70.

2 In his study of Scottish responses to the Civil War, Botsford gives no indication that the Church of Scotland, as a denomination, displayed a positive, distinct support for one side or the other.

3 See above, pp. 386-387, 400.

4 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 308.

of course there is no reason to suppose that this sector of Scottish churchmen would have wished to follow meekly in the footsteps of the Church of England.

After the Civil War, there was definitely a modicum of involvement by individual Church of Scotland ministers in the freedmen's aid movement.[1] Throughout the first three post-war years, for instance, these appeared, alongside ministers of other denominations, on the platform at public meetings on behalf of the cause held in Edinburgh and Glasgow.[2] Most prominent of their number was of course the Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod who, as we have seen, strongly advocated Scottish support for the American appeals and was prepared to reinforce his personal commitment to the campaign by officially sponsoring Sella Martin, and by giving him letters of recommendation to many Church of Scotland members.[3]

But the Church of Scotland's knowledge and appreciation of the extent of the task to be undertaken among the freed slaves of the United States was certainly not exclusively confined to the interested concern of a few particularly compassionate ministers. On the contrary, the Church's executive body was distinctly willing to countenance means of spreading an awareness of the freedmen's claims among churchmen and elders throughout the length and breadth of Scotland. Hence, whereas the Church of England apparently did not at any stage entertain deputations presenting appeals for the freedmen's aid cause,[4] the Church of Scotland did in 1866, 1867, and 1868

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1 Bolt, ibid., p. 309, has found that individual clergymen in the Church of England did also participate in the movement.

2 See reports of freedmen's aid meetings held in Edinburgh, 19 Dec., 1867, in Edinburgh Courant, 20 Dec., 1867; in Glasgow, 22 Sept., 1865, in Glasgow Herald, 23 Sept., 1865; 27 Jan., 1868, in ibid., 28 Jan., 1868.

3 See reference by Martin to Macleod's help in this respect in 1865, and his "great interest" in the entire freedmen's aid movement, in report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 4 June, 1866, in Proceedings at the General Assembly...in Reference to America: 1866, p. 5.

4 See Bolt, British Attitudes to Reconstruction, p. 308.

receive at its General Assembly Martin, Patton and Thome; and in 1869, it heard from David Macrae on the progress of the work "in the conversion of the coloured people of the Southern States".[1]

While a certain degree of collective understanding of and sympathy for the freedmen's aid movement must, therefore, have existed within the Established Church during the early years of American Reconstruction, it nevertheless remains the case that no formal scheme was ever launched to gather contributions for the campaign from the congregational rank and file. At the 1866 General Assembly, the essentially vague character of the commitment to practical support of the deputies' appeals was well captured in a stately resolution which affirmed that

> the Assembly, having listened with profound interest to the statements of the Rev. Dr. Patton and the Rev. Sella Martin, concerning the physical, intellectual, and religious wants of the four millions of freedmen in the United States of America, and the work of the American Missionary Association in behalf of these freedmen, and being impressed with the peculiarity of the case, as calling for the sympathy and aid of the whole Christian Church, return their thanks to the reverend gentlemen for their address (sic), assure them of the Assembly's paternal and Christian regard, and warmly commend the American Missionary Association, in behalf of the freedmen, to the sympathy and assistance of the members of the Church of Scotland...[2]

Matching the lack of precise action on the business of fund-raising, no special provision was made for receiving donations from members, the treasurer of the General Assembly's Committee on Correspondence with Foreign Churches simply being requested to deal with any contributions.[3]

In a letter written in the summer of 1866 to the secretary of the National Freedmen's Aid Union, William Smeal, in his capacity as secretary

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1 See Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May, 1866, p. 60; May, 1867, p. 42; May, 1868, p. 72; May, 1869, p. 48.

2 Ibid., May, 1866, p. 60.

3 Ibid.

to the Glasgow Freedmen's Aid Society, inferred that the potential Scottish response to the freedmen's aid appeal was still not being fully realized partly because neither the Church of Scotland nor the Free Church had gone the length of appointing official collections on behalf of the fund. The importance which the GFAS attached to that circumstance was revealed by his disclosure that the committee was then currently considering issuing a circular to all Scottish ministers urging them to follow the U.P. Church's policy of informing each congregation from the pulpit about the freedmen's cause and then, at a later date, taking a collection from the members.[1] But if Smeal hoped that the Established Church might be persuaded to improve its approach to that specific claim on its members' benevolence, his optimism was misplaced. As it turned out, the subsequent appeals presented before the three succeeding General Assemblies elicited nothing more positive than thanks and sympathy.[2]

Yet, the absence of a creditable practical response notwithstanding, analysis of the proceedings in relation to America at the 1866 General Assembly (the only Assembly for which there exists a detailed account of the transactions pertaining to the United States) demonstrates that there was something of a genuine interest and concern about the freedmen in Church of Scotland circles, and some real attempt to show an appreciation of the gravity and extent of the problems which surrounded them. It is worth noting, for example, that a postcript, dated December, 1866, was added to the printed report of the General Assembly proceedings intimating that since the meeting

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1 Letter from William Smeal to Aspinall Hampson, 4 Aug., 1866, A-sl.P., C120/37.

2 See Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May, 1867, p. 42, in which it is recorded that the Rev. J.A. Thome's address prompted the General Assembly to move a resolution expressing sympathy with the work of the AMA and the hope that "with the Divine blessing they [the workers of the Association] may be successful in their very important mission"; May, 1868, p. 72; May, 1869, p. 48.

of the Assembly in the preceding May, the "painful realization" had grown of how bad the plight of the Southern Negroes and poor whites really was.[1] It is perhaps even more significant, indeed, that the entire proceedings relating to the freedmen's aid business at the General Assembly should have been published in pamphlet form at all. The move clearly suggests a real desire on the part of the Church of Scotland to publicize its basic concern over that subject. Furthermore, it seems possible that the pamphlet was in fact produced primarily for distribution among ministers in Church of Scotland churches throughout the country and intended as an effective, convenient means of bringing the freedmen's aid appeal to the attention of those who had not been present at the 1866 General Assembly. And, issued on a widespread basis, it may also have been designed to serve as a solid reminder to the churchmen who had attended that the cause was considered one on behalf of which they should make every effort to arouse the sympathies of their respective congregations.

Suggestive of the idea that the pamphlet was consciously published as an instrument of enlightenment and a source of incentive is the fact that the printed account of the actual proceedings concerning the AMA deputation was preceded by a "Letter to Church of Scotland ministers", informing them of how the General Assembly had unanimously recommended the freedmen's aid cause to the liberal charity of the congregations, and further stressing the desirability of a substantial measure of involvement in the movement by the Established Church. "It is important", the letter stated, "that the sympathy of the Church of Scotland, in a matter which appeals so strongly to

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1 Postscript, dated 18 Dec., 1866, in Proceedings at the General Assembly ...in Reference to America: 1866, p. 21. The postscript stressed that despite all the efforts made by the United States government and all the charity directed towards the Southern states over that year, large numbers of Negroes and poor whites were still dying of starvation and exposure.

the Universal Church, should be expressed in a definite and practical form". Recognizing the needs behind the freedmen's aid appeal to be "very urgent", it accordingly recommended the cause to the consideration of the Kirk Sessions and congregations with the accompanying advice that "it is highly important that whatever assistance may be given should be given immediately".[1]

The sense of urgency which thus suddenly characterized the Church of Scotland's outlook towards a cause which it had previously shown little sign even of being aware of sprang, it might be suggested, not only from a genuine wish that its members might rapidly help to relieve the desperate deprivations of the freed Negroes but also from a certain concern to keep up the Established Church's prestige on that issue in relation to the performance of other religious sects in Britain. At the 1866 General Assembly, Professor Mitchell had expressed the hope that Scotland would not fall behind England in the scale of its contributions to the freedmen's aid fund.[2] And more specifically, there is a distinct indication that the Church of Scotland itself did not want to be seen to be conspicuously less impressive and enthusiastic in its responses than were various other British religious bodies. Thus the letter published in conjunction with the American business at the 1866 General Assembly also sought to stir the energies of Church of Scotland ministers by informing them that other Christian denominations in Britain "are taking steps to render prompt and active aid to the AMA; and there are, no doubt, many in the Church of Scotland who will gladly help on so good a work".[3]

In providing what was in effect a readily accessible, compact source of reference to its official attitude towards the freedmen's aid cause, the Established Church plainly demonstrated, then, that from both a sense of

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1 Letter to Church of Scotland ministers in ibid., p. 1.

2 Report of speech by Professor Mitchell, in ibid., p. 17.

3 Letter to Church of Scotland ministers, in ibid., p.1.

sincere concern and considerations relating to its standing within the conglomerate of British religious denominations, it was by late 1866 exceedingly anxious to be identified with participation in the movement. Yet the significance of the pamphlet and the exhortations which it contained must not be over-estimated. For despite the General Assembly's brave incitements to action and involvement at parochial level, the harsh fact remained that sufficient enthusiasm was never generated among ministers and their congregations to yield a notable Church of Scotland commitment to the cause. And so far as monetary contributions are concerned, even the detailed records of donations to missionary causes listed in the relevant issues of the Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record provide no trace of sums raised on behalf of the emancipated slaves of America.

In considering the Church of Scotland's response to appeals for freedmen's aid, perhaps one of the main points to be made is that, as an organized body, it did not need the movement - or, more precisely, it had no call to use the movement - in the way in which the Free and U.P. Churches did. Both of these unendowed Scottish denominations obviously had closer natural connections in policy and constitution with the Presbyterian Churches of America (totally separate as these latter institutions were from all State interference and patronage) than had the Established Church of Scotland. Given the fragmented state of the Presbyterian Church in America and the dissensions between the dissenters in Scotland, the urge during the 1860s and '70s was strongly towards embracing every means which seemed to offer hopes of bringing together American Presbyterianism itself and binding up differences and forging yet stronger links between Scottish dissenting Presbyterians and their brethren in the United States. The freedmen's aid movement was one such means of helping to smooth the path in that direction. By that stage in the nineteenth century, the dissenting sects within Scotland seem to have been coming increasingly to

entertain the idea that the strength of Presbyterianism in Scotland could best be secured by a pooling of their religious enthusiasm and resources. Indeed, judging by the numbers who in 1873 supported union between the U.P., Free, and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, there was probably already by that time a realization amongst the majority of Scottish dissenting Presbyterians that unity was not merely desirable for its own sake but also necessary for the sake of future security and progress. Through the freedmen's aid movement in Scotland, these elements could help to advance the concept of domestic harmony by working together: and they could simultaneously aid in reinforcing the strength of international Presbyterianism by working with American Presbyterians.

None of these considerations would effectively have influenced Church of Scotland thinking. For the Established Church, the 1860s and '70s was not a time of active campaigning to forge alliances and reunions in order to maintain a position of viable strength; not a time for feeling the need to make any special efforts to consolidate their brand of Presbyterianism by seeking to find a basis of amalgamation with others holding a somewhat divergent view of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church. Firmly established and secure in its niche as the Established Church of Scotland, that sector did not require to consolidate and improve its standing and its relationships. The national and transatlantic buttresses which both Free and United Presbyterian Churches were pursuing at that period were unnecessary for a Church with adequate patronage and finances at its disposal.

It may be necessary to guard against reading too much into these differences in circumstances in the context of the scale of freedmen's aid activities engaged in by the various Scottish denominations. But on the other hand, it seems highly likely that the favoured national position of the Established Church would substantially have affected both its own outlook to the American appeals and the character of the approach adopted towards it by

those whose task it was to present these appeals. In this connection, it is interesting to note, for instance, that Sella Martin, who always carefully tailored his public addresses to suit his individual audiences, largely concentrated his speech at the 1866 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the obligations of the wealthy in Britain and America towards the freed slaves, and on emphasizing the manner in which "the most cultivated and wealthy" people of the United States were supporting the movement. The AMA, he stressed, was "not only large in numbers, but is of the most respectable character as to its complexion. Many of the most cultivated and wealthy people of the United States are devoting themselves, under the auspices of this Association, to the elevation of the negro".[1] Such a theme was totally lacking from the speeches which he delivered at the Free Church General Assemblies and at public meetings, and clearly he chose to employ it on that specific occasion because he realized he was addressing the wealthiest, most secure, satisfied and conservative element within Scottish Presbyterianism. Any response which the Church of Scotland would make to the freedmen's aid appeal would be elicited on grounds of sympathy or philanthropy per se, and/or by reminders of British complicity in fostering American slavery. Involvement in and contributions for the cause could not be expected to be widely forthcoming as part of a general movement by the Church of Scotland at that time to form closer tangible links with American Presbyterians.

All this is not to suggest, of course, that no contact was kept up between the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Churches of the United States. On the contrary, in 1871, 1872 and 1873 American deputies from these visited the Church of Scotland General Assemblies as well as the Free Church ones, for instance.[2] But it was not until 1874 that there appeared

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1 Report of speech by the Rev. Sella Martin, in ibid., p. 6.

2 See Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May, 1871, p. 51; May, 1872, p. 61; May, 1873, p. 49.

in the Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record any real testimony to the desirability of establishing closer connections between Scotland's established Church and the American Presbyterian Churches. The idea when it came was presented by Principal John Tulloch who during his recent trip to the United States had been impressed with the toleration and openness of the various Churches in America, and who accordingly felt that it would be advantageous to send deputations of younger Church of Scotland ministers to America and to establish a "close continuous rapport" between the Churches of the two countries.[1] Yet it might be suggested that any "rapport" envisaged by such an individual would scarcely have been characterized by a really significant increase in understanding and in Presbyterian unity for Tulloch himself was plainly not the sort of man who would readily have accepted the influence on the Church of Scotland of American society and American Presbyterianism in all its aspects. His social conservatism (he became in 1882 dean of the chapel royal and dean of the Thistle) completely dominated his views of Americans: hence he had been enraptured with the atmosphere at Harvard, finding that "People [there] are like English ladies and gentlemen of the best class, as different as possible from the Americans you meet abroad".[2] We have already observed that the impressions formed by him of the free black population were definitely not of a kind which would have inclined him to lend support to the missionary efforts still being made amongst the freedmen by American Presbyterians at that period.[3] And by way of further illustrating Tulloch's basic alienation from the essential mores of transatlantic Presbyterianism, it is significant that a few years after

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1 Principal John Tulloch, "Notes on the American churches" in Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Record, Vol. 9, New Series, April, 1874-Dec., 1875, pp. 51-53.

2 Tulloch to his wife, Harvard, 24 April, 1874, quoted in Oliphant, A Memoir of...John Tulloch, p. 291.

3 See above, pp. 519-520.

his American visit, he was actively involved in opposing moves to disestablish the Church of Scotland.[1] His stated enthusiasm for closer links between his Church and the Presbyterian denominations of the United States thus sounds a peculiarly hollow note, and consideration of his attitudes helps to reinforce the contention that the Established Church in Scotland would have felt no call to champion the freedmen's aid cause as a means of facilitating the establishment of deeper relationships with American Churches which were, after all, permanently separated from the endowed Scottish church by the gulf of state patronage.

VIII Conclusions

As it operated in Scotland, the freedmen's aid movement perhaps derived its support principally as a result of its being an instrument for good which was capable of gathering together disparate but nevertheless basically inter-related strands of Scottish attitudes towards America and American affairs in the Reconstruction era. At the back of the vast majority of Scottish contributions (both financial and in terms of public addresses) to the cause, there was something more than merely a straightforward desire to help alleviate the sufferings of the emancipated Negroes and, in later years, to assist in ensuring that they received a sound secular and religious education. As well as remaining in its own right an eminently worthy case for simple philanthropy, the freedmen's aid campaign also came to be looked upon by many Scots as a means for the advancement of several specific hopes and wishes held by them in relation to the United States during the immediate post-Civil War era. The nature of the cause itself, and the period in which it was pleaded, determined that it should be so. Hence Scottish support for the appeals by the American deputies was inextricably tied up with a continuation of the sentiment which had impelled the Scottish anti-slavery movement; with

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1 See Oliphant, A Memoir of...John Tulloch, pp. 325-327, 336-340, 345-348, 398-403.

the desire to foster goodwill with America; with the wish to atone for British complicity in American slavery; with the eagerness, through assistance in educating and evangelizing the freed Negroes, to advance America and Britain's joint role as guides for the world; and with the desire to strengthen international Presbyterianism.

Of the various features which increased the incentive for Scots to participate in the efforts to aid the freedmen, undoubtedly one of the strongest was the determination to keep alive the spirit which had produced their country's great abolitionist impulse. We have observed that there was a distinct tendency among many involved in advocating freedmen's aid to regard that cause as the extension of the anti-slavery crusade. It has been convincingly argued that abolitionism in the United States was the product of "moral fervency" in the Northern states, a reform drive conducted by middle class people who "came to look upon...[slavery] not as an economic institution but as a breach of the ordinations of God". It was a religious movement, "emerging from the ferment of evangelical Protestantism", and with a philosophy which was "essentially a theology".[1] All of these predominantly religious characteristics associated with the anti-slavery movement were shared in full measure by Scottish elements involved in the agitation on behalf of the cause on their home ground. And if, as has been suggested, there had set in by the Reconstruction era a disillusionment among American abolitionists with their earlier Utopian ideals which adversely affected their approach to guiding and assisting the emancipated slaves,[2] at least for many of those Scots who gave their support to freedmen's aid from the other side of the Atlantic, the essence of the old religious impetus remained a

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1 Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (London, 1962), p. 142.

2 John L. Thomas, "Antislavery and Utopia" in Martin Duberman (ed.), The Anti-Slavery Vanguard (Princeton, 1965), p. 248.

vivid reality.

Thus, prominent Scottish advocates of a vigorous, generous Scottish response to the American appeals - men such as Thomas Guthrie, for example - retained a conviction that it was their own and others of their countrymen's duty as Christians to repay in full to the Negro race the debt which had been incurred by the white South's sin against God in perpetuating slavery. There was the feeling that this debt had not been fully paid by emancipation alone. Slavery had been a moral crime, a sin against God and man. The destitute, dependent state of the Negroes after freedom was a direct consequence of that crime and as such, it lay in the province of that same religious spirit which had fought against slavery to seek to aid and elevate the freedmen.

Furthermore, connected to that concept there was the conviction that every man had a duty to be his brother's keeper and to look to the welfare of others, the individual doing all within his power actively to advance the interests of his fellow men. This principle was particularly strongly espoused by the dissenting Free Church, and it consistently led its members into the advocacy of other philanthropic causes which had this basic belief at the back of them. Accordingly, Thomas Guthrie himself had also in his lifetime been a zealous temperance campaigner[1] and the founder (with all their imperfections) of Edinburgh's Original Ragged Schools. And although the outlook pertains to a much more obscure figure than the famous Guthrie, the manner in which an individual who actively participated in the freedmen's aid movement could be motivated by adherence to this pervasive Christian doctrine was notably demonstrated by William Ferguson, a native of Kinmundy,

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1 In the course of many years' activity on behalf of the temperance cause, Guthrie in 1853 had helped to secure the passage of the Forbes Mackenzie Act which gave Scotland Sunday closing and shortened the hours of liquor sales on weekdays - see DNB, Vol. 8, p. 825.

Aberdeenshire. Fairly early in life, Ferguson had embarked upon a business career at Leith, moving from there to Glasgow and then, in 1852, to Liverpool. Two years later he had become partner in the railway engineering business of Robert Benson and Co., London, and in 1862 had returned to Liverpool as partner in a similar venture operating under the name of Cropper, Ferguson & Co. He took up residence in Birkenhead and remained there until his retirement in 1872. A member of a family which for nearly two centuries had owned an estate at Kinmundy, he by no means severed all links with his place of birth, however:[1] and as well as being involved in efforts to advance the freedmen's aid cause at Birkenhead, he engaged in the autumn of 1865 in an attempt to arouse within his native county public sympathy and support for the American appeals.[2]

Ferguson remained throughout his life a fervent member of the Free Church,[3] and it is beyond doubt that his concern for the welfare of the freed American

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1 See William Ferguson of Kinmundy, J.P. and D.L., LL.D. (Aberdeen), F.R.S. (Edinburgh), F.L.S., F.G.S. (pamphlet in Aberdeen Public Library).
For a fuller biographical note on Ferguson, see Appendix I.

2 See below, Chapter IX, pp. 157-159.

3 One significant instance of Ferguson's avid commitment to promoting the interests of the Free Church and its members is represented by the leading role which he took in securing the erection of a Free Church at Shieldaig, Lochcarron, Ross-shire. At the Disruption, all but one of that district's population of churchgoers had adhered to the Free Church, but the proprietor had refused to allow the seceders to build a church and as a consequence they continued for the following thirty-two years to worship in the open air, with the minister preaching from a wooden box or, at best, in a tent. In 1875 (at which time all except three of the 1,400 persons in the area were staunch Evangelicals), Ferguson suggested to the Free Church General Assembly that the Shieldaig congregation should receive the gift of a church and manse in recognition of their steadfastness. The proposition having won influential clerical support and the agreement of the then proprietor of Shieldaig, a public appeal was launched with Ferguson as treasurer. He laboured zealously in collecting funds and co-ordinating the project, and ultimately raised in only one year the sum of £3,200. On 25 July, 1876, amid fulsome praise for his endeavour, he personally laid the foundation-stone of the Shieldaig Free Church and manse. See Shieldaig. Account of the Laying of the Foundation Stone 25th July, 1876. Appeal and other documents (Edinburgh, 1876; pamphlet), pp. 6 - 18.

slaves was but part of a much wider philosophy of the Christian's responsibility towards his fellow men. The quality of his personal attachment to a belief in the existence of mutual human duties and obligations on a universal scale was admirably illustrated in the Inaugural Address which he delivered on being elected President of the Birkenhead Literary and Scientific Society for the 1868-69 session. Speaking in the late autumn of 1868, Ferguson suggested to the members of the Society that it would add to the usefulness and interest of the meeting if in the forthcoming session there was a larger infusion of papers on matters of "social interest". He referred to the value of papers which had earlier been read on the causes and penalties of crime, and on education, and then went on to offer his own opinions and observations on the latter subject.[1]

The central theme of his discourse was that Britain, alone of the leading countries in the world, had shamefully neglected the education of its working class population. While "enormous" grants were made to schools, these, he contended, mainly helped those persons who did not especially need help and left out of the reckoning the instruction of the masses. In his view, Britain had never made any attempt to solve that question, and he compared the nation's tardiness with the progress made in that sphere by the Free States in America,[2] and, indeed, by the Southern States following the end of the Civil War. Maintaining that many members of the English labouring classes actually did not want education for their children, Ferguson explained that when more than twenty-five years before he had started

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1 William Ferguson, The President's Inaugural Address [to Birkenhead Literary and Scientific Society]. Delivered to the members of the Society at the commencement of Session XII, Nov. 12, 1868 (Birkenhead 1868; pamphlet), p. 5

2 Ibid., p.6. Ferguson was in some authority to pass judgement on this matter since he had visited the United States in 1855.

working among the "neglected masses" of Glasgow he had come to realize that it was necessary to inculcate in them a desire for learning.[1]

It was in stressing the duty which educated Britons had to interest the working classes in learning, and in elaborating upon the manner in which this vital process of inculcation should be approached, that Ferguson exhibited the intense Christian spirit which impelled his social and humanitarian conscience. What was required, he told his audience, was a "human, Christ-like interest", not a "dominant, patronizing" one, in arousing the interests of the masses in education. Insisting that there must be created amongst the workers the desire for education and the means to fulfil it, he declared: "we cannot dutifully go through the world, studying only our personal comfort and enjoyment...There is a heavy responsibility resting on each to do his utmost for the general good". And he concluded his address by identifying self-interest and neglect of the exhortation to love one's neighbour as the causes of "all the evils under which contemporary society is groaning".[2]

Ferguson's convictions regarding the role of the individual in assuming active concern for the rest of mankind were completely in keeping with the mainstream of contemporary Free Church dogma on that issue. One of the denomination's leading ministers, the Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie, was even prepared, for example, to write a volume eulogizing the "leaders in modern philanthropy" in which, appropriately enough, he clearly spelt out the immutable importance of Christian philanthropy in the modern world.

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1 Ibid., p. 8.

2 Ibid., p. 9. The practical bent of Ferguson's Christianity was further amply demonstrated in the spring of 1875 in the character of his chairman's address to the first meeting of the Clola YMCA, held in the Sessionhouse of the Free Church, Clola, Kinmundy - see Clola Young Man's Christian Association. Opening Address by William Ferguson, Esq., President. 17th March, 1875 (Pamphlet printed for private circulation), pp. 3 - 10.

Ferguson, as well as being President, was very probably also the Association's main founder.

Christianity, he declared, brought obligations and endeavours to benefit the poor and the needy everywhere: "To every man and woman whom...[Christianity] blessed it gave a personal sense of obligation to the Lord Jesus, a personal experience of His infinite love, and a strong dynamic impulse to diffuse the love which had fallen so warmly on themselves".[1] Although these specific sentiments were voiced as late as 1884, the outlook which governed them had been evident in Blaikie's writings almost two decades before, as when in 1865 he had publicly censured Scottish employers for being considerably less mindful of their employees' general welfare than were their English contemporaries, and had attacked them for their "selfishness" and "moral inertness" in failing to provide for "the elevation of their workpeople".[2]

A tradition of philanthropic activity and endeavour based on such reasonings was indeed well established within the Free Church by the 1860s and 1870s. It had derived an initial incentive (of sorts) from the philosophy expounded by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Chalmers himself in the 1820s and the years immediately preceding,[3] and had flourished throughout the mid century in the vigorous support given by influential, popular ministers, such as Guthrie and Blaikie to charitable projects and causes for the improvement of the poor and the underprivileged.[4] There was therefore ample reason why during the Reconstruction era in America members of Scotland's

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1 Rev. Dr. William G. Blaikie, Leaders in Modern Philanthropy (The Religious Tract Society, London, 1884), p. 9.

2 Blaikie, Heads and Hands in the World of Labour (London, 1865), pp. 111, 117.

3 For a close examination of Chalmers' social creed which, although blatantly conservative, did leave a vital legacy inasmuch as it put great emphasis on Christian charity and the social duties of all Christians, see Saunders, Scottish Democracy, pp. 208-221; also R.H. Campbell, Scotland Since 1707, p. 208; W.H. Marwick, "Paternalism in Victorian Scotland" pp. 51-52.

4 See ibid. p. 52.

Free Church should have persisted in regarding the cause of the freed Negro predominantly in terms of a straightforward claim upon Christian responsibility and Christian philanthropy. In other words, the cause, like the anti-slavery one of which it was the logical extension, was looked on by those men of the Free Church who advocated it as representing a sphere of obligatory as well as merely desirable support from Scottish Evangelical Christians.

Within the United Presbyterian Church, too, members and ministers shared the strong inclination to accept involvement in the welfare of the American freedmen as a continuation of the earlier involvement with abolition. It has importantly been pointed out that the real characteristic of the Voluntary Church was action and participation in the reformist political sphere - support for political democracy, wider liberties for the individual, and allied concepts - rather than concentration on the social responsibilities of the Christian individual, after the fashion of the Free Church.[1] But while such was undoubtedly the case, it nevertheless remained a demonstrable fact that at least some of the United Presbyterians who showed themselves to be earnestly concerned about the status and spiritual wellbeing of the American Negroes also matched their activities in that connection with public support for other philanthropic, socially remedial causes. Thus the Rev. Dr. William Anderson, the Rev. Dr. George C. Hutton (convenor of the U.P. Synod committee on the freedmen in 1866), the Rev. Dr. Joseph Brown and the Rev. Dr. Alexander Wallace (both regular attenders at public freedmen's aid meetings), Duncan McLaren and David Macrae were all zealous advocates of the

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1 See ibid. p. 52

temperance movement, for instance.[1]

Through the pervasive influence of the social ethics of the two major unendowed Scottish sects, through the singular emphasis placed on missionary work by the U.P. Church, and through the country's proud reputation as a strong pillar of anti-slavery sentiment, a substantial foundation did therefore exist within Scotland for the development of a widespread, generous response to the freedmen's aid cause. And to this central basis for participation were added during the Reconstruction years various new incentives and stimuli for involvement in the campaign. Some of these, such as the emphasis on the strengthening of goodwill with America and the declaration that Britain should reciprocate the assistance given by the United States during the Irish Famine and the Lancashire distress, were common to the pattern of the movement in England while others, such as the fervent desire to see the freed Negroes Christianized according to the Protestant faith, the anxiety to curb the influence of Roman Catholicism among them, and the recognition of the movement as a means of drawing Scottish and American Presbyterianism closer together, might be claimed to have been much more specifically Scottish motivations. All of the mutually beneficial as well as purely philanthropic aspects of the campaign were

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1 Amongst the multitude of public causes which Anderson concerned himself in, he was a "very ardent" temperance lecturer - see Gilfillan, William Anderson, p. 95; Hutton had an extremely strong involvement in the cause, having as a theology student organized the U.P. Total Abstinence Society, and becoming a long-standing member and office-bearer of the Scottish Temperance League, and President for a time of the Personal Abstinence Society of the U.P. Ministers - see Oliver, George Clark Hutton, pp. 36-41; Brown helped create a strong abstinence element in the congregation of his new U.P. Church at Kent Road, Glasgow - see Small, History of the... United Presbyterian Church, Vol. 1, p. 555. Wallace, of East Campbell Street U.P. church, Glasgow wrote in 1860 a work which formed a contribution to the temperance campaign - see ibid., Vol. 2, pp. 43-44; McLaren was a leader in the temperance cause, especially during his term as Edinburgh's Lord Provost, when he was instrumental in paving the way for the Forbes-Mackenzie Act - see Mackie, Duncan McLaren, Vol. 1, p. 305.

vigorously repeated by its public supporters, both Scottish and American, in their attempts to recommend it to the generosity of the Scottish people. If, in terms of actual financial contributions, Scotland's overall support for the freedmen's aid appeals was in some respects perhaps rather disappointing, the result could certainly not be attributed to a widespread public unawareness of the movement, or to lack of popular appreciation of the factors which could be expected to rouse a wide measure of sympathy and support for it.