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To cite this article: Chas. F. Lindsley (1921) A footnote in the psychology of persuasion, Quarterly Journal of Speech, 7:3, 233-257, DOI: [10.1080/00335632109379338](https://doi.org/10.1080/00335632109379338)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00335632109379338>



Published online: 05 Jun 2009.



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## A FOOTNOTE IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION

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IN the summer of 1863 Henry Ward Beecher went to England to seek relief from his arduous labor in this country and to recruit strength for his winter's work. He went as a private citizen seeking health and quiet; but the small group of Englishmen who sympathized with the northern states in their war against the southern Confederacy fell upon him and importuned his aid. "Mr. Beecher, we have been counted as the off-scouring because we have taken up the part of the North. We have sacrificed ourselves in your behalf, and now if you go home and show us no favor or strength they will overwhelm us. They will say, 'Even your friends in America despise you,' and we shall be nowhere, and we think it is rather a hard return." The committee informed him of a great plan to hold public meetings during all that autumn and early winter among the laboring masses to change popular feeling in order that Parliament might be publicly supported in declaring for the southern Confederacy. "If you lecture for us you can head off this whole movement," he was told. Mr. Beecher finally yielded to the urgent demands of his English friends, and consented to make addresses at Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London. The record of these speeches is the story of one of the most stubborn oratorical battles and greatest personal triumphs recorded in the history of platform eloquence. It is my purpose in this article to present an analysis of these addresses from the viewpoint of Persuasion.

In order to appreciate fully Mr. Beecher's difficult problem in addressing British audiences in the year 1863, and to understand clearly the temper of public opinion in England at that period, it is helpful to know something of the political and diplomatic background of our Civil War as well as the effect this war had upon Great Britain. "The feeling in England during our American Civil War was largely in favor of the cause of the Confederate States."<sup>1</sup> "The error that lay at the root of our English miscon-

<sup>1</sup> Autobiography and Memoirs, The Duke of Argyll, Vol. II., p. 169.

ception of the American struggle is now clear. We applied ordinary political maxims to what was not an ordinary political contest, but a social revolution. Without scrutiny of the cardinal realities beneath, we discussed it like some superficial conflict in an old world about boundaries, successions, territorial partitions, dynastic preponderance."<sup>2</sup> A more concrete cause of English ill feeling was the fact that the northern blockade of southern ports cut off the supply of raw cotton on which Lancashire depended. "This helped to excite a strong feeling in England in favor of the recognition of the independence of the southern states."<sup>3</sup> The Cabinet wavered in their opinion as to the advisability of maintaining strict neutrality. "The leading political figure in England at the time was Lord Palmerston, the prime minister, well known, to use a word not then coined, as a jingo. He was distinctly favorable to the South and was not loath to interfere. His foreign secretary, Lord John Russel, was less decided in his sympathies and less inclined to action. Both recognized the necessity of waiting upon public opinion. This force \*\*\* seemed at first overwhelmingly pro-southern \*\*\* 'The Times,' at the zenith of its prestige, if not of its power, was outspoken, and it represented the opinion of the governing classes. The Earl of Malmesbury wrote, May 23, 1862: 'There is a rumor that the Confederates have been defeated and Beauregard taken prisoner, which everybody regrets. The feeling for the South is very strong in society' \* \* \* There was an almost universal feeling in England that the South could not be subdued. Edward A. Freeman, the historian, brought out in 1863, 'A History of Federal Government from the Foundations of the Achaian League to the Disruption of the United States.'"<sup>4</sup> Then came the Trent affair. Captain Wilkes of the San Jacinto stopped an English mail packet on her way from Havana to the Danish island of St. Thomas, a neutral port, and took off Mason and Slidell, southern envoys to France and England. Acting on his own authority, Wilkes took Mason and Slidell to Fortress Monroe. "A storm of enthusiastic approval swept northern United States. A storm of indignation of equal intensity swept England. \* \* \* Congress voted unanimously to thank Captain Wilkes for his brave, adroit, and patriotic conduct in the arrest and detention of the traitors, James M. Mason

<sup>2</sup> Life of Gladstone, John Morley, Vol. II., p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> The Duke of Argyll. Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> American Diplomacy, Carl Russell Fisk. Pp. 313-314.

and John Slidell. The President was requested to present Captain Wilkes a gold medal with suitable emblems and devices in testimony of the high sense entertained by Congress of his good conduct."<sup>5</sup> England answered by despatching troops to Canada, and Lord Lyon, ambassador to this country, was told: "If at the end of that time (seven days) no answer is given except that of a compliance with the demands of her Majesty's Government, your Lordship is instructed to leave Washington, with all the members of your legation, bringing with you the archives of the legation, and to repair immediately to London."<sup>6</sup> As Mr. Adams remarks, "the insanity passed away almost as suddenly as it had asserted itself;" but the event did not create a more friendly feeling on either side of the water. Another cause of ill feeling between England and the North was occasioned by the further fact that the British government seemed to favor the South in the matter of securing armed cruisers from English ship builders. Early in the war a vessel known as the "Oreto" was equipped at Liverpool, sailed for the Bahamas, was seized at Nassau, released after full investigation, then ran the blockade, was armed at Mobile and became the "Florida." Late in June, 1862, Lord Russell's attention was called to a vessel launched at Messrs. Laird's yard at Birkenhead which was fitting out for the especial and manifest object of carrying on hostilities at sea. The government was dilatory in carrying on an investigation and the suspected vessel escaped and began her destructive career as the "Alabama." The "Alabama" claims were long a matter of controversy. An acquaintance with these facts helps one to understand that Englishmen were not willing to lend an attentive ear to a champion of the southern cause.

When Mr. Beecher stepped from the train at Manchester, he found the streets placarded with blood-red letters:

WHO IS  
HENRY WARD BEECHER?

He is the man who said the best blood of England must be shed to atone for the Trent affair.

He is the man who advocates a War of Extermination with the South,—says it is incapable of "re-generation," but proposes to re-people it from the North by "generation."

<sup>5</sup> American Historical Review, Vol. XVII., "The Trent Affair." C. F. Adams.

<sup>6</sup> Life of Lord John Russell, Spencer Walpole. Vol. II., p. 346.

He is the friend of that inhuman monster, General BUTLER. He is the friend of that so-called Gospel Preacher, CHEEVER, who said in one of his sermons—"Fight against the South till Hell Freezes, and then continue the battle on the ice."

He is the friend and supporter of a most debased female, who uttered at a public meeting in America the most indecent and cruel language that ever polluted female lips.

#### MEN OF MANCHESTER, ENGLISHMEN!

What reception can you give this wretch, save unmitigated disgust and contempt? His impudence in coming here is only equalled by his cruelty and impiety. Should he, however, venture to appear, it behooves all right-minded men to render as futile as the first this second attempt to get up a public demonstration in favor of the North, which is now waging war against the South with a vindictive and revengeful cruelty unparalleled in the history of any Christian land.

Such posters were used in every city in which he spoke. In Liverpool, posters 20 x 30 inches called upon the independent and industrial classes of that city to attend the lecture and "show by your hearts and hands that the industrial classes in this town are opposed to the bloody War which Abraham Lincoln is waging against his brothers in the South, and the dastardly means he is resorting to in employing such tools as Henry Ward Beecher, a minister of the Gospel." It was against audiences stimulated by such inflammatory appeals that Beecher rose to speak. Mobs roared and armed men gathered to do him violence; but he broke successively the spirit of each mob that faced him and forced them to hear his argument in behalf of Liberty and Union. I have not space in this article to measure these orations by all the standards or criteriae considered in chapters on "Persuasion and Influencing Conduct," and shall limit this analysis as follows: first, I wish to speak briefly of the general plan of Mr. Beecher's speeches and show how, broadly considered, the speaker tried to adapt himself to the "general disposition," the special interests, peculiarities, and susceptibilities of the audiences he met; second, I shall sketch briefly the particular method of approach (or method of "preliminary tuning" to use a phrase from Professor Woolbert) to each audience; and finally I

desire to present a topical outline of each speech to the Manchester, Glasgow, and Liverpool speeches and indicate how the orator gave acceptance value to each of his propositions.

Mr. Beecher's central purpose was "to enlist against this flagitious wickedness (slavery), and the great civil war which it has kindled, the judgment, conscience, and interests of the British." The specific proposition advanced in each case was: "Slavery was the cause, the only cause, the whole cause of this gigantic and cruel war." He drew sharply the issue of slavery versus freedom, and attempted to show that sympathy for the South was sympathy with "an audacious attempt to build up a slave empire pure and simple." By choosing this as the central theme of his addresses he was able to lift his appeal to the plane of morality and at the same time fit himself to the acting nature of his audiences by arousing their inherent respect for free institutions, individual rights, and law; for Englishmen had been fighting their way for centuries against the darkness of political corruption and tyrannical control to the light of a more popular representative government. "So rooted is this English people in the faith of liberty, that it were an utterly hopeless task for any minion or sympathizer of the South to sway the popular sympathy of England, if this English people believed that this was none other than a conflict between liberty and slavery," he declared in opening his argument at Manchester; and this established his general plan for this whole course of lectures.

The orator's method of securing contact with each of his special audiences revealed a rare subtlety in adaptation. At Manchester his purpose was to present a history of the external political movement in the United States for the first half of the nineteenth century to illustrate that the war was only an overt and warlike form of a contest between liberty and slavery that had been going on for half a century; and this is the central theme of his recorded speech. But in his own account of the speech Beecher declared that he threw away his notes on this occasion and entered on a discussion of the value of freedom as opposed to slavery in the manufacturing interest, arguing that freedom everywhere increases a man's necessities, and what he needs he buys, and that it was therefore to the interest of the manufacturing community to stand by the side of labor thruout the country.<sup>7</sup> The transition to this second method

<sup>7</sup> Patriotic Addresses. "Account of the English Speeches." P. 643.

of argument was made necessary by the hostile and uncompromising attitude of the audience. Had his hearers been calm, interested, even neutral they would have accepted a rational exposition of the background of the slavery movement and have been convinced; but Beecher saw at once that he would have to use a more vital method of stimulation and turned to a discussion of the relation of slavery to the commercial and manufacturing interests of the city. Manchester's mills were idle, men were out of work, production was stagnated: cotton and raw materials were needed, and a return to prosperous trade relations. Beecher recognized these facts and adapted his speech to meet the situation. At Glasgow Beecher faced another group whose industrial life had been injured by the war, and he was again forced to demonstrate the fallacy of slave labor, and prove that "the Southern cause is the natural enemy of free labor all over the world." He attempted to establish the argument that labor all over the world was united in interest and that slavery had made labor disreputable. The Edinburgh speech was "smooth sailing." "There was a different audience there; there was an educated and moral element in it." To these elements Beecher adapted himself by discussing the effect of slavery on learning, culture, and general intelligence on the basis of the history of slavery in America. At Liverpool, the center of Southern sympathizers, a city interested in commerce and trade and manufacture, the orator took as his central propositional idea: "Slavery strikes at the vital want of commerce—rich consumers." Slavery in the long run he declared to be hostile to commerce and manufacture all the world over as it was to free interests in society. Again Beecher revealed his ability to analyze the character of his audience and divine the springs of human action. The London speech was an exposition of the moral aspects of slavery. "The battle had been fought, and my address there was a good deal more of a religious address than anywhere else." This effort concluded Beecher's formal program and brought the series of orations to a climax in a trenchant appeal to England's love of popular liberty. "If the love of popular liberty is dead in Great Britain, you will not understand us; but if the love of liberty lives as it once lived, and has worthy successors of those renowned men that were our ancestors as much as yours, and whose examples and principles we inherit as so much seed corn in a new and fertile land, then you will understand. \* \* \* If we are one in civilization, one

in religion, one substantially in faith, let us be one in national policy, one in every enterprise for the furtherance of the gospel and for the happiness of mankind."

I now turn to a consideration of the introductions and the methods used by Mr. Beecher to win a hearing from hostile audiences. At Manchester an audience of six thousand began to carry out the injunction of the placards to give the speaker a disgusting reception. The chairman had expressed his confidence that there was not an Englishman in that crowded hall who did not approve of a manly, moral, and good man wherever he was found; but peals of derision interrupted Beecher after his first sentence. Instantly the flint struck fire: "My friends, we will have a whole night session, but we will be heard!" The question was, who could hold out the longest. There were five or six storm centers boiling and whirling at the same time; here someone pounding on a group with his umbrella and shouting, 'Sit down there;' over there a row between two or three combatants; somewhere else a group all yelling together at the top of their voices. It was like talking to a storm at sea. \* \* \* The uproar would come in on this side and on that, and they would put insulting questions and make all sorts of calls to me, and I would wait until the noise had subsided and then get in about five minutes of talk. \* \* \* I think it was the design of the men there to break me down on that first speech by fair means or foul." But the orator registers a vow that he will not be broken down, and hurling his pointed spears of defiance at the enemy wins inch by inch the battle for free speech. Then quickly changing his tack, he covets the honor of having his name joined to that "great company of noble Englishmen from whom we derive our dictrines of liberty." He is gratified to make his initial appearance in the "goodly town of Manchester," for "in what town more than Manchester have the doctrines of human rights been battled for, and where else have there been gained for them nobler victories than here?" There are not words of indiscriminate praise, the phrases of a pandering flatterer. One feels the presence of a moral personality speaking honest and deserving compliment. If there is a suspicion of demagoguery or insincerity in this it is quickly checked by the subtlety of the third device of securing the confidence of his audience, for the orator expresses a reckless disregard for what Englishmen might think of him personally or of his words and deeds, declaring that he owes a higher



reverence to personal fidelity to the duty of championing the poor and weak. "I have never stopped to measure and to think whether my words spoken in truth and fidelity to duty would be liked in this shape by one or another person either in England or America. I have had one simple honest purpose which I have pursued ever since I have been in public life, and that was with all the strength that God has given me to maintain the cause of the poor and the weak of my own country." After pursuing this advantage he returns to strike again the earlier note of defiance and independence: "But I am not on trial or defense. \* \* \* I am before you willing to tell you what I think about England or any person in it." Immediately he hedges and denounces anything that might lead to war, appealing to his audience as blood relatives whom America loves. He traces the rise of American affection and admiration for England, pays an eloquent tribute to English men, and institutions. "What we had to dignify humanity, that made life worth having, were all brought from old England. \* \* \* When we searched our principles, they all ran back to rights wrought out and established in England; when we looked at those institutions of which we were the most proud, we beheld that the very foundation stones were taken from the quarry of your history. \* \* \* Now when we thought England was seeking opportunity to go with the South against us of the North, it hurt us as no other nation's conduct could hurt us on the face of the globe." Hereupon he strikes again the general tone of defiance and avows with fervor that the cause of constitutional government and of universal liberty was so dear, so sacred that they (the North) would give every child they had, and that if it were necessary to maintain this great doctrine of representative government in America, they would fly against the armed world—against England and France. The succeeding paragraph again mingles the attitudes of conciliation and defiance, for after assuring them that the darker days of embroilment between England are passed he declares: "We ask no help and no hindrance. \* \* \* If you do not send us another musket nor another cannon, we have cannon that will carry five miles already. \* \* \* All we say is, let England keep hands off." The final paragraph of this introduction is a strong emotional appeal in the name of national honor, fidelity to solemn national trusts, popular intelligence, right doctrines of civil government, liberty of speech and press, honest farmers, and civil liberty in every part of the United

States. To gain these "it will be worth all the dreadful blood, and tears, and woe."

The same mingling of compliment, self-devotion to principle, and defiance of British power and opinion is manifested in the introduction of the Glasgow speech. The first paragraph is a eulogy of Scotland and from the viewpoint of persuasion will repay careful reading.

"No one who has been born and reared in Scotland can know the feeling with which, for the first time, such a one as I have visited this land, classic in song and in history. I have been reared in a country whose history is brief. So vast is it that one might travel night and day for all the week, and yet touch historic ground. Its history is yet to be written; yet to be acted. But I come to this land, which, though small, is as full of memories as the heaven is of stars, and almost as bright. There is not the most insignificant piece of water that does not make my heart thrill with some story of heroism, or some remembered poem; for not only has Scotland had the good fortune to have had men that knew how to make heroic history, but she has reared those bards who have known how to sing her fame. And every steep and every valley, and almost every single league on which my feet have trod, have made me feel as if I was walking in a dream. I never expected to feel my eyes overflow with tears of gladness, that I had been permitted in the prime of life to look upon dear old Scotland. For your historians have taught us history, your poets have been the charm of our firesides, your theologians have enriched our libraries; from your philosophers—Reid, Brown, and Stuart—we have derived the elements of our philosophy, and your scientific researches have greatly stimulated the study of science in our land. I come to Scotland almost as a Pilgrim would to Jerusalem, to see those scenes whose story had stirred my imagination from my earliest youth; and I can pay no higher compliment than to say that having seen some part of Scotland I am satisfied; and permit me to say that if, when you know me you are a thousandth part as satisfied with me as I am with you, we shall get along very well together."

What "affectation of soul" is produced by this paragraph? The lines move rhythmically and are full of figurative implication carefully designed to affect national sensibilities. The expression is not stilted or bombastic but is rather possessed of fine restraint and

absolute sincerity. This would have been a sufficient approach to an ordinary occasion but the speaker was able to proceed at once to his argument. More preparatory pleading was necessary, and he continued by explaining his purpose and intention of appealing to right principles and high moral conduct. "I have been arrayed without regard to consequences and to my own reputation or my own ease, against that which I consider the damning sin of my country, and the shame of human nature—slavery." This devotion to principle, he asserts, overrides all desire for popularity, and "if you do not want a man to express his honest sentiments fearlessly, then I do not want to speak to you." He then parallels further the methods used at Manchester, asserting his primary allegiance to God's principle of truth and justice in favor of which he would forsake his own country and disown Great Britain; and rising again to a climax of defiance: "If they bring war to us, they shall have war. We must oppose arms to arms. If Great Britain is for slavery, I am against Great Britain." But there is woven with this apparent recklessness honest compliment, for he remembers the France "who befriended us in our early trials" and Great Britain "to whom we can never repay the debt of love we owe her for these men who wrought out in fire and blood those very principles of civil liberty for which we are now contending."

Mr. Beecher deemed his Edinburgh audience the most docile of all, and found it unnecessary to use much preliminary pleading. The Introduction consists of two short paragraphs in which recapitulates the persuasive methods used before. Edinburgh he considers the "most picturesque city in the world;" declares that he is not a partisan seeking proselytes but is an apostle of truth, justice, liberty, and good morals. He then expresses toleration for the opinions of the audience and requests reciprocal tolerance from them.

The orator's experience at Liverpool was the most sensational and dangerous of all. "If I had supposed I had had a stormy time, I found out my mistake when I got there. Liverpool was worse than all the rest put together. My life was threatened, and I had communications that I had not better venture there. The streets were placarded with the most scurrilous and abusive cards. \* \* \* There were men in the galleries and boxes who came armed, and some bold men on our side went up into those boxes and drew their knives and pistols and said to these young bloods: 'The first man that fires

here will rue it.' Of all confusions and turmoils I never saw the like in my life. I got control of the meeting in about an hour and a half, and then I had clear road the rest of the way. We carried the meeting, but it required a three hours' use of my voice at its utmost strength. I sometimes felt like a ship-master attempting to preach on board a ship through a speaking trumpet with a tornado on the sea and a mutiny among the men."<sup>8</sup> This speech is referred to in all chapters on Persuasion as a classical example of persuasion; and although the facts about this speech are well known, it may not be altogether amiss to attempt another analysis here. The point usually stressed is that Beecher secured his hearing by appealing to the English sense of Fair Play; but more strategy than this was used as shown by the following outline:

1. My life has not been safe south of the Mason and Dixon line because of my solemn, earnest, persistent testimony against that which I consider the most atrocious thing under the sun—the system of American slavery in a free Republic.
2. (Upon a roar from the audience) I perceive that Southern influence prevails to some extent in England.
3. If a man's cause would bear examination he would have it spoken about.
4. The placards on your streets prove that you are afraid to submit your case to the arbiter of free speech; you appeal to mob law.
5. It is of no personal concern to me whether I speak here or not.
6. If you do let me speak you will hear plain talking.
7. Englishmen favor manly opposition and not the opposition of a sneak.
8. I will appeal to your reason, not your emotions.
9. Therefore, all I ask is Fair Play.

The above is an analysis of the skill and tact and judgment of Beecher in gaining the attention and hearing of hostile and prejudiced audiences. It may be true that the speaker today is not called before howling and hissing crowds, but all the principles utilized by the great American orator may be applied on a lesser scale to even normal occasions.

And now, finally, I wish to outline the argument of the speeches and show Beecher's further persuasive skill in stating those propositions that touched off highly charged tendencies in his hearers, and his especial ability to give these ideas their highest acceptance value

<sup>8</sup> Patriotic Addresses. "Account of the English Speeches." P. 646.

by clothing them with vivid detail. I shall state the topics of the outline quite fully and shall place in the footnotes supporting quotations from the text that will indicate adequately the sharp and vivid manner in which Beecher drove home his arguments. I do not think it is necessary to expatiate upon these outlines, for they in themselves amply demonstrate the principles of persuasion with which readers of this article are familiar. As the title indicates this is intended to be nothing more than a footnote in psychology of persuasion.

MANCHESTER.

(October 9, 1863)

- I. The Civil War is a conflict between liberty and slavery,—a contest for liberty and against slavery,—to scourge oppression and establish liberty. Union in the future means justice, liberty, popular rights.
  - A. At the time of our great struggle for independence, the whole public mind began to think it was wrong to wage war to defend our rights while we were holding men in slavery.
    1. All the great and renowned men were abolitionists.
    2. Slavery was terminated in Massachusetts by a decision of the Chief Justice.
    3. New York freed her slaves by an Emancipation Act.
      - b. Later New Jersey and Pennsylvania passed emancipation acts.
  - (Ref.) B. The claim that Northern capital and ships were employed in the slave trade is true to a certain extent, but
    1. There are miscreants who violate the public conscience in every community.
    2. Since then any man engaged in this infamous traffic hid himself—he would have been branded with the mark of Cain.
    3. The port of New York was under the influence of that Democratic party in alliance with Southern slavery—under the dark political control of the South itself, for
      - a. The South could appoint our marshals and control the appointment of every Federal officer.

Conclusion: "Is New York to be blamed for demoniac deeds done by her limbs while yet under the possession of the devil? She is now clothed and in her right mind. There was one Judas: is Christianity a hoax? There are hissing men in this audience: are you not respectable?"

- C. The Constitution of the United States does not recognize *doctrine* of slavery in any way whatsoever.<sup>9</sup> The slave laws declare him to be chattel (which is cattle with the h left out); but the Constitution of the United States calls him person.<sup>10</sup>
- D. The tide of universal emancipation was stopped by
1. The wonderful demand for cotton throughout the world when, from the invention of the cotton gin, it became easy to turn it to service.<sup>11</sup>
  2. A political system that permitted the South to obtain federal representation for persons and things together.
- E. I can say, under God, the South had unintentionally done more than we to bring on this work of emancipation, for
1. The South began to preach the doctrine of Calhoun—the duty of general government to protect the local states from interference and to make slavery *equally* national with liberty.<sup>12</sup>
  2. The South began to assert rights never before dreamed of, for
    - a. They waged the Mexican war for territory.
    - b. They annexed Texas as a slave state.

<sup>9</sup>“It (slavery) was a fact; it lay before the ship of state, as a rock lies in the channel of the ship as she goes into the harbor; and because a ship steers around a rock, does it follow that the rock is in the ship? And because the Constitution of the United States made some circuits to steer around that great fact, does it follow that therefore slavery is recognized in the Constitution as a right or system?”

<sup>10</sup>“But how does the Constitution of the United States, when it speaks of these same slaves, name them? Does it call them chattel or slaves? Nay, it refused even the softer words serf and servitude. \* \* \* Go to South Carolina, and ask what she calls slaves, and her laws reply, ‘They are *things*’; but the old capitol at Washington sullenly reverberates, ‘No, *persons*!’ Go to Mississippi, the state of Jefferson Davis, and her fundamental law pronounces the slave to be only a ‘thing;’ and again the Federal Constitution sounds back, ‘Persons!’ Go to Louisiana and its constitution, and still that doctrine of devils is enunciated—it is ‘chattel,’ it is ‘thing.’ Looking upon those for whom Christ felt mortal anguish in Gethsemane, and stretched himself out for death on Calvary, their laws call them ‘things’ and ‘chattels;’ and still in tones of thunder the Constitution of the United States says, ‘Persons!’”

<sup>11</sup>“Slaves that had been worth from three to four hundred dollars began to be worth six hundred dollars. That knocked away one-third of adherence to moral law. Then they became worth seven hundred dollars, and half the law went; then eight or nine hundred dollars, and then there was no such thing as moral law; then one thousand or twelve hundred dollars, and slavery became one of the beatitudes.”

<sup>12</sup>“The South, having the control of the government, knew from the inherent weakness of their system, that, if it were confined, it was like huge herds feeding on small pastures that soon gnaw the grass to roots, and must have other pasture or die. Slavery is of such a nature that if you do not give it continual change of feeding ground, it perishes.”

- c. They organized rowdyism in Congress that browbeat every Northern man who had not sworn fealty to slavery.
  - d. They filled all the courts of Europe with ministers holding slave doctrines.
  - e. They gave a majority of the seats on the bench to slave-owning judges.
  - f. They forced the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill for the purpose of humbling the North and making it drink the bitter cup of humiliation.
  - g. They abolished the Missouri Compromise as an infamous disregard of solemn contract.
- F. The conduct of the free North during all these days was honorable, for
- 1. No steps for secession were taken.
  - 2. We threatened no violence.
  - 3. We protested and waited and said: "God will give us the victory."
  - 4. We never taxed their commerce or touched it with our little finger.
- G. When Mr. Lincoln, in fair open field, was elected President of the United States, the conduct of the South was dishonorable, for
- 1. By political jugglery every state was precipitated into secession.

Summary: Against all these facts it is attempted to make England believe that slavery had nothing to do with this war. You might have attempted to persuade Noah that the clouds had nothing to do with the flood; it is the most monstrous absurdity ever born from the womb of folly.

II. Refutation: The assertions of Lord Wharcliffe are without foundation, for

- A. It is indeed true that the South has been tending to support the existence of slavery.<sup>13</sup> There can be no question that there is a strong impression that the South has supported the existence of slavery. (Indeed on our side of the water there are many persons who affirm it.)

<sup>13</sup>In beginning this refutation of Lord Wharcliffe's speech (Wharcliffe was President of the (English) Society for Independence), Beecher said: "I never like to speak behind a man's back. I wish Lord Wharcliffe were present."

1. The South maintains four million slaves.<sup>14</sup>
  2. The Montgomery Constitution is changed from the old Federal Constitution only to declare that it is unconstitutional to do away with slavery.
  3. The speech of Vice-President Stephens declares that all nations have been mistaken, and to trample on the manhood of an inferior race is the only proper way to maintain the liberty of a superior.<sup>15</sup>
- B. It is not true that the strongest supporters of slavery are the merchants of New York and Boston, for
1. Although there have been enough Northern ships engaged, not all nor the most were Northern.
  2. Ships fitted out in New York were just as much despised and loathed and hissed by the honorable merchants of that great metropolis, as if they had put up the black flag of piracy.

Conclusion: Does it conduce to good feelings between two nations to utter such slanders as these?

- C. It is untrue that the slave is put in a worse position in the North than in the South, for<sup>16</sup>
1. Although there has been a prejudice against the Negro in the North—although I concede most frankly there has been occasion for such a statement, it is a part of the great moral revolution that is going on that the prejudices have in great measure been vanquished and are now well nigh trodden down.

<sup>14</sup> The argument here is deeply tinged with irony: "—there are uncharitable men living who think that a nation that has four million slaves has some 'tendency' to support slavery."

<sup>15</sup> "—in which he (Stephens) lays down to Calvary a new lesson; in which he gives the lie to the Savior himself, who came to teach us, that by as much as a man is stronger than another, he owes himself to that other. \* \* \* This audacious hierarch of an anti-Christian gospel, Mr. Stephens,—in the face of God, and to the ears of all mankind, in this day of all but universal Christian sentiment,—pronounces that for a nation to have manhood, it must crush out liberty of an inferior and weaker race."

<sup>16</sup> Note the irony of this paragraph. Wharcliffe had declared in his address that he knew from *experience* that the slave was in a worse position in the North than in the South. Beecher says: "I was never aware that he had been put in that unhappy situation. Has he toiled on the sugar plantation? Has he taken the night for his friend, avoiding the day? Has he sped thru cane brakes, hunted by hounds, suffering hunger, and heat, and cold by turns, until he has made his way to the far Northern States? Has he had this experience? If his lordship says that it is his *observation*, I will accept the correction."



2. The condition of the free colored people in the North is unspeakably better than in the South, for
  - a. They own their wives and children.
  - b. They have the right to select their place and their kind of labor.
  - c. The right of education is accorded to them.

Conclusion: "I have endeavored to show you that slavery was the real cause of the war, and that if it had to be legally decided whether the North or South were guilty in this matter, there could be no question before any honourable tribunal, any jury, any deliberate body, that the South, from beginning to end, for the sake of slavery, has been aggressive, and the North patient. \* \* \* The North went into the war for the Union with the distinct and expressed conviction on both sides that if the Union were maintained slavery could not live long."

GLASGOW.

(October 13, 1863)

Introduction: Paves the way for a clear understanding of his argument.

- I. The slave states may be divided into two classes
  - A. The farming states—Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and parts of Tennessee and North Carolina—are devoted to a mixed husbandry and the grazing of herds of cattle. Slave labor is not profitable but slave-breeding is.
  - B. The plantation states—South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas—do not pursue a mixed husbandry, but raise chiefly the two great crops, cotton and sugar.<sup>17</sup>
- II. The labor of slaves in the farming states does not pay, for
  - A. Mixed farming requires much more skill than slaves have.
  - B. Slaves are too costly, for in the farming states they are better off and a man is expensive just in proportion as he rises in the scale of civilization.
- III. The reason that slaves are kept in the North is that slave breeding is profitable.
  - A. Virginia has raised as much as \$24,000,000.00 a year for slaves sold South.

<sup>17</sup> "They buy the principal part of their food and almost all manufactured products. The pails they carry their water in are made in New England; their broom handles, their pins, glass, stone, iron, and tinware, and all their household furniture, are the manufacture of the North."

1. The editor of the Virginia "Times" gives authority to this statement.<sup>18</sup>
2. Henry Clay, a slave holder, testified to the profit of slave breeding in 1829.

## Discussion:

- IV. Slavery requires ignorance in the slave—intellectual, moral, and social,
  - A. Not because intelligence is more difficult to govern, for
    1. With an intelligent people government is easier.
    2. (Restatement) The slave would not be less easily governed if he were educated.
  - B. But because the most ignorant slave is the *cheapest* slave, and to make slave labor profitable, you must reduce the cost of the slave.<sup>19</sup>
- V. The degradation of the slave affects all labor, even when performed by free white men, for
  - A. Even in the most favored portions of the South manual labor is but barely redeemed from the taint of being a slave's business, for
    1. The poor and shiftless whites, unable to own slaves, unwilling to work themselves, live in a precarious and wretched manner, but a little removed from barbarism.
  - B. The great and free North is a vast hive of universal industry.<sup>20</sup>
- VI. The claim of the South that the North's prosperity is due to class legislation and Yankee shrewdness is unsound, for
  - A. The country's legislation for fifty years has been controlled by the South.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> "You cannot understand anything about slavery until you are admitted to the secrets of raising slaves as colts and calves are raised for the market."

<sup>19</sup> "In order to make slave labor profitable, you must reduce the cost of the slave; for the difference between the profit and the loss turns upon the half-penny per pound. If the price of the slave goes up, and cotton goes down a shade in price, in ordinary times the planters lose. The rule is, therefore, to reduce the cost of the man; and the slave to be profitable must be simply a working creature. What does a man cost, that is a slave? Just a little meal, and a little pork, a small measure of the coarsest cloth and leather, that he is all he costs. Because that is all he needs—the lowest fare and the scantiest clothing. *He is a being with two hands and two feet and a belly.*"

<sup>20</sup> "From Northern looms the South is clothed. From their anvils come all Southern implements of labor; from their lathes all modern ware; from their lasts Southern shoes."

<sup>21</sup> "The oration at this point rises to a fine climax: "Not only is it true that the workmen of England have an interest in this conflict as a political struggle; but as a conflict between two grand systems—Slave labor and Free

VII. A historical retrospect of public opinion in both the North and South will help make clear the true nature of the conflict now raging.

A. Northern opinion passed through three stages

1. At the close of the war for independence men were united in societies to promote the abolition of slavery. These died out in 1830 but were later revived with the purpose of promoting liberty and weakening slavery.
2. Another body of moral and intelligent men held that slavery should be limited to its former territory; for they thought that if slavery were rigorously confined to existing bounds natural laws would work out a system of emancipation.
3. There was a class without moral convictions who looked only at *interest* as the end of politics.

Conclusion: The Northern movement proposed no violence nor any precipitate action.

B. Southern opinion was divided into two divisions

1. The more moderate party attempted to maintain the South on the basis of slavery by the multiplication of slave states, by the acquisition of slave states, by the acquisition of slave territories, and by directing the government in such a manner as to fortify slavery till it should stretch across the continent from ocean to ocean.
2. The second party meant to break off from the Union as soon as they were strong enough. They designed, first, separate national existence as the ultimate aim of the Southern states; and secondly, the inclusion of the tropics of America in a gigantic cotton growing slave empire. \* \* \* They meant to reopen the African slave trade for the purpose of cheapening negroes.<sup>22</sup>

labor—it addresses itself to every laboring man on the globe. \* \* \* It is monstrous that British workmen should help Southern slaveholders to degrade labor. Are there not enough already to crush the poor and helpless laborers of the world without English workmen, too, joining the rebel gang of oppressors? Every word for the South is a word against the slave! Every stroke aimed at the slave rebounds upon the European laborer! \* \* \* The North is truly fighting the battle of the laborer everywhere. The North honors work. When the laborer is educated, all doors are open to him, and it depends on his own powers and disposition whether he shall be a drudge or an honored citizen. It will be a burning shame for British workmen to side against their own friends!"

<sup>22</sup> Beecher felt sure that his audience condemned the African slave trade, and he therefore proceeded to stir feeling against the South by arguing that the domestic slave trade in the states was infinitely more cruel than the barter

IX. The second faction of the South have attempted to carry out their designs, for

A. The state legislatures were persuaded and intimidated to vote for secession.<sup>23</sup>

X. When the South opened their batteries on Fort Sumter, the grandeur of the uprising of the North was sublime, for

A. With stern unanimity the public voice denounced complicity with the South as a treason worthy of death.<sup>24</sup>

B. The government began to defend the laws and the constitution.<sup>25</sup>

which his audience for many years had looked upon with righteous indignation. "I declare that the inter-state slave trade of America is in many most important respects more cruel than the roughest part of the African slave-trade. To bring up men under the gospel, to bring up women with some of the tender susceptibilities of womanhood, and more than half their blood white blood,—to rear them in your household, and then,—if bankruptcy threatens, or exigences press, to call out your valuable slaves from a Virginia plantation and sell them to the slave master, to manacle them—to drive in gangs—men reared under the sound of the bell of the Christian Church,—who have required something of refinement in their master's families—to carry them down South in droves of fifties and hundreds, as is done on every great street and road of the northern line of slave states,—is, I say, more infernal, more wicked, by as much as these northern-bred slaves are more tender, susceptible, and intelligent, than the poor half-imbruted African. If God sends one bolt at the ship that brings slaves from Africa, double-shotted thunders are aimed at every gang-master that drives them from the Northern slave states to the Southern."

<sup>23</sup> "When history shall be written, the fact will appear that numbers of convention members were made afraid for their lives. They were told in almost so many words, 'You shall never leave Richmond alive if you fail to vote secession.' It was voted, but secretly, and it was not known in Virginia for weeks. \* \* \* It was to commit the South, to fire the wavering, and arouse the sectional blood, that orders were sent from Washington by the Southern conspirators who were lurking there—'Open your batteries of Fort Sumter.' And they fired at that glorious old flag which had carried the honor of the American name 'round the globe, in order that they might take Virginia out of the Union, and compel the North to submit either to a degrading compromise, or to the independence of the South."

<sup>24</sup> "No rainbow was ever so decked with color as was Broadway with flags. Bunting went up in the market. \* \* \* It is said that misery makes one acquainted with strange bedfellows, but patriotism makes even stranger transformations. I found men that were ready to mob me yesterday for my anti-slavery agitations, ready to denounce me today because I was not anti-slavery enough."

<sup>25</sup> "If they had failed to do this, if when the government and country were threatened by this rebellion they had faltered, not Judas, not the meanest traitor that has ever been execrated thru all time, would have surpassed them in ignominy. I have been asked would it not have been better to negotiate? What! with cannon balls firing right into your midst! The other side was using powder and balls, and you propose to use wad and paper! The day for talking was gone by forever. They had talked too much already. It was then the day for action."

## Refutation:

XI. Men ask me why did you not consent to let them (South) go.  
Because

- A. Only on the single matter of slavery is there any antagonism—and this we believe to be a removable evil.
- B. Secession was an appeal from the ballot to the bullet.
- C. Instances of colonies in the past asserting their independence are not good analogies, for
  - I. A remote colony, an outlying and separate territory, whose autonomy is already practically established, and whose connection with the home government is not intimate, territorial, adjacent, but only political is not to be compared to home territory, geographically touching the country along its whole line.<sup>26</sup>

XII. I shall now refer to the astonishing pretense made in England that this war has nothing to do with slavery. This is not true, for

- A. Never has the South asserted this.
- B. Her politics for thirty years have avowedly and indisputably moved around that center.
- C. All her principal statesmen having made interferences with slavery wrongs at the hands of the North the reason of rebellion—the whole interior history of America for fifty years has been wound up on this speel.<sup>27</sup>

Conclusion: The triumph of the North means the triumph of free institutions. "If the North prevails, she carries over the continent her pride of honest work, her free public schools, her homestead law; her free press, her love and habit of free speech, her untiring industry, her thrift, frugality, and morality, and above all her democratic ideas of human rights, and her old English notions

<sup>26</sup> "This is not cutting off a foot, or a hand. It is cutting across the body right under the heart. The line of fracture proposed by the South is not a stone's throw from the national capitol. France might consent to let Algiers go, but would she let a north and south line be run touching the city of Paris on the east, and separating all the territory east from her dominions? Great Britain might suffer the Canadas to secede from the crown; but would she suffer an east and west line to be run along the edge of London, and all the territory south of it to pass into hostile hands? Yet this is the very case in America. Secession accomplished will leave Washington toppling on the edge of the Southern abyss in whose lurid future loom the elements of quarrel, collision, and terrific war."

<sup>27</sup> "Slavery has been the very alphabet of the war. Every letter of its history has been taken from the font of slavery! The whole black literature of the war has been drawn from slavery!"

of a commonwealth, transmitted to her from Sydney, Hampden, Vane, Milton; and not least, her free churches, with their vast train of charities and beneficences!"

XII. But I return to the shameless and impudent assertion that the North is not sincere in this conflict.

A. There has never before, since time began, been a spectacle like that in America, for

1. One million men are on foot either in the army or navy—every man a volunteer.<sup>28</sup>

XIII. But, it is asked, since the South is so utterly discordant with the North, why not let her go and have peace? But

A. It is to stay that she is fighting. If we let her go she will stay.<sup>29</sup>

B. There would divide us only a fiery line of a slave empire charged with the flames and thunder of war, ready to explode on any occasion.<sup>30</sup>

C. Slaves would run across the line and the South would be irritated if we harbor them.

D. Our press would not be less bold in its proclamation of doctrines of liberty.

Conclusion: Cruel as the war is, yet to stop it until slavery has its death wound would be even more cruel.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> "They have come, not like the Goths and Huns from a wandering life or inclement skies, to seek fairer skies and richer soil; but from homes of luxury, from cultivated farms, from busy workshops, from literary labors, from the bar, the pulpit, and the exchange, thronging around the old national flag that had symbolized *liberty* to mankind, all moved by a profound love of country, and firmly and fiercely determined that the mother-land shall not be divided, especially not that in order that slavery may scoop out for itself a den of refuge from Northern civilization, and an empire to domineer over all the American tropics."

<sup>29</sup> "No mountains divide the North from the South—they run the other way. No cross rivers divide them—they run the other way. \* \* \* God has affianced the torrid and temperate zones in America one to the other, and they are always running into each other's arms."

<sup>30</sup> "Well, may be—may be—you could lie down on a powder magazine, with a thousand tons of powder in it, and a fire raging within an inch of it, but I could not!"

<sup>31</sup> "When the surgeon has cut half the cancer out, is that man the friend of the patient, who, seeing the blood and hearing the groans, should persuade him to leave the operation half performed, and bind up the cancered limb? But, you ask, How long shall we carry violence into the South? I will ask you a question in reply. If in the purlieus of vice in old Glasgow there should be a ward of which a confederation of burglars and thieves had taken possession, how long would you invade it with your police? Would Glasgow give up to them or would they have to give up to Glasgow?"

IX. Final Summary: You ought to give your support to the North, for

- A. You have supported Greece, Poland, and Hungary when fighting for the same principles of liberty.
- B. The North is fighting to establish principles of moral law, not principles of technical law.<sup>32</sup>
- C. Great Britain is tied to America by ties of kindred blood and should not put herself in a position where she cannot be in cordial and ever-during alliance with the free republic in America. (I do not undertake to teach the law that governs the question; but this I do undertake to say, and I will carry every generous man in this audience with me, when I affirm that if between America, bent double with the anguish of this bloody war, and Great Britain, who sits at peace, there is to be forbearance on either side, it should be on your side.)

#### LIVERPOOL.

(October 16, 1863)

Introduction: The things required for prosperous labor, prosperous manufacturers and prosperous commerce are three.

- I. Liberty—to follow those laws of business which experience has developed without imposts or restrictions or governmental intricacies.
- II. Liberty—to distribute and exchange products of industry in any market without burdensome tariffs, without imposts and without vexatious regulations.
- III. Liberty—of an intelligent and free race of customers, for (Let us put the subject before you in the familiar light of your own local experience.)

<sup>32</sup> "I do not discuss this as a question of technical law at all. I lift it up and put it on the ground of moral law. Between two parties, one of whom is laboring for the integrity and sanctity of labor, and the other is for robbery, the degradation of labor, and the integrity of slavery,—I say that the man that gives his aid to the Slave Power is allied to it, and is making his money by building up tyranny. Every man that strikes a blow on the iron that is put in those shops for the South, is striking a blow and forging a manacle for the hand of a slave. \* \* \* You are false to your own principles, to your own interests, to mankind and to the great working classes. \* \* \* You strike God in the face when you work for slaveholders. Your money so got and quickly earned will be badly kept, and you will be poor before you can raise your children, and dying you will leave a memory that will rise against you at the day of judgment. By the solemnity of that judgment—the sanctity of conscience—by the love you bear to humanity—by your old hereditary love of liberty;—in the name of God and mankind, I charge you to come out from among them, to have nothing to do with the unclean and filthy lucre made by pandering to slavery."

- A. The ignorant and poor man buys simply for his body.
- B. The educated and prosperous man buys in greater quantity for he buys for the satisfaction of sentiment and taste as well as senses.<sup>33</sup>

Conclusion: That nation is the best customer that is freest because freedom works prosperity, industry, and wealth. Great Britain, then, aside from moral considerations, has a direct commercial and pecuniary interest in the liberty and civilization and wealth of every people and every nation on the globe. \* \* \* Of course you do have an interest in this because you are a moral and religious people.

Discussion:

IV. It is a great deal more important for Great Britain to have customers than cotton. (It is to this doctrine I ask from you business men, practical men, men of fact, sagacious Englishmen—to that point I ask a moment's attention.)

A. Since there are no more continents to be discovered, you must civilize the world in order to make a better class of purchasers.

1. If you were to press Italy down again under the feet of despotism, Italy, discouraged, could draw but very few supplies from you.<sup>34</sup>
2. If Hungary asks to be an unshackled nation she will rise in virtue and intelligence, for her Liberty is to be found in the Price Current.
3. Every free nation, every civilized people—every people

<sup>33</sup> "The law of price is the skill; and the amount of skill expended in the work is as much for the market as are the goods. A man comes to the market and says, 'I have a pair of hands,' and he obtains the lowest wages. Another man comes and says, 'I have something more than a pair of hands; I have truth and fidelity'; he gets a higher price. Another man comes and says, 'I have something more, I have something more; I have hands and strength, and fidelity, and skill.' He gets more than either of the others. The next man comes and says, 'I have hands and strength, and skill, and fidelity; but my hands work more than that. They know how to create things for the fancy, for the affections, for the moral sentiments'; and he gets more than either of the others. The last man comes and says, 'I have all these qualities, and have them so highly that it is a peculiar genius; and genius carries the whole market and gets the highest price.' \* \* \* That nation is the best customer that is freest, because freedom works prosperity, industry and wealth."

<sup>34</sup> "But give her (Italy) liberty, kindle schools throughout her valleys, spur her industry, make treaties with her by which she can exchange her wine, and her oil, and her silk for your manufactured goods; and for every effort that you make in that direction there will come back profit to you by increased traffic with her."



that rises from barbarism to industry and intelligence, becomes a better customer.<sup>35</sup>

- V. If the South became a slave empire what relation will it have to you? It will be a bad customer and affect you seriously, for
- A. One-third of the population would be miserably poor, un-buying blacks, for whom you manufacture very little. (You have not got machinery coarse enough. Your labor is too skilled to manufacture bagging and linsey-woolsey.)
  - B. One-third of the population of the South consists of a poor, unskilled, degraded white population.
  - C. Only one-third are intelligent and rich customers that can afford to buy the kind of goods you bring to market.

Conclusion: If by sympathy or help you establish a slave empire—you sagacious Britons are busy in favoring the establishment of an empire from ocean to ocean that should have fewest customers and the largest non-buying population.

- VI. The difference between free labor and slave labor is shown by a study of the difference of the two sections in cultivating land, for
- A. Virginia with 15,000 more square miles than New York has 5,000 square miles less under cultivation.
  - B. Maryland with 2,000 more square miles than Massachusetts has only 800 square miles more under cultivation.
  - C. Georgia with 12,000 more square miles than Pennsylvania, has 5,600 less land under cultivation.

Conclusion: Now what can England make for the poor white population of such a future empire and for her slave population? What carpets, what linens, what cottons can you sell to them? A little bagging and a little linsey-woolsey and a few whips and manacles, are all you can sell to the slave.

(Ref.) VII. The claim that the interests of England consist in drawing from any country its raw material, is not the whole truth, for

<sup>35</sup> As people rise from barbarism to civilization they become better customers. "When you Christianize and civilize a man, you put story upon story, for you develop faculty after faculty; and you have to supply every story with your productions. The savage is a man one story deep; the civilized man is thirty stories deep. Now if you go to a lodging house where there are three or four men, your sales to them may no doubt be worth *something*; but if you go to a lodging house like some of those I saw in Edinburgh, which seemed to contain about twenty stories—every story of which is full, and all who occupy buy from you—which is the best customer, the man who is drawn out, or the man who is pinched up?"

- A. When she (England) has put her brains into the cotton, and into the linen and flax, and it becomes the product of her looms, a far more important question is, What can be done with it? *England does not want merely to pay prices for that which brute labor produces, but to get a price for that which brain labor produces.*

VIII. The claim that if the South should be allowed to be separate there will be no tariff and England can trade with her freely, but that if the South remains in the United States it will be bound by a tariff and English goods will be excluded from it, is fallacious; for

- A. The first tariff policy proposed in the United States was proposed by the South. The tariff had its origin in Southern weaknesses and necessities.
- B. There has not been a time for the whole of fifty years when any tariff could be passed without the aid of the South.
- C. Before the war the thinking men of America were ready for free trade.
- D. The Morrill tariff was made necessary to pay the millions of millions of imposed debt the South left to cramp the incoming of Lincoln.
- E. Just as soon as we begin to have peace again, and can get our national debt into proper shape as you have yours \* \* \* there is nothing more certain in the future than that America is bound to join with Great Britain in the world-wide doctrine of free trade.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> This completes the principal argument of this speech. The remainder is a repetition for the most part of rebuttal argument outlined in the Glasgow speech.