

**REPLY TO DR. DEWEY'S ADDRESS,
DELIVERED AT THE ELM
TREE, SHEFFIELD, MASS.
WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE SAME**

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Reply to Dr. Dewey's address, delivered at the elm tree, Sheffield, Mass. With extracts from the same by Various

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VARIOUS

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Compl. to
H. C. ...

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REPLY

TO

Dr. Dewey's Address,

DELIVERED AT THE

ELM TREE,

SHEFFIELD, MASS.

With Extracts from the same.

CHARLESTON, S. C.
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1856.

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PREFACE.

IN compliance with the wish of a number of gentlemen, the publishers offer to the public, in pamphlet form, the reply which lately appeared in the Charleston Courier to Dr. DWKEY's remarks on Slavery. The pamphlet embraces a few additional passages by the author of the reply, on one or two topics in the remarks not before noticed. The publishers have also included the remarks themselves, as given in the Charleston Mercury of the 18th October, from Northern papers. They are extracts from the address delivered by Dr. DWKEY at the Elm Tree, in Sheffield, Massachusetts, in September last. It is presumed that they are correct, and that a reference to them may be convenient to the readers of the reply.

NOVEMBER 7th, 1856.

TO THE REV. ORVILLE DEWEY.

"In the right of your own poor thought," which, you say, "cries to heaven in its very weakness," you have denounced Southern society, in your Elm Tree oration. Your friends, in this region, thought themselves able to say that you would not espouse the vulgar topics of the multitude; that your literary taste and gentle philosophy would keep you aloof from the coarse stimulant which so much delights the passions of the people around you; that you would not, at least, seek an opportunity for indulging their gross appetite for abuse on Southern manners and morals. But we are not surprised that the confidence has been misplaced. The occasion was too alluring—the exciting subject, the sympathetic audience, the obvious expectation produced by your sojourn for two winters in the very heart of Southern society, in the midst of Southern families, with every opportunity afforded by their unsuspecting hospitality for marking the omissions and commissions of Southern life, and registering the misdeeds of the Legrees, which you have detected,—all this involved a temptation which it would be unreasonable to expect you to resist. Your virtues are not ascetic. Why should you refrain from gratifying the eager appetite for detraction on the South which pervades your people? Why impose on yourself an unprofitable self-denial in reference to those whom you never expect to see again? You have already reaped all the fruits that the Southern field directly produces, and it was sound philosophy to secure from it the indirect advantage which its offences afford. Your condemnation of the South gives pleasure to your friends, and profit to yourself. It would be foolish to expect that an idle

motive of delicacy should be allowed to debar you from so much enjoyment.

But although not surprised, we are nevertheless grieved at your Elm Tree declamation. It strikes us as, somehow, not in strict accordance with true moral taste and sound judgment. There is in it something not easily reconciled with the position, so lately held among us, which has enabled you to say, "the planters confess this," "the Southern gentlemen admit that"; it has done general harm. The advantage which your visit gave you for preparing materials in the South for a speech in New England could hardly be used as you have used them, without injury to the great cause of hospitality and social life. It must produce distrust in the South on all future occasions. They received you with unsuspecting cordiality; your seizing the first opportunity to assail them may serve to close their hearts and houses against future lecturers from the same quarter. People do not ordinarily invite detraction to their homes, however willing to be hospitable. You have added another obstacle to those before existing in the way of social intercourse between the two sections of the country. The reflection must be painful to every man. The worst would avoid it. It reminds us of the Eastern story of the *Emir* and his horse. The *Emir Hamid* was wealthy and charitable. Among his riches was a horse, which he valued above them all. The steed was the fleetest and most enduring in Arabia. A neighboring chief envied the *Emir*, and wished to lay hands on his property. In vain the chief used every art of persuasion and offer of value. *Hamid* was deaf to every thing. One day as he was riding his favorite horse in the desert, he saw a man lying on the ground, writhing and groaning and uttering cries and supplications for aid. The *Emir* dismounted and hastened to help the afflicted stranger. At that moment the chief, for it was he, sprang from the ground, leapt into the saddle, and galloped off on his prize. The *Emir*, waking from his surprise, called out to the flying robber to pause for an instant. "My friend," said the *Emir*, "you have gained your end, but, I pray you, never tell any one in what way you have succeeded. It may prevent travellers from doing deeds of

charity by the way side." The story adds, that the plunderer repented, restored the horse, and the parties became good friends ever after. You would rob us of property and good name; whether the attendant circumstances are not similar, and whether the last act of the repentant robber be not worthy of imitation, it is for you to decide.

We can see nothing new or strong in your attack on slavery. Your reasonings, however applauded by your hearers, are feeble and flimsy to us. Notwithstanding your emphatic declaration to the Southern people, "you are in the wrong; you are certainly in the wrong; your judgment is wrong; your course is wrong"; the argument of your speech does not weigh with them a straw, and your solemn assurance is without authority.

"If a man," you tell us, "should throw his lasso, in the hunting grounds of Africa, over the neck of a wild horse and subject him to domestic use, it would be right. But if he should throw his lasso over the neck of a man roving wild and free in the wilderness, should tear him from his wife and children, put chains on his limbs, and sell him into hopeless bondage, we should pronounce that a monstrous wrong." "And no talk," you add, "about civilizing or christianizing or improving the African race, could ever stand against that conviction." It is characteristic of the mode of reasoning which the Abolitionists use, on the subject of slavery, that something is always introduced into the statement which does not necessarily belong to it, and so uses and abuses, substance and accident are mixed up in endless confusion. Divest your statement of the mere rhetoric, the pomp and circumstance, the lasso, the hunting ground, the tearing from wife and children, which would vitiate your argument if thrown into logical form, and it amounts to this—you mean to say that the seizure of a tribe of wild Africans, and transporting them to a country where they will be civilized, christianized and improved, would be a monstrous wrong. This is your proposition, fairly stated, and relieved from the ornaments which a professed rhetorician so naturally finds in his way. This is your position, and, if I were accustomed to deal in *ex-cathedra* phrases, I would say,

as you say to us, "you are in the wrong; you are certainly in the wrong; your judgment is wrong; your course is wrong;" You undervalue the blessings of civilization, the far greater blessings of Christianity, if you think them dearly bought by the restraints imposed, in a Christian land, on heathen savages. You prefer to those blessings the wild freedom of the barbarian, helpless and hopeless, for ages past and ages to come. Are you not confounding the means with the end? The wild man's brute freedom is not the end of existence. Freedom is a means only for reaching the great purposes of human life. These are truth, virtue, sound morals, pure religion, human happiness here and hereafter. The terms of your proposition admit that the wild man reaches them, and can reach them, not by his freedom, but by slavery only. You decide that they are not worth the price thus paid—better a wild free savage, than a Christian slave! You belong to those who "bawl for freedom in their senseless mood," and do not know that they who would be free "must first be wise and good." The freedom that you would preserve has neither wisdom nor goodness. It is license, not liberty. It is the freedom of the wild horse. It is attended with brutal ignorance, superstitions, gross, stupid, devilish, with the cruelty of the cannibal, the carnage of endless strife, the horrors, so hideous, of heathen African life. The African who is brought from it to slavery, blesses God for the change. But you think all these things are better, with wild freedom, than civilization and Christianity, with the restraints of slavery in a Christian land. Surely, sir, this is strange doctrine for a Christian teacher. It is not the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets. Paul and Moses would repudiate it, and brand it as heresy, as hostile to the teaching which accounts all things to be but dross, in comparison with the excellency of a life in Christ. In civilized society we fetter this wild freedom which you so much admire, by the involuntary servitude of the penitentiary, for long years, and for life. We subdue it by the prison, the hangman and the gallows. We limit it, at every turn, in every department of society. Why will you permit these abuses of wild freedom to exist? You take life to ensure order in the State for others, and you think it a monstrous