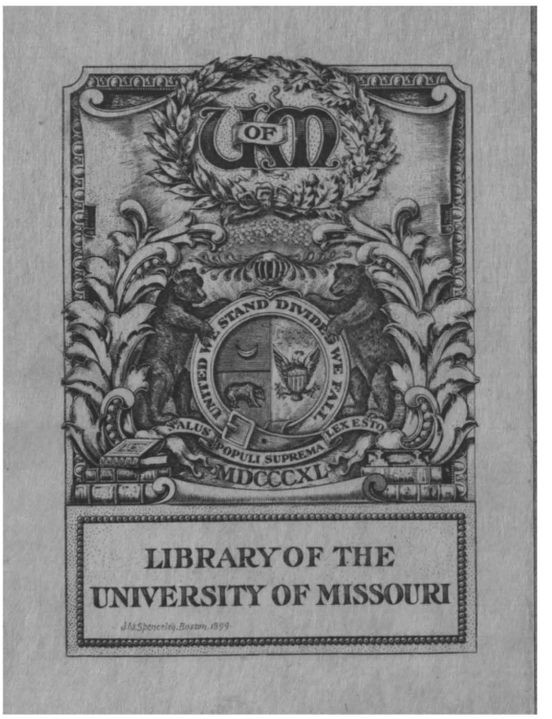

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THE WESTERN ABOLITIONISTS

BY

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THE WESTERN ABOLITIONISTS.

CHAPTER I.

The Anti-Slavery Movement before 1830.

"Abolitionist" is a term loosely applied to those individuals who before 1860 opposed any phase of slavery. They may have advocated the abolition of the foreign slave-trade, or domestic slavery, or perhaps they were fighting for the right of free speech on the subject, but in either event they are thus named. The real Abolitionists considered not one but all forms of slavery a moral wrong. To abolish the system they adopted various schemes which at the time would seem most effective. They were more active in their agitation and felt bound by no restrictions; if state or national laws were such as to favor the perpetuity of slavery, they believed in changing the laws. Their appeal was based on moral rights of men, and to this end they labored diligently. Before 1820, the slave-trade was the object of antagonism generally and when it ceased, the system as a whole, was attacked. Opposition took definite shape in the attempts of the churches and abolition societies to arouse public sentiment; in the coöperation of these societies, under the lead of a national emancipation society; in the colonization scheme; in organized political activity based on the restriction of slavery and freedom of discussion. There were a great number in the North, who realized that the institution brought about results unfavorable to the general welfare, and they were strongly in favor of restricting slavery to its existing bounds.

The policy of non-interference with slavery in the slave states, but objection to the system in their localities as an economic or social disadvantage, belonged to the class called Anti-Slavery advocates, rather than to the so-called Abolitionists.[1] To gather together all Anti-Slavery advocates of the North and West, to give them a common purpose and plan of action, was largely the work of the Western Abolitionists. An attempt has been made in this paper to give some account of the abolition movement in the West, and to give a general idea of the work done by the prominent men of that section. Special attention has been paid to the efforts of those who seem typical of the general class of abolitionists in the West, and who became known nationally as out and out Abolitionists. In order to understand the conditions which made their work possible, it will be expedient to have an idea of the earlier movements in the North and in the Border States.

From the time when the African slave-trade and the domestic system of slavery had their beginning in America, there was some opposition, because of the wickedness and injustice of such treatment to human beings,[2] or from economic and social policies. It was in the year 1619, that a Dutch man-of-war sailed up the James River and offered for sale twenty negro captives, attaching no limitations as to the term of service or payment during their lives.[3] Thus was introduced an institution which was destined soon to cause dissatisfaction in the colonies. From this date until the beginning of the Revolution, under the influ-

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1. Slavery and Abolition - Hart, p. 173.
2. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the Year 1800; W.F.Poole, p.39.
3. Virginia - A History of the People; J.E.Cooke, p.123.

ence of the British government the number of slaves increased alarmingly.[1] Several of the colonies tried to check the growing slave-trade; the planters of Virginia, in 1726, imposed a tax on each imported slave, but the influence of the slave-dealers caused a repeal of the law by the British government.[2] Later in 1772, the Assembly of Virginia petitioned the throne of England to stop the importation of slaves, but the request was disregarded.[3] In 1712, the legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act, restricting the increase of slaves, but England annulled this act. The same fate met the Massachusetts laws of 1771, and 1774.[4] To many individuals the evil effects of the slave-traffic soon became apparent, and they tried to exert religious and moral influences toward its extinction. The Quakers were foremost in the struggle against slavery, at this time, and in 1696 certain Pennsylvania Quakers issued advice to their members, discouraging all forms of "buying, selling, and holding men in slavery".[5] Three years before this date, a pamphlet had been published by George Keith, urging his Quaker brethren to "set their negroes at liberty after some reasonable time of service".[6] The Friends were active throughout New England, and some of

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1. More than 300,000 African slaves were imported into the thirteen colonies 1619-1776. History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power; Henry Wilson, Vol.I, p.3.
2. Ibid. Vol.I, p.3.
3. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the year 1800; Poole, p.40.
4. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America; Wilson,Vol.I,p.4
5. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the year 1800; Poole, p.43.
6. Ibid. p.41.

their number travelled in the Middle and Southern colonies preaching against the sinfulness of denying to men their natural liberty. Notwithstanding the efforts of colonial legislatures and of the Quakers as well as the individual attempts to put a stop to slavery, it increased steadily. Not only the British were responsible for this continuance of the slave-trade, but by many of the Southern planters it was welcomed, and they gave every encouragement to its growth. Counteracting this spirit in the South, was the growing anti-slavery sentiment of the Northern and Middle States at the time of the Revolution, the expression of which may be seen in the formation of societies. The first anti-slavery society in this or any other country was organized April 14, 1775, at the Sun Tavern on Second Street in Philadelphia, with a membership composed entirely of Quakers, or Friends, in the beginning.[1] The name given to the organization was "The Society for the Relief of the Negroes unlawfully held in Bondage" and it met four times a year.[2] In 1785, the New York Abolition Society was formed, and it caused the gradual emancipation act of 1799.[3] In all the northern colonies but Massachusetts, and in Virginia and Maryland, manumission societies were formed and the members were eminent men.[4] The commercial situation of the two sections was different, and in the North, there were so few slaves that they presented no source of profit. Practically all the public men there, were of the opin-

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1. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the Year 1800; Poole, p.42.
2. Because of the war, the society disbanded until Feb.1784.
3. Poole, p.47. John Jay, President; Alex.Hamilton, Secretary.
4. Ibid. p. 49.

ion that slavery should be abolished, though what to do with the freed slaves, remained a problem. Thomas Jefferson, in his "Notes on Virginia", written 1781-2, was most emphatic in condemning slavery, but he could not decide upon the question of the negro's mental equality with the white man. He favored colonization as a probable solution of the difficulty. Washington, Madison, Patrick Henry, George Mason, and many others of Virginia and Maryland were like Jefferson in believing slavery wrong but they had no substitute to offer.[1] It is a significant fact that the first Continental Congress, which met October 20, 1774, put forth a pledge that the United Colonies would "Neither import nor purchase any slave" and would "wholly discontinue the slave-trade".[2] In the Congress of April 6,1776, a further resolution was passed, declaring that no more slaves would be brought into the thirteen colonies.[3] When the Constitutional Convestion assembled in 1787, there began a sharp struggle on the subject of slavery, based on representation of the Southern States. The minority were strong enough to secure concessions in this matter, and to have inserted in the Constitution a provision for returning fugitive-slaves.[4] Notwithstanding this victory of the Southern members, the ordinance of 1787, prohibiting slavery from the section of country northwest of the Ohio River,[5] gave ample proof of the general attitude regarding the much disputed question. On February 12,1796, a memorial from

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1. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the Year 1800; Poole, p.32.
2. Wilson I, p.13.
3. Journals of the Constitutional Congress, 1774-1789. Vol.IV. p.258.
4. Constitution of United States, Article IV, Sec, paragraph 3.
5. Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin; Poole, p.26.

the "Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery", was presented to Congress.[1] After a lengthy debate, this petition and others of like nature were set aside, because they were considered by the southern members as instruments giving rise to insurrections and disunions among the States.[2] Confidence and hope led the South in 1793 to demand the enforcement of the fugitive-slave act in the Constitution. Accordingly a law was passed with little opposition giving agents the power to seize and reënslave fugitive bondmen.[3] As a consequence of the law providing for the capture of fugitives, it was suggested by the New York Manumission Society that a convention of delegates be held, to deliberate on the common purpose of abolition societies.[4] This body of representatives from ten States convened January 1, 1794, at Philadelphia, and drew up a memorial to the House of Representatives, praying Congress to pass a law prohibiting the slave traffic in which Americans were engaged for the purpose of supplying slaves to foreign nations, and to prohibit foreigners from fitting out vessels in the United States for the slave-trade with Africa. The bill was made a law, January 28, 1794.[5] Three years later the House refused to grant a petition sent to them by the Quakers of Pennsylvania, regarding the treatment of some of their members in North Carolina. The Friends of that State had emancipated their slaves in 1797, and the State reënslaved them, thus enraging the Quakers. Con-

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1. Poole, p. 68 (foot-note)
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power; Wilson, Vol.I,p.67.
3. The People of the United States; J.B.McMaster,Vol.3.p.514.
4. Anti-Slavery Opinions before the Year 1800; Poole, p.58.
5. Poole, p.59.

gress maintained that the petition dealt with a judicial matter, hence they, as a legislative body, had no power to settle the question.[1] The organization of Quakers throughout the Middle States was regarded by some leaders in Congress, as a menace to peace and security, because they were continually presenting petitions and arousing the minds of the people in every conceivable way. Their efforts in preventing national legislation seemed of no avail. In 1801 Congress reënacted the slave codes of Maryland and Virginia, f o r the District of Columbia, thus placing national sanction on slavery.[2] The act of 1808, prohibiting slave-trading on the high seas, amply provided for the coast-wise and border traffic, a more cruel practice than the foreign trade.[3] An impetus was given to the slavery cause, when three large slave States were carved out of the Louisiana territory. The two wars in Florida, costing the nation about $40,000,000, were for the sake of catching fugitive slaves, and were recognized by the slave-holders as such. Finally, the Missouri controversy brought slavery before the people as a political issue. Ever since 1794 the slave power seemed to have added new strength and scope. The invention of the cotton-gin made the selling of slaves the source of profit to the South, and any attempt to take away this source of profit met stringent opposition. The southern statesmen who had believed slavery to be temporary were no longer in existence. The South, realizing the great commercial advantages without noting the ultimate consequences of slavery, seemed to unite in a desire for its ex-

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1. Rise and Fall of thr Slave-Power; Wilson I, p.82.
2. Life of Giddings; George W.Julian; p. 43.
3. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power; Wilson, Vol.I, p.97

tension. On the other hand, anti-slavery sentiment in the Northern and Middle States was quickened by the efforts of the Southern leaders to plant the system in the new territory. Their opposition was expressed by the speeches of individuals and by the action of legislatures and societies in general. The full meaning of the struggle did not become evident until ten years later, when it began to take shape in a more organized movement. In the Border States conditions were somewhat different from those in the distinctly northern and southern states. Here there were counter-influences at work, and during the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth, the anti-slavery sentiment was in the ascendency. In 1791, the College of William and Mary in Virginia conferred upon Granville Sharp of England, the degree of LL.D.[1] This man had no other reputation than that gained by his decided opposition to slavery. In the decade beginning 1795, and lasting till 1805, there were one thousand bondmen set free annually in the commonwealth of Virginia, but this practice was soon checked by law.[2] The full tide of public opinion did not turn until much later, as a result in a large measure, of two slave insurrections. In 1800, Gabriel, a negro who had always been well-treated apparently, conceived the idea of marching to Richmond and exterminating the whites. An accident prevented the accomplishment of the design and he was sent to the gallows.[3] Just thirty-one years later, Nat Turner, in the County of Southampton, south of the James River, incited the negroes of that

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1. Poole, p. 73.
2. Some Recollections of our Anti-Slavery Conflict; S.J.May, p.5.
3. Virginia. Cooke, p.485.

section to revolt, and before he was captured, his band had killed fifty-two whites. A danger of this sort might arise at any time, and the people of the South lived in constant dread of an insurrection instigated by the more educated negroes. In Kentucky, the greater part of the State was not suitable for plantation life and the class of small farmers did not own many slaves.[1] Throughout this portion of the country there was a dislike of slave commerce which took form in their State Constitution, drawn up in 1792. It was provided in the Kentucky Constitution that slaves were not to be brought into the State as merchandise and none whatever were to be brought in, who were imported to America after 1789. It was also recommended that the legislature emancipate such slaves as would not become a burden to the community in which they lived.[2] This constitution was not submitted to the people for a vote but conventions could be called to revise it.[3] Immediately after the constitutional convention had met there was a Free-State sentiment taking shape, and a revision would probably have been brought about, had not the Alien and Sedition Law passed Congress, June 25, 1798. This act caused much excitement, and in the confusion the pro-slavery element took advantage of the situation to regain control.[4]

The number of slaves had greatly increased since the separation of Kentucky from Virginia. To offset the increase in number, a constant stream of immigrants from the North were coming into Kentucky, who were strongly influencing the development

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1. Kentucky: A Pioneer Commonwealth; N.S.Shaler, p.196.
2. Ibid, p.122.
3. James G.Birney and his Times; Wm.Birney, p.21.
4. Ibid. p.21.

of the State. Among the early agitations was that of the Baptist Church, which began work as early as 1781. As a consequence of the zeal of some of the preachers, the Church became divided; some were called "regulars" and others "separatists" according to their slavery views.[1] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there happened to be a great religious revival, the kind that rouses men and sweeps them off their feet, causing them to look deeper into the problems of life. Immediately following this revival, we see the first definite organized movement for abolition in the State. It was begun by a number of Baptist divines and, although their work was soon lost sight of, the spirit lived and thrived.[2] In September 1807, a State Convention was held in Woodford County, to form a "Kentucky Abolition Society" and the next year the members adopted a constitution which stated as its main object, an attempt to abolish slavery, in any way consistent with the National Constitution and the laws of the State. Auxiliaries of this Society were organized in various parts of Kentucky during the four years from 1818 to 1822.[3] In Tennessee, a manumission society was organized by 1814, under Quaker influence, and in that State was published one of the first newspapers, with the avowed object of abolition of slavery.[4] Maryland and Kentucky had more emancipationists among their inhabitants than North Carolina, though there were a considerable number in the last named State.[5] The fact that there were so many in the slave-holding States, in

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1. Birney, p.18.
2. Ibid. p.23.
3. Ibid. p.169.
4. Ibid. p.76
5. Ibid. p.80.

favor of immediate or gradual emancipation, greatly influenced the people in the North. As the advance of the slave-power became more rapid, many from the Border States and some from the extreme South freed their slaves and migrated to a free State, where they would be at liberty to exert their influence in behalf of abolition. This voluntary sacrifice on the part of the Southern owners, convinced many doubters that there must be an element of truth in the abolition argument.

It was in the Border States that the colonization idea gained strongest foot-hold, though colonization societies existed in most of the Southern States. The purpose of the American Colonization Society, organized in 1816, was to ship to the coast of Africa all free colored people of the United States and to prohibit the emancipation of any more of the enslaved, except on the condition of their removal to Liberia. Many prominent men of the South eagerly accepted the plan, but the majority of planters were opposed to it because they feared discontent among the slaves. The free negroes regarded colonization with disfavor, and held meetings as early as 1817, to express their sentiments.[1] It was one stage in the national anti-slavery movement, and when men began to examine its purpose, and its methods, the utter impossibility of using colonization as an effective means of exterminating slavery, became evident.[2] By 1830, most of the Middle and Northern States had abolished slavery within their boundaries; and there seemed to be a cessation of anti-slavery agitation in all parts of the Union; the aboli-

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1. Rise and Fall. Wilson, Vol.I, 215.
2. Garrison's "Thoughts on Colonization" may have had some influence against its operations. Garrison's - Garrison,V.I, p.290.

tion societies were dying out, and the Colonization Society was doing nothing to help the slave or the free negro; the churches were not exerting much influence; it was not a hopeful outlook for the band of workers who believed in total abolition.

CHAPTER II.

Conditions in the West up to 1830.

In the preceding chapter, an account has been given, of the general aspect of the slavery situation previous to 1830, as a background for the entire abolition movement. To gain a clear idea of the Western Abolitionists it will be necessary to give a brief summary of conditions in the West, previous to the period beginning in 1830.

There were negro slaves in the Mississippi Valley early in the eighteenth century, but slavery in this section of the country was very different from that of the Cotton States in later years. The slaves were treated with more consideration, and the modern commercial element figured very little. During the occupation and control of the French there were no restrictions on the number brought in, just as long as the inhabitants had the purchasing price.[1] Towards the middle of the eighteenth century slaves became rather numerous in the Northwest Territory. When England received this territory by the Treaty of 1763, the people therein were guaranteed full protection of all property. In 1783 the treaty ceding this territory to the United States made no mention of slavery, merely assuming the conditions of 1763.[2] During the Virginia period, 1778 to 1784, the Northwest was slave territory and in the Virginia cessions to the National Government of 1784, slaves were doubtless included in the enumeration of property rights. Two attempts had been made to limit the continuance of slavery in the new States, but it was

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1. The Old Northwest, Hinsdale, p.337.
2. Ibid. p.338.

not until 1787, by the Northwest Ordinance that slavery was forever prohibited from the Northwest Territory.[1] That Congress had the power to prohibit slavery from the territories, was not questioned by either North or South.[2] In later times this Ordinance proved a basis for determining the condition of other territories belonging to the United States, and it was a strong influence in shaping western thought and action.[3] The construction put upon the clause regarding slavery was what controlled affairs in the territory.[4] Most of the territorial governments acted on the principle that the sixth article would not affect the condition of slaves before 1787, but would affect all brought in after that date.[5] Several considerations controlled the legal aspect of the question. Some disposition must be made of those in servitude to French owners before the cession of jurisdiction to England, because,if property, they were protected by the treaty. In the same way, those held by British owners at the time of Jay's treaty, 1794, were promised protection as property. A third consideration concerned those brought from States in which slavery was lawful, and retained in the Territory after it had come under American jurisdiction.[6] The

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1. Indiana, Dunn, p.192.
   Thomas Jefferson had been one of the first to try to secure a limit, and in 1785, another attempt was made to prohibit slavery except in punishment of crime.
2. Rise and Fall of Slave Power in America. Wilson I. p.38.
3. Ibid. p.38.
4. Indiana, Dunn, p.219.
5. The Old Northwest. Hinsdale, p.340.
6. Ibid. p. 340.

impetus to slavery in the Northwest came from Virginia and Kentucky settlers. They found the land similar to what they had left, and were anxious to make use of slave labor. Small groups of settlers from time to time sent to Congress petitions to set aside Article VI of the Ordinance, but their requests were not granted. The same request was made several times by the inhabitants of the Indiana territory. In 1807, the Indiana legislature passed an act providing for the indenture of slaves, and allowing any person to bring in slaves under fifteen years of age. This law remained in force three years. A further act was passed by this legislature in 1814, permitting slaves to hire themselves in the Territory for a term of not more than one year, at the end of which time they would revert to the original owner.[1] All the citizens in Indiana were not in favor of slavery, but the majority wished to retain their slaves, and if possible to introduce others.[2] Because of the fact that the Northwest was surrounded on two sides by slave territory, separated by the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, to evade the sixth Article of the Ordinance was not a difficult matter. In Ohio the constitution[3] as finally adopted, forbade the holding, as a servant, under pretence or indenture or otherwise, any "male person twenty-one years of age, or female person eighteen years of age, unless such person had entered into the indenture while in a state of perfect freedom,and on condition of a"bona fide"consideration received or to be received for the service".[4] An indenture made out of the State was not valid, nor was any within the State if

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1. Old Northwest. Hinsdale. pp.343, 344.
2. Indiana. Dunn, p.292.
3. Ohio was admitted as a State in 1803.
4. The Old Northwest. Hinsdale, p.346.

it exceeded one year's duration.[1] The clause regarding indentures was accepted in committee by a majority of one, and when an attempt to change the clause was made in the convention, it was prevented only by the vote of the presiding officer.[2]

The New England people as a whole, opposed any enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, and when many of them emigrated to the Western States they found ample opportunity to express their opposition,by aiding slaves to escape bondage. Especially was this true of the Western Reserve District,[3] though New England influence was found in other parts of Ohio and in Northern Illinois.[4] Those who located in the northeastern part of the Territory were not men of influence and wealth, who merely sought adventure, but they were hard-working peace-loving citizens thoroughly imbued with the frontier spirit and ready to meet obstacles. There were few southern settlers in this community, and the New England influence remained distinctive.[4] The region was settled principally by people from Connecticut,who established schools, churches, and local governments modelled upon the New England institutions.[5] After about 1820, the Western Reserve maintained a prominent part in the politics of the State. It was a representative from that part of the State who first upheld the cause of abolition in Congress. The sentiment

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1. An exception to this rule was made in the case of apprenticeships.
2. Ohio. Rufus King, p.292.
3. The Western Reserve originally extended, west one hundred and twenty miles from the western boundary of Pennsylvania,with its southern boundary to the forty-first degree of latitude (north) and its northern line to Lake Erie. Connecticut yielded general claim to this land, in 1785. Ohio: Rufus King, p.171.
4. Life of Benj.F.Wade: Riddle p.46.
5. Slavery and Abolition: Hart, p.196.

which resulted in the election of Joshua R. Giddings to the House of Representatives in 1838, was a culmination of early New England influence, merged into later efforts, as characterized by abolition meetings and abolition societies.

A brief glance at the conditions in the Northwest before 1830, reveals the fact that the people of that section were prohibited from introducing slavery by national legislation and not by state enactments. In the New England and Middle States, the legislatures took action on the subject and all had abolished slavery from their limits, by 1830.[1] The reason for this difference may be found in the character and customs of the people. Those in the eastern part of the country were not accustomed to owning slaves in great numbers, nor did they wish to own them, whereas the early French settlers of the Northwest, and the later settlers from the slave-holding states, had always held slaves, and their love of ease and luxury made them desirous of retaining bondsmen.[2] Strenuous efforts were made by the inhabitants of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois to set aside the provision of the Ordinance regarding slavery.[3] Although slaves were much in demand, free negroes were regarded with dislike and every attempt was made to discredit their labors, especially by some white inhabitants along the Ohio River.[4] The Black Code of Ohio was evidence of this feeling.

The State Legislature of Ohio passed the first of these laws in 1804; it required any black or mulatto before he could reside in the State, to file with the clerk of the county in

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1. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p.78.
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America. Wilson, vol.I. p. 33.
3. Indiana, Dunn, p. 291.
4. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America.I.p.363.

which he would live, a certificate of freedom, given by his former State. In 1806, a supplement to this act required all colored persons to give bond for their good behavior and to promise not to harbor fugitices. Blacks and mulattoes could not be used as witnesses against white persons. By an act of 1831, all blacks were excluded from the public schools, and as late as 1872, they were excluded from becoming lawful paupers.[1] The black laws were industriously executed by the people in the southern part of the State.

Little interest in the earlier anti-slavery movement, was taken by the Northwest. The Underground Railroad was practically the only manifestation of anti-slavery opinion. Prevented by law from giving open sanction to slaves seeking freedom, the Quakers and others of like views, felt conscience-bound to give them as much secret aid as possible.[2]

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1. The Life of Benj.F.Wade - A.G.Riddle, p.131. (foot-note)
2. Underground Railroad. Siebert, p.17.

CHAPTER III.

The Abolition Movement.

The abolition movement as such, really began with the publication of Garrison's paper the "Liberator", January 1,1831. It was due to Garrison and his associate abolitionists that slavery became a subject of such thorough discussion in the North.[1] He expressed and stimulated a sentiment which had been slowly developing for twenty-five years. The movement was the inevitable result of the world-wide humanitarian spirit which was beginning to manifest itself in a better treatment of all unfortunate beings.[2] It was not strange that slaves, who belonged to a race of relatively normal individuals, should receive special attention. Previous to this time, for those who did not accept the idea of colonization, there was little concern for the actual condition of the slaves. The mass of people in the North recognized the fact that slavery was an economic, social and moral evil, and should by all means be kept within its existing limits. To prohibit the system from their localities they were willing to use every effort. The abolitionists, on the contrary, believed in keeping slavery from their localities more because it was harmful to the slaves than because it was a disadvantage to the community. They were eager to have slavery abolished in the South, and directed their arguments to the southern slave-owners. To the abolitionists, the idea of holding their fellow-man in bondage was contrary to all laws, human and divine. When this sentiment found expression in an organ of free speech,

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1. History of the United States. Rhodes I, p.63.
2. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p. 172.

it began to permeate the minds of the more indifferent northern men, causing them to consider the question of slavery from all sides. The agitators were not acting through ignorance. The North and South were more closely united by travel, commerce,and general interests,[1] than they had ever been, hence a knowledge of conditions in the South was readily gained. Many of the slaves, escaping into the North, would relate the stories of their lives, with convincing clearness and accuracy. The slave-owners of the South would stoutly maintain that the slaves, if emancipated, would be intoxicated by their freedom and would rise in a war with the whites. The fallacy of such an argument became apparent, from an event in Jamaica.[2] The British Government, by gradual emancipation, set free all the slaves of its colonies. The freed negroes, though shiftless at first, soon settled down and became small land owners. The main reason for the tenacity with which the South held to the system of slavery, was the increasing profits to be derived from slave-labor. Cotton was their chief industry and the demand for that product was greater each year. A large part of the slave population, girls, women, young men and old men, were employed in the raising of cotton, hence there was little waste in labor. After a certain length

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1. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p. 92.
2. Ibid. p. 171.
   In 1833, the British Parliament passed an act whereby colonial slavery was to be abolished by gradual emancipation, extending through seven years. As compensation to slave-owners, Parliament set aside 20,000,000 pounds. This action was due to the efforts of individuals and abolition societies in England.

of time the land was exhausted and new tracts were bought by the planters, thus large and fertile areas were devoted to the cultivation of cotton. The increased profit to be derived from this source convinced the South that slavery was an economic necessity and would remain.[1]

In the rapid growth of the northern cities, in the development of new industries, mining and manufactures, there was a demand for labor which the slave could not supply. Likewise, complex conditions resulting from the density of population, caused new business methods.[2] Thus economic conditions caused sectional divergence in the attitude toward slavery, and social conditions had their influence also. Social classes in the South were determined by the number of slaves owned.[3] A basis of this sort was contrary to the customs and ideals of the majority of northern people.

There had been large numbers opposing slavery, even in the Southern States, but by 1830, with a few exceptions,[4] those who adhered to abolition principles had gone North where they would be free to act as they chose. When William Lloyd Garrison began to make himself heard through the pages of the "Liberator", he uttered the unconscious ideas of many people. To attack slavery from its foundation, to describe the institution in all its forms, was the policy which he adopted to achieve his end. Although Benjamin Lundy had founded an abolition newspaper in 1821, and had organized abolition societies, it was not until

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1. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p. 53.
2. Ibid. p.55.
3. Ibid. p.67.
4. John G. Fee and Cassius M.Clay of Kentucky remained in the South, though staunch advocates of abolition.

Garrison became converted to his view that the slumbering spirit of opposition to slavery was unequivocally set forth.[1&2] In the first issue of the abolition paper the editor stated his object to be the "immediate enfranchisement of the slave population". Just one year after its founding, Garrison organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society.[3] Two years later, the call was issued for a national Anti-Slavery Convention, which met and organized December 4-6, 1833,[4] with about fifty-six delegates representing ten free states. The Constitution of the Society was a simple declaration of strong political principles. In the second article of that document, the object of the Society was declared to be the "entire abolition of slavery in the United States".[5] It admitted that each State had the "exclusive right to legislate in regard to its abolition in said State", but it said further that they would "aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments addressed to their understandings and consciences, that slave-holding is a heinous crime in the sight of God, and that the duty, safety, and best interests of all concerned require its immediate abandonment, without expatriation".[6] Garrison was appointed one of a committee to draw up a Declaration of Principles. The Declaration as finally accepted was with a few minor changes the original draft prepared by him.[7] That Garrison had a definite place in the abolition movement, is unquestionable. It was his work, to give expression to the princi-

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1. History of the United States. Rhodes I, p.53.
2. W.L.Garrison: Garrison's I, p.225.
3. Wm.L.Garrison: Garrison's I, p.278.
4. Ibid. p.408.
5. Ibid. p. 414.
6. Ibid. p. 414.
7. Recollections: May, p.86.

ples so long withheld; to push forward and to stimulate the agitation, by newspaper articles, by tracts, and by speeches; to organize the scattered activity of the East, into abolition societies, local and state. He was too radical to be typical of abolitionists as a class, but he was active in furthering their aims, hence he deserves prominent mention in a discussion of abolition.

At the time when abolition was gaining ground so steadily in the East, there was developing in the West a movement of equal importance, wholly independent of the eastern agitation. There had been an active anti-slavery sentiment in the West for many years. In 1815, Benjamin Lundy had formed a society at Mount Pleasant, Ohio, called "The Union Humane Society". At the same time, he suggested the founding of other societies of like nature,[1] with constitutions containing the same principles, and with full coöperation in the general plan of action. Within a few months this society had about five hundred members, who lived in surrounding counties in Ohio.[2] When, in 1816, Thomas Osborn of Mount Pleasant, began the publication of a paper, the "Philanthropist", Lundy wrote numerous articles in favor of abolishing slavery.[3] and in 1821, he established a monthly periodical "The Genius of Universal Emancipation"[4] and gave full expression to his views of immediate emancipation.

The churches in Ohio did active work through the influence of the abolition papers. Rev. Dyer Burgess, in charge of the Presbyterian Church at West Union, Adams County, for so many

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1. Abolition societies were formed soon, in Highland, Brown, Clermont, and Adams Counties in Ohio. Birney: Appendix E. p.431.
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America: Wilson I. p.168.
3. Ibid. p.168.
4. Birney and His Times: Birney, Appendix B. p.390.

years was a decided abolitionist. Thomas Kirker, a Kentuckian, who came to Ohio in 1806, because he hated slavery, was prominent in Rev. Dyer Burgess' church.[1] Upon the suggestion of Rev. Samuel Crothers, a Presbyterian preacher, who had moved to Ohio from his native State of Kentucky in 1810, the Cincinnati Synod of that church unanimously declared the holding of slaves for gain to be a "heinous sin and scandal".[2] From East Tennessee in 1822, came Rev. John Rankin, whose writings and work as lecturer did much toward creating abolition sentiment, not only in Ohio and Kentucky, but in other parts of the United States also.[3]

The quiet effective work of the Underground Railroad had been going on in the West since about 1815. The Western Reserve had become a refuge for fugitive slaves about that time, and a district of four or five counties in South Central Ohio, became known for their friendliness to runaway slaves.[4] By the time the Garrisonian movement in the East had gained headway, the abolitionists of the West were taking steps to organize their scattered forces. The Lane Seminary debate was a powerful influence in bringing about this unity. It furnished a subject for discussion common to all classes of emancipationists, and a common ground for agitation to those who desired abolition. As a result of the debate, Oberlin and Cincinnati became a center of abolition in the West.

The students of the Lane Theological Seminary were of mature age, and many of them as sons of southern planters, had taken slavery for granted, never considering what conditions might be without slaves. Not long after the formation of the

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1. Birney and His Times. Birney: Appendix E. pp.431-432.
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America. Wilson I, p.178.
3. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.170.
4. The Underground Railroad. Siebert, p.31.

American Anti-Slavery Society, an auxiliary was organized in the Cincinnati Seminary. At the first anniversary of the National Society, held in New York in May 1834, two members of the Lane auxiliary, Henry B. Stanton and James A. Thome of Kentucky, attended the convention.[1] During the course of the following winter, upon the suggestion of Arthur Tappan, President of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and one of the founders of Lane Seminary, the students engaged in a debate on colonization and abolition.[2] The speaker of most note was Theodore D.Weld, whose opinions on abolition were adopted by the majority of the students. Others who took part in the discussion were Marius R. Robinson of Tennessee,[3] James A.Thorne and Henry B.Stanton. So much excitement was caused by the debate that the president of the college became alarmed, and the trustees ordered the Anti-Slavery and the Colonization Societies to disband. Feeling that they were deprived of the right of free speech,[4] fifty-four students issued a protest against the action of the president and the board, and then about four-fifths of all those attending the Seminary withdrew from the school.[5] For several months, Dr. Gamaliel Bailey lectured to them in a sort of institution of their own. Asa Mahan, a minister in Cincinnati, resigned from the board of trustees and with Rev. John Morgan, a professor from Lane Seminary, led the students to Oberlin, where a school was established. As the students went out into different parts of the country, secure in the conviction that abolition was the

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1. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America. Wilson,Vol.I,p. 264.
2. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.136.
3. W.L.Garrison. Garrison's I, p.454.
4. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p.191.
5. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power. Wilson I, p.265

only effective policy to settle the slavery question, they made an indelible impression on the minds of their hearers. Hence the Lane Seminary debate caused the first organized abolition movement in the West.[1]

Largely as a result of its agitation, the Ohio Anti - Slavery Society was formed in April 1835.[2] As we have seen, there had been numerous local societies for promoting abolition, but their work was somewhat hindered by their lack of centralization. Most of the men who had been active in forming abolition societies were emigrants from slave states, especially from Kentucky. Members of the churches, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, came to Ohio and openly espoused the cause of immediate emancipation.

Among those who came together at Cincinnati to organize the State Society, were many of these Border State men. Some of them had been in Ohio working for abolition, for ten years, others for less,[3] but the entire number of one hundred and ten delegates,[4] representing Anti-Slavery Societies in twenty-five counties, were thoroughly determined to formulate some plan by which they could bring about the desired end. Some of the leaders who influenced the convention by their clear-sighted reasoning, were Theodore D.Weld, H.B.Stanton, Horace Bushnell, James A.Thorne, Augustus Wattles, of the Lane Seminary group; John B. Mahan of Brown County, Rev. Samuel Crothers, Rev. John Rankin, all clergymen. Though the convention was made up of men who

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1. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p.190.
2. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.163.
3. Ibid. p.166.
4. Ibid. p. 163.

had fought for immediate abolition, the "Declaration of Sentiment"was moderate. James G.Birney, of Kentucky, had been requested to be present at the formation of the State Society, and when he presented resolutions denouncing the "Black Laws", and adding a pledge to vote only for the candidate who would work for their repeal, the second part of the resolution,containing the pledge, was omitted from the report.[1] The convention further declared its intention to petition Congress to abolish the domestic-slave-trade, and to repeal laws favoring slavery. Birney was surprised at this conservative attitude, but felt that it would be changed later on.[2] Soon after his removal to Ohio, he was made a member of the executive committee of the Ohio Society, and because he was the only member devoting his entire time to abolition, he became the center of all the activity of the organization.[3] How he conducted this work will be discussed in the following chapter.

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1. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.171.
2. Ibid. p. 172.
3. Ibid. p. 256.

CHAPTER IV.

Western Abolitionists.

Among all abolistionists, James G. Birney was the man best qualified to criticize slavery. By the time he left the South permanently, he was thoroughly converted to the principles of abolition, though to reach this decision, he had passed through the various stages of belief regarding slavery. The very fact that he had experienced every phase of the anti-slavery agitation, and had taken up the idea of abolition only after a thorough study of the question from all sides, made him more able to meet the arguments of the pro-slavery advocates. The influences of his early life had played an important part in the final outcome. The abolitionists were accused of being ignorant of slavery as it existed in the South, and therefore incapable of discussing the subject justly. Such a charge could not be made against Birney.

He was born in Kentucky[1] and lived in the South until he was a middle-aged man, and he had seen slavery in all its forms, had even owned slaves. Notwithstanding this fact, he never liked the system and had intended for a long time to free his own slaves.[2] As a boy, he was accustomed to seeing his father's and grandfather's slaves, but he knew that they would willingly emancipate their slaves in the event that Kentucky became a free State.[3] With this impression fixed in his mind it was not a difficult matter to accept the teachings of his college profes-

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1. Born February 4,1792, in Danville, Ky. a town in which lived many brilliant men, and the general opinion of the inhabitants was anti-slavery. (Birney, p.19.)
2. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.102.
3. Ibid. p.16.

sor,[1] who said that slavery, though wrong morally and politically, should be abolished only by the voluntary manumission of the slaves by the masters. They did not take into account the great profit of slaves to the southern owners, and the reluctance with which these men would part with the source of such profit. Some southerners felt that slavery was wrong, but the negro himself confronted them, and they felt certain that no adequate provision could be made whereby this problem would be solved. To colonize the slaves on some distant coast, seemed plausible to a great number both in the North and South. Mr. Birney was slow in arriving at this conclusion, but gave it enthusiastic support when he finally did adopt the belief. He had opposed the attempt to enact a fugitive-slave law for the State while a member of the Kentucky legislature,[2] but that merely signified his independence and his aversion to the methods of the slave owners.

He first began to take an interest in colonization when living in the extreme South, in Alabama,[3] and was a regular contributor to the American Society. Soon he became more active and aided in organizing a colonization society in the county in

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1. Samuel Stanhope Smith, President of Princeton. He claimed that the State legislature would assume the same right of appropriating other property, if they took away the slaves. Birney entered Princeton April 1808, was graduated September 26, 1810 (p.25). He took very little part in the anti-slavery discussions while in college. Birney and His Times: Birney,p.26.
2. Elected to Kentucky Gen.Assem.Aug.1816. (p.33). Before returning to Ky. he had gone from college to Phila.where he studied law for three years and a half in the office of Alexander J. Dallas, a prominent lawyer. There is no evidence that Birney received any anti-slavery influence while there. Birney,p.29.
3. Birney and His Times, p.49.
   Because of the number of prominent men in his own State,Birney moved to Alabama where he remained Feb.1818-Nov.1832 at which time he returned to Ky. He was considered one of the best lawyers in Ala.and was highly respected,but disappointment because of slave conditions led him to change his home. His practice of law at Huntsville,Ala.gave him valuable experience in dealing with men,and he never willingly undertook an unjust cause.

which he lived.[1] As long as he was connected with the work he tried faithfully to further the operation of the society,[2] by travelling throughout the South, but all the time he was slowly changing his opinion, and from colonization he turned toward gradual emancipation as the best means of freeing the slave.[3] He had always objected to the importation of slaves into the State and in 1827,he had secured the passage of an act prohibiting the importation of slaves into Alabama,[4] where he was then residing. His idea at that time was not to interfere with slavery, but to control it, to put an end to the cruelties of the system, and to make the public slave-markets illegal. Little hope could be had from the thought of gradual emancipation legally enforced, because the southern slave-owners would rather keep their slaves and lose the probable increase from free labor.

A deep and lasting influence had been made on Birney by the arguments of a northern abolitionist, Theodore D. Weld. He was lecturing in the Southern States, on temperance and education, and had heard that this southerner was opposed to slavery: Hence he made arrangements to meet Mr. Birney and discuss the question thoroughly.[5] Weld was well acquainted with the South, and could readily understand the effects of slavery. His eloquence and mastery of language gave him wonderful power over his hearers, and it was not surprising that he turned the mind of Birney into new channels of thought. It was largely due to this influence that Birney was willing to undertake the active work

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1. Birney and His Times. p. 90.
2. Ibid. p.114.
3. Ibid. p.137.
4. Ibid. p. 56.
5. The meeting took place in Huntsville, Alabama, in June,1832. (Birney, p.106.)

of the Colonization Society, in the South. He realized, from his conversation with Weld that something ought to be done to change the state of affairs regarding slavery, and his interest in colonization was the first step toward further activity. He felt that this was a work which might accomplish good results, and in the mean time, he began a systematic study of the question from all sides. Even Garrison's arguments were read, though Birney was prejudiced against his methods. Following close upon the visit of Theodore Weld, came the Lane Seminary debate, the account of which was eagerly read and appreciated by Birney.[1] By this time his views on colonization had completely changed[2] and he did not attend any of the meetings of the Colonization Society,either national or local. In his absence from a meeting of the Kentucky Society, he was elected one of the vice-presidents, though he was not notified of the election.[3] Soon afterwards, Mr. Birney remarked in several speeches, that colonization would not meet the existing needs and therefore was powerless.[4] In commenting on these remarks, the newspapers added that he was a Vice-President of the Kentucky Colonization Society. In order to clear his name of the implied falseness, he felt it incumbent upon him to state his views more clearly. Hence his resignation to the office was written in the form of a pamphlet, entitled "Letter on Colonization".[5]This was copied by many papers outside of Kentucky, and by its clear, sensible view of the matter,caused much attention. There was no equivocation in his manner of stat-

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1. Birney and His Times, p. 137.
2. Ibid. p. 140.
3. Ibid. p. 140.
4. Ibid. p. 141.
5. The date of the letter was July 15,1834.
Garrison. Garrison's I. p.422. (foot-note)

ing facts and because it came from a native southerner, may have added to its wide-spread influence.

From the publication of the "Letter" dates Birney's change to abolition. Henceforth, he became the out-spoken advocate of immediate emancipation. It was not long until he began the publication of an abolition paper, called the "Philanthropist". For its continuation he suffered severe trials in his native State of Kentucky and later in Ohio. The growth and development of the abolition doctrine in J. G. Birney, was similar to the process through which the general anti-slavery movement had passed. Until the African slave-trade was prohibited, it served as the connecting link for opposition in the United States. After Congress had put an end to that traffic, the growing anti-slavery sentiment took shape in the colonization idea. To many people it seemed to solve the problem, and they entered into its work with zeal and energy. In the Southern States, there were some who believed colonization to be the least offensive measure for settling the question, but the majority were hostile to any scheme for removing the negroes, and they realized better than their northern kinsmen the utter futility of an attempt to transplant such a great number of individuals. Gradual emancipation was not generally accepted as a safe plan, hence to the great mass of anti-slavery advocates, abolition was found to be the only safe working plan, and after 1830, it became the guiding principle of anti-slavery opinion. Birney was not an abolitionist until a few years later, but the final result was inevitable.

Before Birney moved to Ohio, he had ably served the

cause of freedom in Kentucky. By discussing the slavery question at every opportunity he had become well-known, and as he said in a letter to Mr. Weld, July 26, 1834, "Slavery, emancipation etc. are more and more talked of here, and I am looked upon by many pretty much as a disturber of the peace".[1] The month after this letter was written, Birney prepared a letter, addressed to the minister and elders of the minister and elders of the Presbyterian Church of Kentucky which was printed in a Lexington paper.[2] Following this, he made many personal visits to the various members of the synod, trying to discover their views. When the synod convened in October, a resolution was passed declaring slavery a sin and favoring all proper measures for voluntary, gradual, emancipation.[3] This action was somewhat encouraging, though not decided enough. His great desire was to establish a Free-State Anti-Slavery Association, and then to establish a newspaper which would give expression to the views of its members.[4] After some delay, the Kentucky Anti-Slavery Society was formed at Danville, March 19th, 1835, and began its life with forty members. There was no opposition to its meetings, nor any attempt at mob violence. Birney realized his unpopularity in Kentucky at this time[5] but he felt that it was not personal dislike.

In April 1835, upon his return from the East, he found public feeling against him had reached fever heat, and the publication of a paper was forbidden him. Notwithstanding this fact, he made several attempts to publish his newspaper, but in each

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.145.
2. Ibid. p.145.
3. Ibid. p.151
4. Ibid. p.153
5. Ibid. p.157.
   In a letter to Gerrit Smith, Mch.21, 1835, he explains his position.

case he found the printer[1] to be in the power of the slave-owners, and it would be impossible for him to try further. Soon, Mr.Birney's mail gave evidence of having been intercepted, and places to speak were refused him[2]. The fact that many regarded him as the cause of discord in the community, made him unhappy and he finally decided to move to Ohio, where he would at least be free to talk as he wished, and he hoped to edit his paper. Accordingly, with his entire family, he moved to Cincinnati in October, 1835.[3]

From this date the abolition cause seemed to take on new life. After Mr. Birney had visited Ohio, in April of 1835,[4] where he had assisted in organizing a State Anti-Slavery Society, he returned to his home, convinced of the urgent necessity of more direct measures and of organized resistance to slavery. As a visitor he had been able to see the situation in a clear impartial light, and as an inhabitant of the State, he resolved to organize the scattered forces for the accomplishment of his aim, the abolition of slavery by law.

One of the main reasons of Mr. Birney's removal to Ohio was the desire to publish a weekly anti-slavery paper in Cincinnati. When the project became known, he was assailed by every newspaper in the city except one, the "Gazette," edited by Charles Hammond, an independent, liberty-loving man, though not an abolitionist.[5] Not only from the city but from the southern newspapers were maledictions hurled at Birney's head. In one

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.182.
2. Ibid. p. 184.
3. Ibid. p. 186.
4. Ibid. p. 172.
5. A Political History of Slavery: W.H.Smith I. p.22.

county in Alabama at a public meeting, he was denounced as a fanatic and threatened with death if he persisted in cirulating seditious literature in their community.

Birney had been in Cincinnati less than a month when the city mayor and city marshal, with the county sheriff, called to inform him that he might be visited by a mob, because a hand-bill, of anti-slavery statements, had been printed in his office, and the people were angry. Though nothing came of this threat, Mr. Birney was convinced of the immediate necessity of publishing the "Philanthropist" to set forth his position and to clear his name of the charge of disloyalty to the National Constitution and of a desire to arouse the slaves.[1] Because of the hostility in the city, he chose New Richmond, a town twenty miles from Cincinnati, and there prepared to edit his paper. When the first number came out in January 1836, the people were disappointed at the moderate tone of its articles, but the newspapers by means of inflammatory comments,[2] succeeded in arousing enough excitement to cause large crowds to respond to a call for a meeting to express disapproval of the abolitionists and their methods. Mr. Birney visited this meeting held at the court-house, and after the pro-slavery speeches had ended, he arose to his own defence[3]. The speech which he made that night, January 22, 1836, was one of the best of his whole life, and he exerted all the powers within him to send home his arguments. Such was the result of his efforts that the mob quietly departed, leaving Mr. Birney unmolested. Henceforth, the anti-slavery publications

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1. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.208.
2. Ibid. p. 211.
3. Ibid. p. 215.

were openly sold in Cincinnati and the editor of the "Philanthropist" made numerous speeches and attended many anti-slavery meetings in the city. In March after the Mob Meeting, the "Philanthropist" began its publication in Cincinnati. No trouble came until July 12th,when a mob destroyed much of the press and the issue ready for mailing. Two days later, handbills printed in Covington, Kentucky, threatened the abolitionists if they re-established their press. On the following morning the "Philanthropist" appeared as usual, much to the surprise of the mob followers. Mr. Birney appealed to the mayor, but received little satisfaction, and violence was expected. On Saturday, the twenty-third of July, 1836, a crowd made up of all sorts and conditions of men, some of whom were Kentuckians, proceeded to hold a meeting and passed resolutions favoring the suppression of all abolition publications. One week later the mob completely destroyed the printing-office of the "Philanthropist", though Mr. Birney remained untouched.[1] The paper was not re-established until September 1836.[2] It became the leading anti-slavery newspaper in the West[3] and though the majority of subscribers lived in Ohio,[4] there were some in other States. The editor published full accounts of the anti-slavery movements, and tried to cen-

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.240-246.
2. Ibid. p.253.
3. Ibid. p. 221.
4. It was a special object of Mr. Birney to become acquainted with editors in Ohio wherever possible, and thus he gained a much more intimate knowledge and relationship with the people of those sections. Birney, p.258.

tralize the agitation, having for its aim the use of the polls though not then as a separate party. He had no patience with the religious man who did not vote because of corruption in the party, nor with the abolitionist who voted for a man who declared his adherence to slavery.

There was no head of the abolition movement in the West, and there was no concerted plan of action. Opinions varied, and each advocate was unwilling to yield a point for a national agreement. Such a condition of affairs gave evidence that a leader like Birney was needed, a man who could see both sides, and would not use "personalities" for which he so severely criticized William L. Garrison.[1] The paper did not attempt to deal with any question but slavery. By giving account of the proceedings in Congress in favor of abolition, by noticing the work of the churches,[2] and by an earnest appreciation of all efforts in behalf of the cause, the editor of the "Philanthropist" gave inspiration and hope to the body of abolition workers.[3] Owing to manifold duties as a speaker and as a member of societies, much of the editorial work of the paper after September 1836, was undertaken by Dr. Gamaliel Bailey,[4] and in 1837 when Birney went to New York, the entire editorship was given to Dr. Bailey, who soon became the most vigorous western anti-slavery editor.[5]

Although the newspaper was the principal instrument which Mr. Birney used in his work, he was active in abolition

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.179.
2. Mich.Synod declared itself for "immediate abolition" in 1836, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church also. In Cin.Meth.Gen.Conf. held 1836 (May) and notable anti-sl.speeches were made by Rev Orange Scott and Rev.George Storrs.
3. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.230.
4. Ibid. p.239.
5. Slavery and Abolition, Hart.p.195. In 1847, Dr.Bailey removed the paper to Washington City where it became the organ of the political abolitionists.

societies and was made a member of the executive committee of the State Society which he had helped organize in April, 1835. His main work in this office, was to select public speakers, a matter which he found very difficult to arrange.[1] Many volunteered who would not represent the cause in the best light, and others had no power of public speaking. Those whom he did select[2] were men of force and influence, laying solid foundations for the future action. These were paid, but there were some[3] who received no remuneration, and their work was worthily performed. The latter were chosen because of their prominence in their localities and their understanding of people to whom they spoke. From May 1836 to May 1837, there were formed in Ohio eighty anti-slavery societies, largely as a result of the speeches made by the various men delegated for that purpose. Mr. Birney lectured frequently and especially in the Western Reserve,[4] where he also sent the eloquent Theodore Weld. It was probably from him that Joshua R.Giddings received some of his most decided opinions on anti-slavery.[5]

Mr. Birney was not so engrossed with local societies that he lost sight of the national. At the second anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society held in New York 1835, he was a prominent speaker, and received enthusiastic support in all that he said. When he attended the fourth anniversary, he

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.256.
2. Rev.John Rankin, J.A.Thorne, Timothy Hudson, William T.Allen of Alabama, etc. Theo.D.Weld.
3. Thos.Morris; Rev.Henry Cowles, Albert A.Guthrie,Rev.James H. Dickey, Rev.Dyer Burgess,Dr.W.W.Bancroft.
4. Birney and His Times; Birney, p.341.
5. Life of J.R.Giddings, G.U.Julian, p.45.

was elected the Ohio vice-president of the society, and was held in respect by all the members,though his statement of principles regarding the use of "all lawful means" to bring about abolition,[1] was not received with unanimous approval. The non-voting abolitionists considered it too severe, and preferred to hold to their old principles of not using the polls. Following this meeting, he lectured in several places of New York and New England. In the latter place, he had attended the New England Anti-Slavery Convention held at Boston May 30 to June 2 and was urged to accept the position as one of its vice-presidents and to act on its committee of business. He returned to Cincinnati fully convinced that there would be more harmony in New England, but only a short time afterwards, Garrison put forth his theory of no-human government[2] and a division in abolition ranks was the result. When the leader of the disturbance demanded the aid of the executive committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, that body requested Birney to come to New York and take charge of affairs as corresponding-secretary, an office which Judge William Jay volunteered to vacate for that purpose. After deep thought and some delay, Birney decided to accept the call.[3] The summons to the East was a tribute to his national reputation as an abolitionist, and to his moderate, though none the less active, treatment of the great question at issue. The trouble which Birney was called East to settle, finally resulted in a division of the American Anti-Slavery Society in May 1840.[4] The faction which

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1. Birney and His Times; Birney, p.268.
2. William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison's,II. pp.133, 139.
3. Birney and His Times; Birney, p.277.
   He moved to New York September 22, 1837.
4. William Lloyd Garrison. Garrison's,II. p.355.

held to the no-human-government theory, admission of women to take part in the proceedings, and a non-resistant attitude, retained the original name. The members who had dissented from the principles,organized the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, of which J. G. Birney was chosen one of the secretaries. The basis of their theory was the "lawfulness of a human government", and the pressing necessity of political action.[1] Birney's work in Ohio had been well done. He had partly organized the movement in the West, and there was less necessity for his remaining. The winter following his removal, he exerted his energies toward securing legal enactments in the Northern States, which would aid in the cause of freedom. He visited every State capital of the North, where the legislative bodies were in session, and secured not only an attentive hearing, but the making of new laws and the changing of old laws respecting the freedom of men.[2]

In the fall of 1838, Birney sent out agents whose purpose was to create popular sentiment which would result in the election of candidates for State offices, who were favorable to the anti-slavery platform. By this means much was accomplished, but nevertheless some of the abolitionists, notably Birney, began to feel the necessity of a party of their own. Heretofore, the anti-slavery voters had adopted the system of asking the candidates questions, framed in such a way as to call forth an expression of opinion on slavery. If the answers did not satisfy the abolitionist, he remained away from the polls entirely.[3]

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1. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America, Wilson I. p.420.
2. In Mass.and Conn.every person claimed as slave could have a jury trial. Connecticut's "black-law" was repealed. Right of petition and opposition to admission of Texas were maintained by the legislation of Maine,Vt.,Mass.,R.I.,N.Y.,Ohio,Mich. Birney and His Times. Birney, p.339.
3. History of the United States, Rhodes I. p.74.

Such a plan as this would never enable them to get a representative in either State Legislature or Congress, and though their influence was somewhat felt, there was no organization among anti-slavery voters, each voting according to the dictates of his conscience or his desire. The movement for an independent anti-slavery party began to take shape in 1839. A strong pro-slavery speech by Henry Clay, February 7,[1] caused many falterers to lean toward a new party which would be based on an anti-slavery platform. Mr. Birney was much impressed by the refusal of J. Quincy Adams to vote for the abolition of slavery in District of Columbia.[2] Although the latter had expressly stated that he had no sympathy with the methods and policies of the abolitionists, he realized that slavery was a menace to free institutions in the United States,[3] and in so far as it caused the abridgement of personal rights and liberties, Adams was opposed to the entire system. Mr. Birney relied on this principle to bring about more decided anti-slavery action on the part of Mr. Adams.

Before July 1839, New York had adopted the plan of independent nominations for State offices and for Congressmen, and at a national anti-slavery convention held at Albany, New York, July 31, 1839, the possibility of presidential nominations was discussed.[4] This movement was organized chiefly by eastern men. A similar step was taken by the West, when a national anti-slavery convention at Cleveland, Ohio, on October 23, 1839, decided to appoint a nominating committee to choose a presidential candidate, though the resolution was tabled.[5]

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1. Thirty Years' View: T.H.Benton II. p.155.
2. Birney and His Times: Birney
3. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America: Wilson I.p.434.
4. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.347.
5. Ibid. p.347.

A month later, at Warsaw, New York, in a state convention of five hundred abolitionists, James G. Birney was unanimously nominated for President. Because it was not a national convention, Mr. Birney would not accept the nomination,[1] however, as the unanimous choice of a formal convention, April 1,1840, he became a candidate for President, and Thomas Earle, of Philadelphia, for Vice President.

The formation of a Third Party was not popular to many anti-slavery men. They realized that such a movement would mean an end of the moral organization of anti-slavery sentiment[2] and they questioned its usefulness as a means of abolishing slavery.[3] Notwithstanding this opposition, confined chiefly to Garrisonian Abolitionists, State Liberty conventions were held in many of the northwestern States. In Ohio the Western Reserve District was unfavorable to any political party based on anti-slavery principles, because it would be on too narrow a basis for anti-slavery agitation.[4]

The importance of the Third Party was not in the number of votes gained in the first election, but in the fact that a definite beginning had been made, and the policy of selecting abolitionists for the highest offices of the land gave the friends of freedom more hope of success.[5]

James G. Birney was again chosen to represent the Liberty Party, in 1844, receiving about ten times the votes cast for him in 1840.[6] Towards the end of the campaign, the

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.348.
2. Garrison, Garrison's II.434.
3. History of the United States, Rhodes I.p.74.
4. William Lloyd Garrison: Garrison's II.p.313.
5. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America: Wilson I. p.550.
6. Ibid. p.553.
   Over 60,000 votes were case for Birney in 1844.

Whigs had become desperate, and to weaken Birney as much as possible, they conceived the idea of publishing a forged letter, claimed to have been written by Birney to a man in Michigan, utterly betraying the principles of the Liberty Party. Copies of this letter were sent by the Whigs into all the Northern States, and before the accusation could be denied, many votes were lost to the abolition candidate.[1]

Mr. Birney appeared very little in national life after 1844, but he left the party organized and the abolitionists had a working policy for obtaining a definite aim. His last service as a public man was to preside[2] over the Southern and Western Liberty Convention held at Cincinnati, June 11-12, 1845. The members of this assembly were called together to review their course of action and to pledge themselves to continue the warfare against slavery by all conventional and honorable means.[3] Mr. Birney guided the opinion of the two thousand delegates, to a harmonious conclusion.

Although a serious accident prevented his appearing in public life, he retained a wide-awake interest in events of the day, especially those affecting slavery.

James G. Birney was conservative and thoroughly logical; he believed in making political action the basis of abolition agitation; he helped to make Ohio the center of the most effective work of abolition; he was well versed in constitutional law, and made fact the basis of his arguments. For these reasons,

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney, p.355.
2. Ibid. p.364.
3. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America: Wilson I,p.553. Samuel P.Chase had joined the Liberty Party in 1841. At this convention he presented an "Address to the People of the United States", containing a statement of abolition principles and a bitter arraignment of slavery. Well-written paper,and after a few changes, it was accepted by the convention.

he was a Western Abolitionist and was typical of the abolitionists of that section. They were independent of the East, and were practical, whereas the Garrisonian and other Abolitionists in the East were radical, and less inclined to consider all sides of the question. The West would reconcile the moral with the political forces, and as Birney said would bring "patriots, philanthropists, and Christians into one noble and dignified and swelling stream of action for God and our country".

Before the fall elections of 1838, James G. Birney urged the Ohio abolitionists to vote only for those who avowed unqualified opposition to slavery, and if possible to send to Congress a man of this principle.[1] He often said "One good Congressman can do more for our cause than a hundred lecturers". An opportunity to prove this assertion presented itself when Elisha Whittlesey of the Western Reserve District, resigned his seat in Congress.[2] The Whigs of that section nominated and elected Joshua Read Giddings to take his place in the House of Representatives. Giddings claimed that he had taken his abolition sentiments, not from the present day agitation, but from the writings of Thomas Jefferson, whose "abolition tract" Giddings said "was called the Declaration of Independence".[3] The majority of inhabitants of the Western Reserve held the same view and from the beginning of their life in Ohio, these emigrants from New England were opposed to the institution of slavery on general principles.[4] An influence which may have increased this feeling,was the frequent visits of Theodore Weld and other noted lecturers who placed empha-

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1. Birney and His Times: Birney p.341.
2. Giddings studied law in the office of Elisha Whittlesey,but there is no evidence of abolition influence.
3. Life of Giddings: G.W.Julian, p.157.
4. Giddings was born October 16,1795 in Pennsylvania; the family moved to Ashtabula County,Ohio in 1805. Julian, p.12.

sis on action as the only adequate means of getting rid of the system of slavery.[1] It was due largely to Weld's influence, that Giddings, with Benj. F. Wade, his law-partner, formed an anti-slavery society with only four members, in the township of Jefferson.[2] Although he never hesitated to express a decided opinion on the wrong of slavery, he was not aggressive but his real work began in Congress.

When Giddings entered the House, he found that conditions were somewhat unfavorable for the cause of abolition. On December 12, 1831, John Quincy Adams[3] had presented to Congress fifteen petitions sent by abolitionists[4] praying for emancipation in the District of Columbia. When referred to a committee, they received an adverse report, but a Representative had been found who was willing to present any petition sent him, hence from this time until the end of his term he received and presented thousands of petitions all of which related to slavery.[5] The South became alarmed at the increasing number of petitions on slavery, and in January 1836, when Adams presented a petition, the southern members seized the opportunity for a heated discussion which resulted in the passage of the Gag Resolution on May 26, 1836. This rule provided "that all petitions, memorials, resolutions, or papers relating in any way, or to any extent whatsoever, to the subject of slavery or the abolition of slavery, shall, without being either printed or referred, be laid upon the table and

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1. Joshua R.Giddings had aided fugitive slaves to escape into safety,for many years,and even after he became a Congressman he kept one wing of his home in Jefferson,Ohio,as the refuge for slaves. The Underground Railroad: Siebert, p.31.
2. Life of Giddings; G.W.Julian, p.45.
3. J.Q.Adams was elected to Congress in 1830 on an anti-masonic ticket. Hart.p.263.
4. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p.256.
5. History of the United States: Schouler,Vol.IV. p.302.

that no further action whatsoever shall be had thereon".[1] The rules of the House expired at the end of each session, hence the gag rule was renewed in the following sessions until in 1840, when it became a standing-rule of the House. Not until December 2, 1844, was the rule repealed.[2] John Quincy Adams was not an abolitionist and had emphatically declared that the people in the District of Columbia should decide the question of slavery for themselves.[3] He regarded the abolitionists as too radical and believed the opposition to them was brought on by their own actions.[4] It was the denial of the right of petition which caused him to struggle so earnestly against the efforts of the South. He believed slavery was an influence in paralyzing free speech, and t h u s was a danger to the Union and should be abolished. He felt no interest in the slave, but the freedom of the white man in the North, he considered the paramount issue. In 1835, President Jackson had tried to force through Congress a law prohibiting the use of the mails for certain abolition publications.[5] His successor disapproved of any measure interfering with slavery in the District of Columbia or in the slave-holding States.[6] It was not an easy matter to contend against a policy so strongly favored by the administration,but on the right of petition Mr. Giddings was in accordance with the views of John Quincy Adams. Seth M.Gates of New York and Wm.Slade of Vermont, were active workers for the anti-slavery cause along

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1. Niles Register L. p.241-245. Rhodes I.69.
2. Schouler IV. p.481.
3. A Political History of Slavery: W.H.Smith I. p.46.
4. History of the United States: Rhodes I. p.72.
5. Rhodes I. p.67.
6. Political History of Slavery: Smith I. p.48.

with Mr. Giddings.[1]

When the representative from the Western Reserve came into Congress, he made up his mind to deliberately evade the gag-resolutions. To deny right of petition was contrary to Mr. Giddings fundamental ideas of liberties belonging to the people and he would not be bound[2] by any restricting law. His fearlessness and frankness made him unpopular, and after his first speech in Congress, he was forced to bear the scorn and wrath of northern pro-slavery advocates as well as that of southern slave-owners.[3] Giddings was greatly incensed by Clay's speech, February 7, 1839, and a few days later (Feb.13) on the apparently harmless question of building a bridge in the District of Columbia, he found opportunity to discuss at length, the slave-trade and the right of petition.[4] From his first entrance into Congress, he had attacked the slave-trade, and had presented petitions for abolishing slavery in District of Columbia, but he had not yet made a set speech. His influence was more decidedly realized when an account of the discussion on the Seminole war, was printed in the leading newspapers, and aroused many people in the North to a possible danger. A bill had just been introduced by Mr. Thompson of South Carolina appropriating $100,000 for the removal of certain Seminole chiefs and warriors west of the Mississippi. Mr. Giddings saw his chance, and decided to test the gag-resolution by bringing in a discussion of slavery in this connection. In his speech February 8, 1841,he proceeded to give documentary proof that the cause of

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1. Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America. Wilson I. p.350.
2. Life of Giddings: Julian, p.46.
3. Ibid. p.71.
4. Slavery and Abolition. Hart, p.264. This speech of Clay's was a bitter denouncement of abolition principles. Giddings could not reply because of the gag rule,but he successfully evaded it in his speech on the bridge in the Dist.of Columbia

of the war was the capture of fugitive-slaves and that the people of Florida understood it as such, and moreover, they were aided by the government in carrying on the war against the Seminoles.[1] The southern members took exception to his statements, and he received constant interruptions, though these did not greatly trouble him. At the end he was insulted by a Southerner,[2] an action which was repudiated by many in the North and South. In the disturbance which was caused by the attempt to censure J. Q. Adams,[3] Giddings was prominent as his friend and supporter.[4] While the Southern conclave was preparing for Adams' trial, Giddings held a meeting in his room of the members of the House favoring emancipation. They sent one of their number to offer assistance to Mr. Adams.[5] The latter needed little help and in his eloquent defence, he brought out all the weak points in the pro-slavery cause, and humiliated the opponents of free speech. The resolutions of censure were tabled February 6,1842, and nothing came of the attempt.[6]

The following March came a sequal to John Q.Adams' censure, when the House, by a vote of one hundred and twenty-five to sixty-nine, adopted a vote of censure of Giddings. Such action was due to the fact that Giddings had introduced a series

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1. Life of Giddings: Julian, p.91.
   By orders to commanders; by reports of Indian agents etc. Much of this was new to the majority of people, and by original research,Giddings unearthed the truth.
2. Mr. Thompson, S. Car.
3. Polit.Hist.of Slavery; Smith I. p.65.
   As a result of presenting a petition in behalf of 46 citizens of Haverhill,Mass., praying Cong. to peaceably dissolve Union, Adams merely wished it referred to a committee which would give reasons for not allowing such an occurrence as requested but in excitement the Southerners took it up.
4. Rise and Fall of Slave Power in America; Wilson I. p.534.
5. Ibid. p.418. Among those present,Theo.D.Weld,Joshua Leavitt.
6. Political Hist.of Slavery; Smith I. p.66.

of resolutions relating to the case of the "Creole". This ship had set out from Hampton Roads October 7,1841, bound for New Orleans with one hundred and thirty-five slaves on board. On November 7, when near the Bahama Islands, nineteen of the slaves rose in revolt, killing one slave-trader and wounding eleven of the crew.[1] Madison Washington, the leader of the slaves, ordered the brig to put into Nassau a British port, which was reached in a few days.[2] Their object in the mutiny was simply to gain liberty, and when this fact was proved, all but the ringleaders were set free, since under British law they were entitled to freedom. When the officers of the ship demanded the remaining nineteen to be tried for murder and mutiny the British authorities refused to surrender them.

The Senate and the President agreed[3] that it was the obvious duty of the British nation to make reparation by assisting the owner of the vessel to re-embark, and by giving up the captives.[4]

Mr. Giddings, in the House, felt that it was imperative for him to oppose the position thus assumed, and prepared the resolutions to the effect that the States exercised full jurisdiction over the slaves in their own territory, but that this power was not delegated to the Federal government by the Constitution, hence, the slaves on the "Creole" were legally free

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1. History of International Arbitration: J.B.Moore I. p.410.
2. Rise and Fall of Slave-Power in America: Wilson I. p.443.
3. Ibid. p.447.
4. The British Government finally allowed $110,330 in claims, Moore I. p.447.

by the law of Great Britain;[1] that control of slavery did not extend to the high seas, and "slavery being an abridgement of the natural rights of man, can exist only by force of positive municipal law."[2] When Ohio was called on for resolutions, March 21, 1842, Giddings presented these and was allowed to finish reading them.[3] A spirited debate ensued, whereupon Fessenden of Maine, requested the withdrawal of the resolutions, an act which was accordingly done. Giddings said that he had only intended to put them before the House and have them considered at a future day.[4] In the excitement that followed the reading of the resolutions, Mr. Botts of Virginia proposed a vote of censure on their author, and condemned the act of Mr. Giddings.[5] The latter made several attempts to defend himself but was met with interference each time, hence the resolutions of censure were passed before he was heard.[6] As a result of this manner of treatment, he resigned his seat in Congress and returned to Ohio

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1. By Treaty of Ghent, English and American Governments pledged themselves to Christian world, to use their endeavors to totally abolish the slave-trade; (coast-traffic was included). Julian p.111.
2. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.125.
3. Ibid. p.120.
4. He had submitted resolutions to J.Q.Adams who approved of all but the one denying Federal control of sl. in the States. He maintained that in case of war, the government could abolish sl.to save the Nation. Since reso. were the order, Mr.Weller of Ohio, adopted Mr. Botts' resolution as his own and presented same.
5. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.121.
6. Ibid. p.127.

where he issued an address to the people of that district. The people were eager for him to become a candidate for re-election, and by a greatly increased majority, he was chosen again. In five weeks from the date of his censure, Mr. Giddings resumed his place in the House with the confidence of his constituents more firmly fixed than ever, and with the assurance of their hearty support in the re-presentation of the resolutions,[1] and in his further struggle to secure the rights of the people. An account of the whole affair came out in the newspapers, with general commendation for Mr. Giddings - even in some of the Democratic papers. Public meetings were held endorsing his action. The resolutions were not unusual, but they were contrary to the popular view taken by the Senate and most of the House, and coming as they did, from a man whose cause was decidedly unpopular, were doomed to cause discord.[2]

In his own district in Ohio Mr. Giddings' views on the political questions of the day were well-known. He wrote a series of essays for the Western Reserve Chronicle signed "Pacificus", which created wide-spread anti-slavery sentiment.[3] Especially did he insist upon the "reciprocity"of rights between the slaveholding and non-slaveholding States. His idea was not to have a third party, but to formulate some political theory on which the Whigs could work.[4]

When the Liberty party was organized, Mr.Giddings censured the people in the Western Reserve, for separating them-

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1. A Political History of Slavery. I. p.65.
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America; Wilson I.p.451. The New York "Evening Post" whose editor was William C.Bryant, highly praised Mr.Giddings' action.
3. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.133.
4. Ibid. Appendix, p.417.

selves from the Whig party, when to him there was so little difference between the Whigs and the new party. He remained a Whig until a national convention of that party held in June, 1848, refused to accept a resolution drafted by the Ohio delegates, asserting the power of Congress and the duty of Congress to prevent the introduction of slavery in the territories.[1] The national convention based on this principle, which met at Buffalo, August 9th, 1848, consisted of citizens of eighteen States, who were not satisfied with the trend of national politics, and who were opposed to any pro-slavery influences. In this free soil convention Mr. Giddings was a prominent figure and stoutly maintained his abolition principles throughout the campaign.[2] He had no patience with the man of uncertain views, and expressed his displeasure with Thomas Corwin of Ohio, because he adhered too closely to the Whig party when it had declared for slavery.[3] In Congress, Mr. Giddings had never ceased to assert his principles and after the censure he was less interrupted in his speeches, though forced to undergo the hatred of many and the ridicule of others. During the winter, Giddings had run for Senator from Ohio in opposition to Chase.[4] The former was considered a deserter, by the Whigs and the Press of that party assailed him from every side.[5] In 1850, the charge was put forth by the Whig Press, that Mr. Giddings had "purloined" papers from the General Post-Office, and when the accused demanded an investigation, the House appointed a committee not altogether favorable to Mr. Giddings. There was no foundation for the report,

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1. A Political History of Slavery; Smith I. p.98.
2. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.254.
3. Ibid. p.215.
4. Ibid. p.266.
5. Ibid. p.278.

and the action caused the Whig party to lose some of its power.[1] The new Free-Soil party in Congress was steadily gaining power, and in its opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Bill the South felt its force.[3] In the Republican National Convention of 1856, Mr. Giddings was also prominent. The Republican Party absorbed the old Free-Soilers who had organized in 1848, and had lost much of their power by 1852. He was a delegate to the nominating convention at Philadelphia and a member of the Committee on Resolutions which prepared the platform unanimously adopted by the convention - principles which Giddings had fought for and had maintained all his life.[4]

To support his belief in the doctrine of freedom, in the summer of 1857, he prepared a series of letters to Chief Justice Taney exposing the Dred Scott Decision as being inhumane and legally false. At the same time, he was active in making speeches on current anti-slavery topics and in writing articles on that subject.[5] Much to the surprise of his constituents Mr. Giddings was defeated for re-election in 1858. The opposing candidate, John Hutchins was a radical anti-slavery man, but Giddings' friends felt no anxiety and neglected to work.[6] His

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1. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.279.
2. An attempt was made by the enemies of abolition in Ohio to defeat the re-election of Giddings in 1852 by re-districting the State - an effort which was unsuccessful, however.
3. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.311.
   On Jan.19,1854,Free-Soilers set forth opposition in a paper entitled "Appeal of the Independent Democrats in Congress to the People of the United States" signed by S.P.Chase, Chas. Sumner, J.R.Giddings, Edward Wade, Gerrit Smith, Alexander DeWitt; it helped create public opinion.
4. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.335
5. Ibid. p.340.
6. Ibid. p.353.

last anti-slavery speech in Congress, Jan. 12,1859, was a brief historical review of the anti-slavery conflict in Congress. In conclusion he said, "And when I shall have passed away, let my epitaph announce that I hated oppression and wrong - that I loved liberty and justice".[1] Near the close of the session, Mr. Giddings received a testimonial from his fellow-members, as a token of their respect for his "Moral Worth and Personal Integrity", and from the colored people of Brooklyn he received another tribute.[2]

In the national convention at Chicago in 1859, Mr. Giddings was a delegate and helped to nominate Lincoln and Hamlin.[3] He realized that his power was practically gone, but he rejoiced to see the adoption of a platform so nearly in accordance with his views. In the campaign, he was active as a stump speaker in several States.

The greatest service which the Ohio abolitionist performed was not as a campaign orator, nor as leader in conventions, but it was his persistence and determination to keep the subject which he considered the most important of all issues, before the attention of Congress, of which he was a member for so many years. He was not a radical but he was imbued with the idea that all men had certain "inalienable" rights and any abridgement of these rights should be contested. Giddings had the condition of the negro slave ever before him, and because free speech was necessary to bring about a change, as well as a right belonging to the people, he joined with J. Q. Adams in

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1. Life of Giddings; Julian, p.361.
2. Ibid. p.363.
3. Ibid. p.371.

the fight against the gag resolution. That he was a Western Abolitionist needs no explanation. His conservative, independent attitude, made him a typical representative of the abolition of the West. He believed that the States had a perfect right to hold slaves, independent of Congress or of the Federal Government. He realized the necessity of establishing a constitutional basis for the movement against slavery, and his arguments were founded on facts which were hard to assail.

We have seen the slow progress of abolition as an organized movement and the work of James G. Birney as a Western Abolitionist toward bringing about a system upon which to base operations. A second step in the movement by Birney was the acquisition in Congress of an earnest out-spoken advocate from the West, in the person of Joshua R. Giddings,who served in the House of Representatives for about twenty years. He had a difficult position to fill in the face of staunch opposition from most of his fellow-members, opposition which took the form of rancor and personal disagreements. In the Senate, it was seemingly impossible to overcome the effect of precedent, and a well-established way of looking at public matters. The few who were against slavery in a tentative way, were not strong enough to make themselves heard. To bring about a change in this respect, was perhaps the third step in the abolition campaign. It was toward this aim that Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio, by upholding the right of the minority in debate, unconsciously directed his efforts in the Senate.[1] The first evidence of his extreme anti-slavery views was during his service as a State Senator in 1837. He had been nominated by the Whigs without his knowledge, and

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1. Political History of Slavery; W.H.Smith II. p.381.

though a comparatively young man, he soon gained a position of prominence in the General Assembly.[1] In the eighteen years that he had lived in the Western Reserve, he had absorved the vigor,and independent attitude of that district.

During the second session of the Ohio legislature 1838-9, two commissioners from Kentucky[2] came to secure the passage of a more stringent fugitive slave law although the existing laws were rarely executed. Benj. F. Wade was one of the five in the Senate, to oppose the bill, and towards the end of the long session devoted to a discussion of the proposed bill, he made a strong,courageous speech, which contained decided anti-slavery principles. Though primarily in opposition to the fugitive-slave law, he assailed the entire system of slavery, advancing arguments which were not to be denied. He plainly expressed his antagonism to the institution as may be seen from the following portion of his speech: "While I have a seat on this floor, am a citizen of this State, - nay, until the laws of nature and nature's God are changed - I will never recognize the right of one man to hold his fellowman a slave. I loathe, I abhor the accursed system, nor shall my tongue belie my heart"[3] The bill was passed, but it was never enforced because of public opinion against it. As a result of his action in this matter, he was defeated for reëlection in the fall of 1839, though in 1841, he was returned to the Senate. Wade persistently adhered to the Whig party through the 1840, 1844 and the Free-Soil campaigns,[4] and was still a Whig when he entered the United States

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1. Life of Benj.F.Wade,A.G.Riddle,p.133. Wade was born October 27,1800, in Massachusetts; the family moved to Ohio in 1821 and located in the Western Reserve in Ashtabula County.
2. Benj.F.Wade, Riddle, 134.
3. Ibid. p.140.
4. Ibid. p.166.

Senate in 1851.[1] His anti-slavery principles were well-known;[2] and his appearance in the Senate, added one more to the small group of men opposing the extension of slavery.[3] Soon an opportunity to test his loyalty to these opinions came to the Ohio Senator. On January 4, 1854, Stephen Douglass presented his bill urging the right of the Kansas territory to decide upon slavery in its own boundaries.[4] In his speech on the bill he maintains that the 1850 compromise nullified the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and the new territory even if north of 36° 30′ could admit or prohibit slavery, as it desired. Wade's speech against the bill was full of wit and was to the point. Many would criticize his harsh language but his manner of plain speech was not disliked by his Western Reserve constituents.[5]

Mr. Wade claimed that this 1820 law was a solemn promise and any violation would bring on a conflict between liberty and slavery - in which event liberty would not die, but slavery would certainly die. In his speech opposing the measure he stated boldly what he regarded as his duty in controversy. "You may call me," he said, "an Abolitionist if you will. I care little for that; for if an undying hatred to slavery constitutes an Abolitionist, I am that Abolitionist. If man's determination, at all times and at all hazards, to the last extremity, to resist the extension of slavery, or any other tyranny, constitutes an Abolitionist, I, before God, believe myself to be thatAboli-

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1. Benj.F.Wade; Riddle, p.175. As a northern Whig, he went into the Republican party.
2. While State Circuit Judge he had bitterly denounced the Compromise of 1850.
3. Seward,of New York; Chase and Wade of Ohio; Sumner of Mass.; Hale of New Hampshire. Rhodes 1. p.229.
4. Rhodes. I. p.427.
5. Rhodes I. p.452.

tionist."[1] Anything which he regarded as the least hint of tyranny, he was quick to resent. Such an act as the assault on Sumner on the floor of the Senate, aroused all the fire in the westerner's heart. He considered the attack a pre-conceived plan on the part of the Southerners, to limit the power of debate, and to hinder the weaker side from frankly discussing a subject from their point of view. Working for an unpopular cause, he was bound to undergo the unpleasant remarks of his opponents and as a result of one of these personal altercations,[2] Mr. Wade and two of his colleagues, determined to settle matters of that sort, by challenge to fight, and drew up an agreement to that effect.[3] Nothing better illustrates the character of the man, than this decision to fight, notwithstanding the strong public sentiment of the North against duelling as a manner of settling disputes.

Although fiery in temperament, Benj. Wade was nevertheless clear-sighted, and his delineation of facts, as they were, soon won the confidence of the people, besides giving him a position of independence in the Senate.[4] When the real conflict[5] of the Nation finally came, Wade by experience, by level-headedness, had become first in the Senate. It was through his influence that resolutions were passed by that body, stating the cause of the war not to be the destruction of slavery, but the maintenance of the supremacy of the Constitution and the preserv-

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1. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America; Wilson II.p.386.
2. Senator Clayton of Dela.
3. Simon Cameron and L.Chandler.
   Benj.F.Wade; Riddle, p.213.
4. Ibid. p.220.
5. Ibid. p.237.

ation of the Union. He may have seen clearly enough that the objective point was emancipation, but he understood how disastrous to northern aid, if such a policy were announced at the beginning.[1] The President's message of 1860 was the cause of a lively debate in the Senate, and he was bitterly assailed for not proposing a definite means of adjusting the crisis. Mr.Wade asserted the intention of the executive to be wholly in accordance with the doctrine of human rights, and asserted the former willingness of the North to comply with the laws of the Nation, in contrast to the actions of the South in many instances.[2] His views were becoming more pronounced, as the time went on, and by the beginning of his third term in the Senate, he frankly advocated full emancipation.

In a speech on the question of emancipation, Mr. Wade said, "I ask for no place until slavery is extinct in these United States".[3] Formerly he had believed that slavery was a problem to be solved by the people in their own States, and he felt that the negro was an element which could not easily be adjusted.[4]

With reference to the States which had withdrawn from the Union and were slowly regaining their place, he believed that a liberal policy would never be satisfactory. When Lincoln withheld his signature from a bill restricting national vote in the Rebellious States, which were in process of reconstruction a censure of his action came out in the form of a paper signed

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1. Benj.F.Wade; Riddle, p.243.
2. Rise and Fall of the Slave-Power in America; Wilson III,p.26.
3. Ibid. p.412.
4. Benj. F. Wade; Riddle, p.229

by "B.F.Wade, Chairman of the Senate Committee, and H.Winter Davis, Chairman of the Committee of the House of Representatives on the "Rebellious States". This publication was addressed "To the Supporters of the Government"[1] and as an expression from two Congressmen of such standing, it made a deep impression on the minds of the people, especially when there was already a misunderstanding in the North of the Southerners' motives and general appreciation of the Union, notwithstanding the secession of some of their States.

Mr. Wade was like a great many other men in the North. He believed that the South had been warned, and when it did not heed the warning, it must suffer the consequences of its own act.[2] Due in part to this belief, was the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. His plan of reconstruction differed from that of Congress, and though Wade did not agree altogether with the view taken by the majority in Congress, he believed Johnson proved guilty as charged, and voted for his impeachment.[3]

After eighteen years of continuous service in the Senate, Wade returned to Ohio, and took up the life of a private citizen.[4] He had seen the Nation pass through the most critical

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1. Rise and Fall of Slave Power in America; Wilson III. p.524.
2. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the civil rights bill, and fully approved the 14th amendment.
   Benj.F.Wade; Riddle, p.275.
3. Benj.F.Wade; Riddle, p.285.
4. Returned to Jefferson, Ohio. Delegate to convention of 1876, and Presidential elector. (Riddle, p.294). Wade died March 2, 1878 in Jefferson, Ohio.

period of its history, and had worked diligently to maintain the principles which he considered the most fundamental for its guidance. His entire attitude was rather defensive, that frontier spirit which caused men to struggle against fearful odds, but which made them stronger in the end.

As a type of western abolitionists, Wade represents the radical element of that section. His uncompromising warfare on oppression in any form, caused him to be regarded as a worthy opponent. His willingness to fight, made him seem uncouth, at times, but his early training in the woods of Ohio had taught him to be fearless, outspoken and aggressive, when liberties of the people were assailed. Unquestionably Benj. F. Wade did exert an influence in breaking down the barrier of prerogative which the Senate had consistently put forth since the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

CONCLUSION.

From the foregoing chapters it will be seen, that the Western Abolitionists were largely responsible for the determined energy of the abolition movement after 1830. They were not beginning a new work in the West, but were merly making use of elements which had existed in that section for many years. It was not necessary to establish new abolition societies, nor to interest the people in the negro slave. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century there had been organizations in Ohio with the avowed intention of liberating the slave at the earliest possible moment, and a great number of fugitives who received shelter and care in the Northwestern States gave ample proof of the desire to help the individual slave. The sympathies of the abolitionist were aroused not only by the fleeing bondsmen who came to them for aid, but by actual conditions as they existed in the slave States. With a well-established system of slavery just acorss the Ohio River, the people of the free States along its northern boudary were fully informed of the evils which came from the institution of slavery. Moreover, some of the most active abolitionists in the West were former slave-owners, From Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia or Maryland, who had manumitted their slaves and had come into the free States to work against the system in its entirety.

The West was continuing the work begun early in the century, but the difference in the abolition movement after 1830 and the one previous to that date, was in the complete and effective organization of the latter. This then was the beginning of successful work in the abolition struggle in the West. To bring

about this cooperation,and later,to take control in the East, where there was need of a less radical leader than Wm. Lloyd Garrison, was the service of James G. Birney. Because he believed that the only method of securing desired results, was to make abolition a political issue, he made all his efforts conform to that idea. A political party whose fundamental principle was emancipation, was the direct outcome of this method of procedure.

When Birney had completed the work of organizing scattered opinions and forces and of basing his principles on political action, operations were transferred to Congress where Joshua Reed Giddings by upholding the right of petition and freedom of debate, became the abolition champion in the House of Representatives. From him we pass to the last and most extreme type of the Western Abolitionist treated in this paper, Benj. F.Wade. His work in the Senate, begun before the shock of war had stirred the hearts and minds of the Nation,lasted through the period of stress and into the somewhat less troubled period following.

A comparison of the Western Abolitionist with those of the East brings out three points of difference. The former were conservative; they believed that the only way to win the victory was by quiet and persistent work, though they were not lacking in fire and energy. The Western Abolitionist made common sense and logic the basis of their arguments. It was to the understanding and reason that they appealed, as well as to the sympathies and the moral side of individuals. Finally, the men of the West fighting for the cause of freedom, used politics as the best working-plan for securing what they wished -

the freedom of the negro slave. That the Western Abolitionists were instrumental in bringing about a culmination of the disagreement between the North and South, cannot be doubted, whether for the best is not in the realm of this discussion.