

July 18, 1864
Martin, [J.] Sella
National Anti-Slavery Standard

Rev. Sella Martin, who was received with prolonged cheering, came forward, and with a naturalness and ease of manner which at once put his auditors at ease, began his address. After a brief and happy acknowledgment of the honor done him by the large meeting and the tribute of the Chairman, he took up the subject announced for the evening.

On the American question he said England was divided in opinion into three distinct classes—a division that followed naturally in the social order of the country—the upper, middle and lower classes representing the three phases of opinion and feeling. Each of these classes was subdivided, the upper embracing but a few influential friends of the North. A larger wing of the upper class were represented as being enemies to the North. This wing Mr. Martin designated as the political wing; and though opposed to the North for political reasons they were for similar reasons opposed to the success of the Confederacy. They would be willing to see both North and South fall, but unwilling to see either succeed.

The Tory wing of the upper class was then handled. It was in favor of the South on the ground of its aristocratic form of society, and opposed to the North for the two reasons that our example of free institutions tended to make the lower wing of the middle class agitators and caused the lower class to emigrate. Revolution and depopulation were the two evils most feared by the tories as the results of our example.

The middle class was also subdivided; the upper part being merchants, expected free trade with the South in the future, and were chagrined at the present check of a supply of cotton. Among these were mentioned the influential dissenters, who having demands to

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make on their own account, professed neutrality on the American question, because they did not wish to have these demands associated with the odium now cast by the upper class on the North. But the lower wing of the middle class were our friends by nature and by grace. The religious part of them, led by Baptist Noel, were true; and the professional part, led by Professor Newman, were faithful in the darkest hours of our struggle.

The lower classes, almost without exception, were friends to the Union. One part of them from simple anti-slavery considerations, the other for political and philanthropic reasons combined. The majority therefore of the English people were favorable to us. All these statements were supported by facts and listened to for an hour and a half with deep interest and profound attention, except when the silence was broken by the enthusiastic response made by the audience to the strong points and lively illustrations of the orator.

Mr. Martin has a youthful appearance, which, after the audience sees his self-possession helps to put him in favor with them.

His style is simple and pure, his language well selected, and his statements are clear.

Dispensing with rhetoric as mere ornament, he uses it with great power when the subject justifies it. The speech last night was thought to be by all who heard it, in all respects effective. It abounded with humor and pathos, was argumentative and eloquent. The callers of the meeting have done the cause a service, and given the people great pleasure by affording them an opportunity of judging of the ability and effectiveness with which our cause was advocated by a col-

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