

**Talk of President Johnson's Proclamation about Jeff. Davis and others—Vilification of Him—What our Enemies Say, and our Friends—A Catchpenny "Confession of Booth, the Murderer"—Apprehensions about Canada and Mexico—The Freedmen's Aid Society—English Politics—Mr. Villier's Bill—A Country Joke on a Tory Landlord—The Reform Movement—The Hight of the London Season—"Laura Bell's" Preaching—Items.**

From Our Special Correspondent.

LONDON, May 20, 1865.

President Johnson and his proclamation incriminating Jeff. Davis and other Rebels of minor prominence as accomplices in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, is the topic of gravest interest this week. It has produced a marked sensation among both our friends and enemies. The howl raised about it by the latter has, I think, equaled, if not eclipsed, all the ululant utterances throughout the war. All the Anglo-Rebels and ex-"secesh," big dogs and little mongrel puppy, whelp and hound and cur of low degree, use their voices with a vehemence that would be appalling if it weren't ludicrous, and if one hadn't got pretty well used to it. It is like Irish wolves baying the moon or an Islington dog show. Andrew Johnson is a ruffian, a renegade, a slanderer, a moral assassin longing to become a practical one, a sanguinary fanatic, a terrorist, a wordy stump orator and turncoat, a bad plagiarist of Barrère, Marat and Robespierre—and so on. *Sic* the Tories and especially the delightful *Standard*, which has absolutely gone into convulsions and raved about it; one almost expects to find slayer flecking its editorials. Among our friends there was, at first, a decided disinclination to credit the imputation which has, I believe, merged into a conviction that the United States Government must, as asserted, possess evidence to sustain such a charge, or it would never venture to do more than stultify itself before all the world in making it, coupled with a wise determination not rashly to prejudge the event. These people remark that the vilifiers of the successor of Abraham Lincoln, who are screaming themselves hoarse with indignation at the impeachment of Davis, do not hesitate for one moment in flinging at Johnson an equally damatory imputation—that in saying that our President has issued this proclamation utterly without warrant, upon forged evidence, with a full knowledge of its forgery, they commit the very offense they charge him with committing. With them it is the old question of whose ox is gored, and by whose ball. Such logicians may therefore, stand aside. Our friends argue that the allegation of the probability of Davis's innocence, based on his knowledge that he could gain nothing by Mr. Lincoln's death and Mr. Johnson's installment are easily disposed of by the circumstance that his life was aimed at, too, in common with that of every one of the nation's leaders. Also that Booth's plans of attack and escape, the funds at his command, the facilitation of his flight, his evident hope of getting to England (as shown by his investment in an English bill), all intimate powerful complicity, as well as the connivance of authority. Besides (our friends say), few of the minor Rebels incriminated in the proclamation possess too good characters. It is remembered that George Sanders told Mr. Russell or Mr. Sala (I forget which misrepresentative of the London press was honored with his confidence), at Niagara, that the Confederate conspirators meditated things that would startle civilization, *et cetera*. Clearly the St. Albans raider, and Tucker the spy, who when United States Consul at Liverpool got hideously in debt and swindled everybody, offer no very strong guarantees of honesty or honor. So we talk, the wisest of us deferring our judgment, the foolish floundering into a welter of abuse by the will-of-the-wisp flicker of their own prejudices.

I have not heard a single Englishman, friendly to us, express a hope of the conviction and consequent execution of Davis. By them Wendell Phillips's magnificent oration on the subject, in Boston, is spoken of with much approbation. The Rebels, on the contrary, and their partisans, seem rather to desire that their ex-President should become "a martyr." Writes *The Index*—not dead yet—"If President Davis falls into the hands of his enemies he will doubtless be murdered. President Johnson will not care for the protests of England and France, if such protests have been sent to Washington. If President Davis is to suffer a felon's death at the North, sure we are that he will meet his fate with the calmness, fortitude and dignity that becomes a true patriot, a brave gentleman and a devout Christian. President Johnson may murder Jefferson Davis—will murder him if he has the opportunity—but he cannot tarnish the great and glorious name of his victim." That's it, you see; they would rather have the blood of this great criminal staining our annals, than let history tell of him as slinking out the remainder of his life in the slums of Leicester-square, or—supposing he escapes with the plunder of the Richmond banks—ruffing it in Paris with no-end of hard-up Rebels dogging his heels and writing bushels of begging letters to him, setting forth their destruction and services to the defunct Confederacy. Such an anti-climax is worth considering. In the House of Commons you will see what was said about the question last night on the motion of Darby Griffiths. You are not to be interfered with.

Before dismissing the subject, and in reference to what it grew out of, let me find room for the following advertisement, scissored from the daily papers. The nature of the catchpenny publication is so amply indicated by its announcement that comment would be superfluous.

**WILKES BOOTH'S  
PRIVATE CONFESSION  
OF THE  
MURDER OF LINCOLN.**

His connection with  
THE REBELLION.  
THE KILLING OF A BOSOM FRIEND  
Of Booth's by Federal Soldiers after the Battle of Bull's Run.  
Their Brutal conduct towards  
THE VICTIM'S WIFE.  
Her Brother and Booth then vow a terrible oath of  
VENGEANCE AND RETRIBUTION.  
Booth is implicated in the  
SLAYING IN COLD BLOOD  
Of no less than twenty-six Federal Officers. His plans for  
assassinating the President, General Grant, and  
ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE CABINET,  
And for burning the Capitol at Washington; also the public  
buildings of New-York, Boston, and Philadelphia. This con-  
fession was given by the assassin to a  
CONFEDERATE FRIEND,  
Who assisted in his concealment, and who escaped to New-  
York after the capture of Booth by the officers of justice,  
ARRIVING AT LIVERPOOL  
On Saturday last, on his way to Russia.  
Full particulars (not obtainable elsewhere) now being pub-  
lished in pamphlet form, price 2d., by the Newsagents' Com-  
pany, 147 Fleet-street, London.  
Give orders early to obtain a copy.

There is yet another American topic which excites interest, if not apprehension, here. This is the reported opening of recruiting offices for the enlistment of men for service in Mexico—of course on the side of Juarez against Napoleon the Third's bran-new empire and emperor. Very exaggerated reports (manufactured on your side of the water as well as in this city) are in circulation as to the future policy of the new President toward all the European dependencies on the American continent, especially Canada and Mexico. You are going to steal the former, it is said, in order to lessen the burden of your debts; to invade the latter with the ultimate design of annexation. Your good friends on the Stock Exchange (who seem generally to prefer to get their impressions as to the intentions of the United States Government from its enemies) were troubled by these things this week, to the unfavorably affecting of American securities. They are, I believe, better now—under the influence of the news that the Washington Cabinet is favorable to unrestricted commercial intercourse with the conquered South, and to an extensive reduction of naval and military armaments.