

enjoying more refined and intellectual society. It was as if the Legislature of the British empire, representing not only England, Scotland, and Ireland, but Canada, Newfoundland, the West Indies, Australia, the Cape, and all the other dependencies of the British crown, were to meet in some third-rate town. Nor even then would the comparison be a fair one, because if there be one characteristic more than another which advantageously distinguishes three-fourths of the American population, it is the high social, intellectual, and political condition, relatively speaking, of the working classes. The foreign diplomatist residing in Washington lives within the borders of the slave territory, where the laborers are more degraded, and perhaps less progressive, than in any European state. Besides, the foreign ambassador, in his official and political capacity, too often sees exposed the weak side of the constitution of the Union, and has to deplore the powerlessness of the federal executive to carry out its own views, and to control the will of thirty independent states, or as many *imperia in imperio*. Just when he may have come to an understanding with the leading statesmen on points of international law, so that his negotiations in any other metropolis would have been brought to a successful issue, he finds that the real difficulties are only beginning. It still remains to be seen whether the government is strong enough to contend with the people, or has the will so to act, or whether it will court popularity by yielding to their prejudices, or even exciting their passions. Such is at this moment the position of affairs, and of our minister at Washington.