

toms of friendship to them." I agree with the right honorable gentleman, it was an abominable act.

I am not the apologist, much less the advocate, of their iniquities; neither will I countenance them in their pretences for the injustice. I do not think that much regard is to be paid to the charges which a triumphant soldiery bring on the conduct of a people whom they have overrun. Pretences for outrage will never be wanting to the strong when they wish to trample on the weak; but when we accuse the French of having seized on Venice after stipulating for its neutrality and guaranteeing its independence we should also remember the excuse that they made for the violence, namely, that their troops had been attacked and murdered. I say I am always incredulous about such excuses; but I think it fair to hear whatever can be alleged on the other side. We cannot take one side of a story only. Candor demands that we should examine the whole before we make up our minds on the guilt.

I cannot think it quite fair to state the view of the subject of one party as indisputable fact without even mentioning what the other party has to say for itself. But, sir, is this all? Though the perfidy of the French to the Venetians be clear and palpable, was it worse in morals, in principle, and in example, than the conduct of Austria? My honorable friend [Mr. Whitbread] properly asked, "Is not the receiver as bad as the thief?"

If the French seized on the territory of Venice, did not the Austrians agree to receive it? "But this," it seems, "is not the same thing." It is quite in the nature and within the rule of diplomatic morality for Austria to receive the country which was thus seized upon unjustly. "The Emperor took it as a compensation. It was his by barter. He was not answerable for the guilt by which it was obtained."

What is this, sir, but the false and abominable reasoning with which we have been so often disgusted on the subject of the slave trade? Just in the same manner have I heard a notorious wholesale dealer in this inhuman traffic justify his abominable trade.

"I am not guilty of the horrible crime of tearing that mother from her infants; that husband from his wife; of depopulating that village; of depriving that family of their sons, the support of their aged parents! No, thank Heaven! I am not guilty of this horror. I only bought them in the fair way of trade. They were brought to the market; they had been guilty of crimes, or they had been made prisoners of war; they were accused of witchcraft, of obi, or of some other sort of sorcery; and they were brought to me for sale. I gave a valuable consideration for them. But God forbid that I should have stained my soul with the guilt of dragging them from their friends and families!"

Such has been the precious defence of the slave trade, and such is the argument set up for Austria in this instance of Venice

"I did not commit the crime of trampling on the independence of Venice; I did not seize on the city; I gave a *quid pro quo*. It was a matter of barter and indemnity; I gave half a million of human beings to be put under the yoke of France in another district, and I had these people turned over to me in return!"

This, sir, is the defence of Austria; and under such detestable sophistry is the infernal traffic in human flesh, whether in white or black, to be continued and even justified! At no time has that diabolical traffic been carried to a greater length than during the present war, and that by England herself, as well as Austria and Russia.