

"Movement Among the Negro Slaves in America,"

London (UK) *Observer* October 3, 1852

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**MOVEMENT AMONG THE NEGRO SLAVES IN AMERICA.**

The *Carolina Spartan* says: "We perceive by the Virginia papers, that, within the last three months, a greater degree of insolence and resistance has been manifested by the negroes in every portion of the state to the authority of their owners, than ever known before. The negroes attack their masters and overseers when anything goes wrong with them; and, in the settlement of the matter, such is the laxity of punishment generally, that the negroes are often the victors. The *Frederick (Va.) Herald* says it knows of several instances of the kind referred to. Some negroes will not be chastised by their owners, and go so far as to resist any punishment from that quarter. The servants in the kitchen teach their children that the relative position of master and slave does not of right exist, and that henceforth the word 'Mister' is to be used instead of master; and instead of addressing them in the terms heretofore known as the father and mother among the blacks, require their children to call them pa and ma. This is no great thing in itself, but it is a sign of the times, and shows conclusively that in this age of progress the negroes are making progress too. The same paper says that it is now a debateable point as to which colour shall use the sidewalk and which give way. We also learn from our exchanges, that in the border States there is very frequently a stampede among the negroes—large numbers going off together. Now in the name of common sense, a common cause and a common fate, how can the people of the Southern States be so blind as not to see that this growing insubordination of the slaves is one of the consequences of the existing union of slaveholding with non-slaveholding states. A union of those who love and live by slavery, with those who hate and spurn it—yes, a union of those who would fight for it, with those who would, and are now fighting against it. To us it seems that the union, so far from being desirable, has now become unsafe, unprofitable, and dishonourable; and in the end will prove fatal to the institution of slavery. We value slavery more than we do the union, and in choosing a foe for our steel in the settlement of this question, we would prefer a northern man to a negro. Viewing slavery then as we do—the very essence of our moral, physical, and civil life, and looking upon the union as the hateful instrument of its final overthrow, if not dissolved—we believe it would be to the best interests of the south to dissolve their existing connection with the north. And the sooner the better."

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Slave Stampedes on the Southern Borderlands

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