

**Liberty by Trial:**  
**John Stuart Mill, the American Civil War, and the Ethics of Foreign**  
**Intervention<sup>1</sup>**

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War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things: the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing *worth* a war, is worse.

- John Stuart Mill, "The Contest in America," February 1862<sup>2</sup>

**I**

The American Civil War may be considered an important event not only in the history of nineteenth-century British diplomacy, but also in the history of British political thought. The war carried with it significant implications for Britain's understanding of its moral and political purpose in international affairs. In America, the Union and the Confederacy each sought the moral and material support of British statesmen, and both purchased munitions from British manufacturers. The Confederacy requested active military intervention on its behalf, while the Union insisted that Britain maintain a policy of non-intervention. After President Abraham Lincoln internationalized the war by deciding to blockade the entire length of the Confederate coast in May 1861, the British were compelled to respond to the blockade's effects on its commercial interests in the South, especially in the cotton trade, and adopted a neutral wait-and-see approach to the war in order to gauge the blockade's consequences. Those international dimensions of the American Civil War raised critical problems for British politicians and political philosophers with respect to the intersection of morality and foreign policy – in particular, the ethics of neutrality and intervention in foreign conflicts, the moral status of rebellions and wars for self-determination, and the enduring problem of slavery.

British policy toward the conflicting parties in the Civil War fostered intense public debate in Britain. As John Morley, editor of the *Fortnightly Review*, later recalled, “in the partisanship with the sides there was the veil of a kind of Civil War here.”<sup>3</sup> In 1862, the *London Times* estimated that, both in terms of moral concerns and financial interests, the Civil War “affects our people more generally even than the Indian Mutiny.”<sup>4</sup> Among the most prominent public voices in Britain was that of John Stuart Mill, who, after his retirement from the East India Company in 1858, made significant contributions to public political discourse on the United States in articles and reviews for such publications as *Fraser’s Magazine* and *The Westminster Review*. The intense energy and conviction with which Mill responded to the crisis across the Atlantic provides insights into the principles and implications of an underappreciated aspect of Mill’s political thought: the nature of what he called “international morality.”<sup>5</sup>

For Mill, the Civil War was both the great crisis in, and the great opportunity for, the moral and political progress of American civilization – which could, depending on the outcome of that struggle, either achieve great advances or suffer terrible setbacks. Mill’s impassioned contributions to the public debate over British policy toward the Union and the Confederacy attempted to re-frame the terms of the debate by defining the war as, above all other considerations, a moral crisis, and one in which the British were deeply and inescapably implicated. This article investigates how Mill applied his theory of “international morality,” in particular his philosophy of non-intervention, to the debate over British intervention in the Civil War, as he attempted to undermine British sympathy and support for the Confederate cause. We must also ask, though, why Mill’s moral crusade for the Union never translated into advocacy for British diplomatic or military action to ensure the defeat of the Confederacy. Why, that is, despite his forceful rhetoric – and despite his belief that the war “was destined to be a turning point, for good or evil, of the course of human affairs for an indefinite duration” – did Mill steadfastly support a policy of neutrality?<sup>6</sup> When, for Mill, was intervention justified, and not justified, to confront a foreign evil on behalf of a righteous cause?

An investigation into Mill’s articles and correspondence from the period helps to uncover the principles that guided his standards of “international morality” – in particular his understanding of the moral and political significance of national sovereignty and his philosophy

of non-intervention. Moreover, an analysis of how Mill framed his opinions in relation to his opposition regarding British policy toward what he called “the American question” reveals the dimensions and implications of his positions on problems of intervention and sovereignty in foreign conflicts.<sup>7</sup> Mill applied to the case of the Civil War the language and concepts of a moral and political worldview in which progressive “civilization” was “the direct converse or contrary” of, and was in perpetual conflict with, the retrograde forces of “barbarism.”<sup>8</sup> This article argues that Mill’s advocacy for a policy of non-intervention was grounded in his conception of the relation between liberty and sovereignty, and his understanding of the means by which nations most effectively achieve moral progress through ascending levels of civilization. In the case of the American Civil War, Mill’s vision of moral progress carried significant implications for how, and under what circumstances, he thought Britain could most effectively promote and advance the progress of American civilization.

## II

The British debate over slavery did not end after the slave trade was outlawed there in 1807, or after slavery itself was abolished in the British colonies in 1833. Between 1833 and the onset of the Civil War in 1861, Mill developed a keen interest in American affairs and became an ardent advocate for the abolition of slavery in the United States. As early as 1836, Mill believed slavery would be the “dark spot in the character and destiny of the Americans.”<sup>9</sup> In the case of the United States, the “dark spot” of slavery was hindering precisely such national improvement – which for Mill involved both moral improvement and political development toward democracy. In his lengthy review of de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* in 1840, Mill argued that a “law of progress,” which was “an inherent attribute of human nature,” guided that improvement.<sup>10</sup> For Mill, progress was a process of national education; and one way the education of the American people was to be advanced was through gradually increasing participation in democratic institutions. The Southern states, dominated as they were by what Mill considered a despotic aristocracy that perpetuated the evil institution of slavery, inhibited that educational process. Slaveholders, Mill observed, “have a large share of all the personal qualities which belong everywhere to those who rule by force.” He considered it “a mere perversion of terms” to call the governments of the slave states “democracies.”<sup>11</sup>

To better understand how Mill would frame his wartime essays, it is instructive to begin with one of his most involved expositions, written before the Civil War began, on how Britain should approach foreign conflicts – his 1859 essay, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention.” Mill’s essay was ostensibly a response to Prime Minister Lord Palmerston’s attempt to defeat the international project of building a Suez canal, based on the notion that it could injure British commercial interests further east. Mill, however, only briefly discussed the Suez issue, and instead explored at greater length the principles upon which British decisions to intervene in foreign affairs should be determined, a question that involved the problem of repairing what Mill perceived to be Britain’s damaged moral reputation abroad. Mill would eventually employ the framework for British international conduct formulated in this essay as a method to address the British response to the American conflict.

Mill contended that it was imperative for Britain to reassert unselfish priorities in order to recover its moral authority among nations. When Britain approached foreign conflicts primarily with a view to its commercial interests, Mill argued, foreigners “are firmly persuaded that no word is said, nor act done...which has not for its motive principle” a particularly British interest.<sup>12</sup> Mill insisted, though, with some prescience, that Britain might be called upon in the future to take action “rather in the service of others, than of itself.”<sup>13</sup> For example, Britain may be called upon

to mediate in the quarrels which break out between foreign States, to arrest obstinate civil wars, to reconcile belligerents, to intercede for mild treatment of the vanquished, or finally, to procure the abandonment of some national crime and scandal to humanity, such as the slave-trade.<sup>14</sup>

In the case of the slave trade, Mill argued, Britain had set an important precedent by proving its willingness to put a moral cause before its immediate financial interests. Mill recalled that “when we taxed ourselves twenty millions...to get rid of negro slavery,” it was an act of “self-sacrificing” virtue.<sup>15</sup> He cited that particular instance in order to call for a more general reorientation of priorities in foreign policy. For Britain, then, “incomparably the most conscientious of all nations,” considerations of international morality should supercede that “meanest and worst” attitude toward intervention in which only considerations of financial interests prevail.<sup>16</sup>

The standards that Mill defined for this international morality were based on an overarching, roughly drawn scale of civilizations, in which nations were ranked by their “degree of civilization” and “grade of social improvement.”<sup>17</sup> Each nation, he believed, exemplified a “distinct phase of humanity.”<sup>18</sup> Relating nations to individuals, he observed that nations “are serviceable to the general improvement, in the same manner as the individualities of persons.”<sup>19</sup> As a result, Mill’s view of the project of “civilizing” involved, in J.M. Robson’s words, “the moralizing of individuals in society.”<sup>20</sup> “Advancing civilization,” he believed, could be achieved through “training,” a kind of national education guided either by indigenous or foreign efforts.<sup>21</sup> The main features of civilization could be discerned from counterexamples: “Whatever be the characteristics of what we call savage life,” he explained, “the contrary of these, or the qualities which society puts on as it throws off these, constitute civilization.”<sup>22</sup> Slavery, for Mill, was deeply connected to the status of a civilization. It was a feature of “the more backward countries,” where property was “entirely concentrated in a small number of hands,” the remainder of the people being “serfs, stripped and tortured at pleasure by one master, and pillaged by a hundred.”<sup>23</sup> A vital sign of high civilization was a broad “diffusion of property and intelligence.”<sup>24</sup> In an impassioned rebuke to Thomas Carlyle’s 1849 essay in *Fraser’s Magazine* disputing the “rights of Negroes,” Mill placed the question of slavery in a broad historical context of civilizational progress. “The history of human improvement,” he contended, “is the record of a struggle” in which “more and more of human life [is] rescued from the iniquitous dominion of the law of might.”<sup>25</sup> In that history of progress, “the occupation of this age” was the abolition of “despotism,” and the signature achievement of that struggle was slave emancipation. Carlyle had committed a “true work of the devil” by lending legitimacy to “owners of human flesh” in a place where despotism still flourished – the American South.<sup>26</sup>

Different levels of civilization called for different relationships between nations. To suppose, Mill argued, “that the same international customs, and the same rules of international morality, can obtain between one civilized nation and another, and between civilized nations and barbarians,” would be “a grave error.”<sup>27</sup> Respect for sovereignty – those “sacred duties which civilized nations owe to the independence and nationality of each other” – should not apply to civilized nations’ interactions with “barbarians.”<sup>28</sup> In Mill’s system, if nationality and

independence were “either a certain evil, or a questionable good” for a given people, the otherwise sacred duties that civilized nations owed to one another were “not binding.”<sup>29</sup> Instead, a civilized nation, in Mill’s view, had the mandate, and even the duty, to enforce a beneficent despotism over a barbarian nation, in order to advance that lower civilization toward a stage at which it would be worthy of sovereignty.

Having established those parameters for the conduct of nations in international affairs, Mill then sought to “establish some rule or criterion” under which one nation should or should not interfere in the internal civil conflict of another.<sup>30</sup> On the one hand, there was much to be said for the doctrine that a nation should assist another in “throwing off oppression and gaining free institutions”; on the other hand, Mill saw strong arguments for a doctrine holding that “each should be left to help itself.” More specifically, the question at stake was, whether one country “may justifiably aid the people of another country in struggling for liberty.”<sup>31</sup> Whether such an intervention was justified, Mill argued, depended, first, on whether the struggle for liberty was against a “native” (i.e., domestic) or a foreign power; and second, whether the people engaged in the struggle were “capable of defending and making good use of free institutions.”<sup>32</sup> Intervention was not justified when the struggle was against a native oppressor. In such a case, non-intervention served to test the fitness of the oppressed for liberty:

If they have not sufficient love of liberty to be able to wrest it from merely domestic oppressors, the liberty which is bestowed on them by other hands than their own, will have nothing real, nothing permanent. No people ever remained free, but because it was determined to be so; because neither its rulers nor any other party in the nation could compel it to be otherwise.<sup>33</sup>

If the people do demonstrate such “fitness,” but are held down by a foreign, more dominant nation, intervention on their behalf, Mill believed, was then justified. But in a civil war limited only to native warring parties, freedom from the oppressor could not be “achieved *for* them,” because in doing so, the intervening nation could not be assured that the action, even if successful in the short term, would ultimately be “good for the people themselves.”<sup>34</sup> As a consequence, those people would have little prospect for truly escaping despotism. Liberty could not be given, but must be attained autonomously, if it was to be “real” and “permanent.”<sup>35</sup> The only assistance

that can be offered by a foreign nation in such a situation, Mill contended, was indirect and non-material, in the form of moral support.

### III

Turning to the American Civil War, we can see how Mill applied the theoretical framework he had outlined before the war began in order to determine both the moral dimensions, and the legitimacy, of a potential British intervention in the American conflict. We also see how Mill undermined the arguments of British writers and politicians supporting the Confederacy by inverting the assertion that the South could rightly claim to represent the cause of liberty against an aggressive Northern oppressor. At the same time, though, Mill remained devoted to a policy of non-intervention, on the principle that, as the American conflict was one between two native parties, those who struggled for real liberty against native oppressors could only achieve it independently of foreign intervention.

Even after Queen Victoria's proclamation of neutrality in May 1861, issued mainly to prevent an accident at sea from inadvertently engaging European nations in the war, divisions in Britain over which side to support in the conflict persisted.<sup>36</sup> Those divisions were largely determined by how the roles of the conflicting American parties were understood and defined in relation to one another. As Douglas Lorimer has observed, "the proclaimed anti-slavery sentiments of England appeared to be no bar to pro-Southern sympathies."<sup>37</sup> The fact that the Southern states had seceded led many in Britain to view the war as a Southern rebellion against a Northern oppressor.<sup>38</sup> In this view, the South was engaged in a battle for freedom and self-determination, which suggested to some that Britain should provide moral support, or intervene on behalf of, the oppressed Confederacy in its struggle for liberty and independence. Those who were convinced that Britain should support the Confederacy found affirmation among a number of leading British politicians. From their view, the South's claim to a struggle for liberty replaced the issue of slavery as the essential driving force of the conflict. As Frank Merli has written, "the rise or fall of [Confederate president] Jefferson Davis's government depended more than he knew on the ways the British government perceived his effort."<sup>39</sup>

Two representative speeches from British political leaders illustrate the prominence of this particular interpretation of the Civil War, especially in its early stages. In October 1861, only

months after Britain's proclamation of neutrality, Foreign Secretary Lord Russell explained his view of the situation at a banquet in Newcastle as follows:

We now see two parties contending together, not upon the question of slavery though that, I believe, is the original cause of the conflict – not contending with respect to Free Trade and Protection, but contending...the one side for empire and the other for power.<sup>40</sup>

Both Russell and Prime Minister Palmerston considered the North an aggressive imperial power, which sought to expand its oppressive dominion over the struggling states of the South. In October of the following year, 1862, Chancellor of the Exchequer William Gladstone reiterated Russell's vision in a speech in Newcastle he later struggled to live down, relegating the issue of slavery to a distant background, while lending legitimacy to the Southern struggle for nationhood:

We may have our own opinions about slavery; we may be for or against the South; but there is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the South have made an army; they are making it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either, they have made a nation.<sup>41</sup>

For Gladstone and many others, the Confederacy had established itself as more than an insurgency; in its struggle for liberty and independence, it had proven itself deserving of recognition as a sovereign nation.

On at least two or three occasions from 1861 to 1863, British hostility toward the Union, and sympathy for the Confederacy, led to talk of actual war against Lincoln's army. One of the most serious of these occasions, the *Trent* affair of November 1861 – in which Union Navy Captain Charles Wilkes breached international law by forcing two Confederate diplomats off the British steamship – set in motion preparations for war in Britain. Mill, then, faced the difficult challenge of countering an opposition not only sympathetic to the Confederate cause, but actively hostile to the Union. After the *Trent* affair was resolved peacefully, Mill responded in February 1862 with his essay "The Contest in America," aiming to prevent future tensions by reversing British sympathies. Charles Adams notes that "probably no other article on the Civil War received so much attention, both within Britain and abroad."<sup>2</sup> The article, reprinted in full by *Harper's Monthly* that April, was in part a reply to Charles Dickens, who had claimed in his weekly journal *All the Year Round* that the Civil War was caused by tax and money issues, rather

than slavery.<sup>3</sup> Mill's main purpose was to invert the dimensions of the conflict as Russell, Gladstone, and others had delineated them. "The moral relations of the two parties," Mill observed, "are misplaced, almost reversed, in Earl Russell's dictum."<sup>44</sup> Mill believed that British support for the Confederacy had been due both to "a complete misunderstanding of principles," and to "an utter ignorance of facts."<sup>45</sup> The ignorance of the public, he pointed out, "was shared by the Foreign Minister."<sup>46</sup> Mill sought to convince the politicians, the public, and Confederate "apologists" like Dickens that slavery was indeed the central cause of the conflict, that the South, and not the North, was the aggressive oppressor, and that it was the Northerners who could rightly claim the cause of liberty.

#### IV

To re-frame the war in those terms, Mill defined the Southern cause as the indefinite extension of slavery, not as a purported struggle for liberty. To those who claimed that the war was "about tariffs, and similar trumpery," Mill's reply was categorical: "the object of the fight was slavery."<sup>47</sup> To intervene against the Union, then, would be, in effect, to enter a war "in alliance with, and...in defense and propagation of, slavery."<sup>48</sup> The war constituted "the critical juncture which was to decide whether slavery should blaze up afresh with increased vigor, or be trodden out."<sup>49</sup> In this view, the South threatened the moral progress of American civilization by imposing upon it an expansionist and, importantly, a "barbarous and barbarizing" force.<sup>50</sup> Mill's application of the term "barbarian" to white Southern slaveholders indicated that, for him, the designation need not be restricted racially, and could be used to refer to aristocratic whites as easily as non-white imperial subjects. For Mill, the Confederacy did not have "the same moral rights" as a civilized society, and was not, therefore, "fit to take its place in the community of nations."<sup>51</sup> In that way, Mill positioned the two sides in the American conflict near opposing ends of his scale of civilization. In accordance with his principles of international morality, then, Mill defined the South as unworthy of sovereignty. Despite attempting to invert British perceptions of the conflict, though, Mill did not go so far as to propose an escalation from moral support to military support for the North. Drawing on the principles of his philosophy of non-intervention, he maintained that if the Northern struggle for liberty against its native oppressor was to be "real" and "permanent," and if it was to mark a substantial moral improvement in American civilization, the North would have to achieve that progress by its own independent efforts.

Mill's conception of the South as an aggressive, barbarian opponent of Northern liberty and progress was based on his understanding of the inherent nature of slavery as a necessarily expansionary institution. When people spoke "as if separation meant nothing more than the independence of the seceding States," they misunderstood that expansionary dimension of slavery.<sup>52</sup> A successful Southern secession would have far reaching consequences. "Slavery will not let freedom alone," Mill argued in a letter to John Elliot Cairnes in August 1861. "American slavery depends upon a perpetual extension of its field; it must go on barbarizing the world more and more."<sup>53</sup> Cairnes, an Irish political economist and frequent correspondent of Mill's throughout the Civil War, lent support to Mill's position in his 1862 book, *The Slave Power: Its Character, Career, and Probable Designs*. Cairnes' analysis of slavery as an economic institution led him to conclude that it was "impelled by exigencies inherent in its position and circumstances to a constant extension of its territorial domain."<sup>54</sup> In his review of Cairnes' study, Mill expanded Cairnes' conclusions with additional arguments for the implications of a continual expansion of slavery, in terms of the moral progress of civilization, in America and beyond. Cairnes noted that slavery, being "the most formidable antagonist to civilized progress," caused a society to "gravitate inevitably toward barbarism." "Instead of raising themselves to the level of free societies," Mill added, slaveholding societies "are urged by the most imperious motives to drag down, if possible, free societies to the level of themselves."<sup>55</sup> For Mill, a lower, retrograde civilization was threatening to reverse American moral progress. Moreover, because conquest was "the sole aim of their policy," the Confederate threat would soon "drag down" even South America and the West Indies, and could eventually reopen the African slave trade world-wide.<sup>56</sup> At that point, Mill told Cairnes in a letter, a "general crusade of civilized nations" would constitute a justified intervention.<sup>57</sup>

In the meantime, however, the struggle to protect American liberty from an encroaching, barbarian oppressor was, based on Mill's understanding of the means by which civilizations most effectively make progress, best kept as an exclusively American effort. Britain could be called upon, in the event of a Confederate victory, to enter a broader crusade for civilization. But until then, Britain could, in fact, be more effective in promoting the moral progress of American civilization not by achieving liberty for the North, but by allowing them to "brave labour and danger for their liberation" and to exhibit their "sufficient love of liberty," in order to "wrest it

from merely domestic oppressors.”<sup>58</sup> The war was an example of the kind of “arduous struggle to become free” that Mill had envisioned in “A Few Words on Non-Intervention,” in which a people, “by their own efforts,” stirred the “feelings and the virtues needful for maintaining freedom.” The Civil War was that kind of “school” in which the American people would “learn to value their country’s interest above their own.”<sup>59</sup> The moral progress of American civilization, for Mill, was best achieved through “trial,” and through victory.<sup>60</sup> If the Union prevailed in “one of the severest trials which a nation has ever undergone,” Mill wrote to John Lothrop Motley, U.S. Minister to Austria in 1862, “the whole futurity of mankind will assume a brighter aspect.” If they failed, that future would be “very much darkened.”<sup>61</sup> Mill utilized those principles from “A Few Words on Non-Intervention” in his 1862 essay “The Contest in America,” to draw a picture of the war as a grave trial, and thus an extraordinary opportunity, for United States to ascend the ladder of civilizations.

As “The Contest in America” reveals, Mill saw in the Northern struggle against slavery a beneficial revitalization of American democracy and moral fervor. Progress for Mill could not be affected in a state of stagnant indifference. As he wrote in a letter to Cairnes in 1863, “the danger of American democracy was stagnation – a general settling into a dead level of low morality and feeling.” A British intervention would serve to redistribute the weight of the moral burden, and, as a consequence, prevent what Mill called the “strenuous antagonism” that encourages the full flourishing of that “feeling.”<sup>62</sup> He repeatedly emphasized the importance of preserving Northern autonomy in facing this trial:

A war to protect other human beings against tyrannical injustice; a war to give victory to *their* ideas of right and good, and which is *their own* war, carried on for an honest purpose by *their free choice* – is often the means of *their* regeneration.<sup>63</sup>

In Mill’s system of international morality, a civilized nation may be called upon to raise the status of a barbarian civilization, but should not do so for another civilized nation. As a civilized nation, the Union must improve itself. In the event of a Northern victory, Mill contended, “the Free States will have raised themselves to that elevated position in the scale of morality and dignity.” That national elevation would be achieved through “great sacrifices consciously made in a virtuous cause,” which could only be brought about “by their own voluntary effort.”<sup>64</sup>

Mill was reassured in the accuracy of his interpretation of the Civil War – as a conflict driven principally by the issue of slavery – when Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862. In a letter of October 1862, he wrote, “no American, I think, can have received” that Proclamation “with more exultation than I did.”<sup>65</sup> Beginning in 1863, Mill began to turn more of his attention to what complications might arise in the aftermath of the war, in order for the Union to succeed in truly eliminating slavery from the United States. Mill remained concerned throughout the war and afterwards that moral stagnation might return to the North after victory. If so, he feared that the Northern struggle could ultimately fail to permanently abolish slavery in America, by being “too gentle” with the defeated.<sup>66</sup> As he had urged in a letter of September 1863, the more “complete” the victory over slavery was, “the more thoroughly the war will have become one of principle, tending to elevate the national character.”<sup>67</sup> In June 1864, Mill was compelled by that fear to issue a warning in the Philadelphia newspaper *Our Daily Fare*. “The most serious danger,” he wrote, “is that the national mind should go to sleep on the self-satisfied notion that all is right with it.”<sup>68</sup>

For the “great awakening of the public conscience” in the United States to endure, Mill believed that it would have to be reflected in renewed and expanded democratic institutions.<sup>69</sup> During the war, Mill had begun to consider the fundamental political and legal changes that would be required in order for the United States to institutionalize the abolition of slavery. First, he argued for constitutional revisions, in order to prohibit the extension of slavery into territories and new states, and to “abrogate that bad provision of the Constitution” in which a slave was counted as three-fifths of a person. Without “fair representation of minorities,” a society risked being “barbarized down.” Second, he argued that slaves, once freed, must be enabled to hold property, so as to establish in the Southern states a “free population in sympathy with the rest of the Union.” Third, Mill argued that in order for the Northern victory to ensure the abolition of slavery, the slaveholders “must be effectually outnumbered at the polling-places.” To do so, Mill advocated the granting of “full equality of political rights to negroes,” in the North and in the South.<sup>70</sup>

Achieving such a measure of political equality would require instituting “equal laws” and an “impartial administration of justice between colour and colour,” as well as electoral suffrage,

the right to serve on juries, and an equal voice in choosing judges. If those changes could be established, Mill wrote, “the opening words of the Declaration of Independence will cease to be a reproach to the nation founded by its authors.”<sup>71</sup> For even though the Civil War was, for Mill, primarily a trial of Northern liberty against the barbarism of Southern slaveholders, the slaves too, after all, had endured their trial, and were now fit for liberty. With the defeat of the Confederacy, Mill foresaw a new “starting point of a moral progress” in the United States which, despite uncertainties ahead, was far more likely to succeed for lack of foreign intervention, the Civil War being their own war, fought for their own regeneration.<sup>72</sup>

### Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> The author wishes to thank Prof. David Armitage for his guidance and for his comments on an earlier draft of this article.

<sup>2</sup> J.S. Mill, “The Contest in America” (February 1862). In J.M. Robson, ed., *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* [hereafter: *Collected Works*] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963-1991), 33 Vols. Vol. XXI, 141.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in R. J. M. Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Blackett, *Divided Hearts*, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Mill, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention” (December 1859), in *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 118.

<sup>6</sup> Mill, *Autobiography*, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, 266.

<sup>7</sup> Mill, “The Contest in America,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 131.

<sup>8</sup> Mill, “Civilization,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 120.

<sup>9</sup> Mill, “State of Society in America” (January 1836), in *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 95.

<sup>10</sup> Mill, “De Tocqueville on Democracy in America” (October 1840), in *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 197.

<sup>11</sup> Mill, “State of Society in America,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 105.

<sup>12</sup> Mill, “A Few Words on Non-Intervention,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 112.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 114-15.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in J.M. Robson, “Civilization and Culture as Moral Concepts,” in John Skorupski, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Mill* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 355.

<sup>19</sup> Mill, “State of Society in America,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 94.

<sup>20</sup> Robson, “Civilization and Culture,” 362.

<sup>21</sup> Mill, “Civilization,” *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 123.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>25</sup> Mill, “The Negro Question” (January 1850), *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 87.

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- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 94-95.
- <sup>27</sup> Mill, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 118.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 119.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 119.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid., 118.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., 114, 121.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 123.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., 122.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., 122.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., 122.
- <sup>36</sup> See Frank J. Merli, *The Alabama, British Neutrality, and the American Civil War* (Indiana University Press, 2004), 7.
- <sup>37</sup> Douglas Lorimer, "The Rise of Anti-Slavery Sentiment in English Reactions to the American Civil War," *The Historical Journal* 19, 2 (June 1976), 406.
- <sup>38</sup> See Stefan Collini, Introduction to *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, xxii.
- <sup>39</sup> Frank Merli, *The Alabama, British Neutrality, and the American Civil War*, ed. David M. Fahey (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 14.
- <sup>40</sup> Quoted in Mill, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 803 (footnote 21).
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid., 803, footnote 22.
- <sup>42</sup> Charles Adams, *Slavery, Secession, and Civil War: Views from the United Kingdom and Europe, 1856-1865* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 172.
- <sup>43</sup> Adams, *Slavery, Secession, and Civil War*, 172.
- <sup>44</sup> Mill, "The Slave Power" (October 1862), *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 159.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 145.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid. 159.
- <sup>47</sup> Mill, "The Contest in America," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 132.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 127.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., 128.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 141.
- <sup>51</sup> Mill, Letter to John Elliot Cairnes of 25 November, 1861. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 750.
- <sup>52</sup> Mill, "The Contest in America," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 139.
- <sup>53</sup> Mill, Letter to John Elliot Cairnes of 18 August, 1861. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 738.
- <sup>54</sup> Quoted in Mill, "The Slave Power," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 146.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., 146, 151.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., 155, 157.
- <sup>57</sup> Mill, Letter to Cairnes of 25 November, 1861. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 750.
- <sup>58</sup> Mill, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 122.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid., 123.
- <sup>60</sup> See Letter to John Lothrop Motley of 17 September, 1862. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 796.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid., 796.
- <sup>62</sup> Mill, Letter to Cairnes of 7 February, 1863. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 835.
- <sup>63</sup> Mill, "The Contest in America," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, 142 [emphases added].
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., 142.
- <sup>65</sup> Mill, Letter to John Lothrop Motley of 31 October, 1862. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 800.
- <sup>66</sup> Mill, Letter to Parke Godwin of 15 May, 1865. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, 1008.
- <sup>67</sup> Mill, Letter to John Appleton of 24 September, 1863. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, 885.
- <sup>68</sup> Mill, "The Civil War in the United States" (June 1864), *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, 1205.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid., 1205.

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<sup>70</sup> See Mill, “The Contest in America,” 140; “The Slave Power,” 163-164; Letter to Parke Godwin of 15 May, 1865. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, 1008.

<sup>71</sup> Mill, Letter to Parke Godwin of 15 May, 1865. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, 1008; Letter to Rowland G. Hazard of 15 November, 1865. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, 1117.

<sup>72</sup> Mill, Letter to Joseph H. Allen of 9 February, 1865. In *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, 992.

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