

quiring fewer comforts than our negroes. Their sad, downcast air, is in strange contrast with the ever-cheerful buoyancy of the blacks; even their singing has the wall of death in its slow, melancholy notes.

If Catholic or Protestant zeal would establish a mission and school here, it would command any number of pupils and proselytes, and would, beyond all doubt, radiate more light to a larger population than any one mission on either continent—Why no mission school and press should be established on the Rio Grande, for the semi-heathen of the border, while they are penetrating Siam and scaling Lebanon, passes my understanding. Why do the Christians of the North pass by their own starving household to carry their food and wine to distant and unwilling strangers. Yours, ever.

Peon Slavery on the Rio Grande--Letter from the Border.

The Senate recently refused to decree the abolition of Peon Slavery in New-Mexico, because no information was at hand of the existence of such Slavery in that region. The following is a portion of a letter just received from 'Cora Montgomery,' an ingrain Texan, whose efforts in favor of Annexation were most zealous and effective, and some of whose writings against the Wilmot Proviso have been reprinted in pamphlet form and widely circulated by the Tammany Hall Committees. On the subject of Peon Slavery on our side of the Rio Grande below El Paso, she writes to a lady friend in this city as follows:

EAGLE PASS, (Upper Rio Grande,) Tuesday, May 21.
My soul is sick of the sights and sounds of Slavery. You know right well how long and faithfully I have pleaded and defended what I religiously believe to be the Right of the South, how almost alone I urged the doctrine of Non-Interference with the Slavery Compromises in the Northern Press, when even the South was hardly stirring in self-defense, and to all this I still hold with every pulse of my heart, but I abhor the presence of Slavery in my own household. Free, willing, well-paid service I will have, or I will be my own servant forever.

I have as lovely and dear a resting-place here on the banks of the Rio Grande as any wayfaring mortal can desire, and if it were really and altogether my own I could bar my dwelling and its enclosure from the intrusion of the lash, but I am not in sole possession, and my resource would be instant flight to my paternal acres whose green sod has—I thank Heaven and my fathers for it—never been turned by enforced labor—whose precious shades have never resounded with the scream of torture—if I had not in reach a surer asylum of peace and independence. My cool, delicious tent of reed peeps forth through the boughs of a mulberry grove, to watch the meeting of the beautiful Mexican river Escondida with the Rio Grande at the far-famed Eagle Pass, the gateway of the Overland Emigration from the southern Mississippi and the Gulf coast to California. Under those clustering shades there is none to molest nor make me afraid. Not but what there are men in the South manly enough to insult a woman, as well as at the North, but the reed tent is really my own, and there are brave and true men near enough to guard its precincts from Indians, prairie-dogs and other wild beasts.

But when I speak of shutting out Slavery from my range of domestic privacy, I do not mean Negro Slavery alone. The Peon Slavery of Mexico is—whether from prejudices of habit, or the mild winning demeanor of the Mexicans—much more repugnant to my feelings. There are few Negro Slaves on the Rio Grande, because they have but to cross the ponds at low water and be free. The only negro Slave I know of near Eagle Pass is at my door, a willful, wayward boy, who, if he were a white apprentice at the North, would be likely to receive as many stripes as he gets from his master here—for he is a just and humane gentleman—and I positively know girls of the age of this black boy, have been whipped more severely at the New-York House of Refuge for slighter offenses. Yet I would not live in hearing of the brutal lash anywhere while I have the power to escape from it, and but for my reed tent refuge, you would be hearing instead of reading my protest of disgust.

We have a man here on the American side who deals in Mexican slaves. His name and some details are at your husband's service, if you choose, hereafter; but let me now give you a hint of the system. Anybody of the working-class can be sold for debt in Mexico; and these peons receive the worst fare and the hardest treatment of any slaves on this Continent. When they get this side of the river they should be free, but are often too timid and ignorant (especially the women) to avail themselves of the fact. I am not certain that this man entices the peons to run away from their masters in his trips to the other side of the river, but it somehow happens that excellent servants of this class do escape and take shelter in his house. So far so good. If I would not abet the flight of a bond-servant, still less would I aid in persuading a poor Indian girl that her chains were binding on our own soil. Not so this trader in peons.

He makes some arrangement with the master, who is glad to get anything, and hires out the poor slave until this debt is cancelled to his satisfaction. In this way he makes some money, and gets his own house served cheaply. If a corrupt public opinion could be created, we should have the poor system of Slavery taking root on this side of the river, but that, I think and hope, is impossible. Thus far, the advance of our line westward has been an advance of Emancipation; if it left servitude in the rear it crushed it in front; and, whatever may be the consequences to me personally—and they cannot be altogether pleasant—I shall not fail to invoke the attention of the Press of the Union to every approach toward the re-enslavement of the peons we have liberated. They are a quiet, respectful, well-spoken race, submitting to more exactions and re-