“When the boat, creaking, and groaning, and puffing, had loosed from the wharf, and was beginning slowly to strain herself along, the woman returned to her old seat. The trader was sitting there, the child was gone!

“Why, why, where?” she began, in bewildered surprise.

“Lucy,” said the trader, “your child’s gone; you may as well know it first as last. You see, I know’d you couldn’t take him down south; and I got a chance to sell him to a first-rate family, that’ll raise him better than you can.”

The trader had arrived at that stage of Christian and political perfection which has been recommended by some preachers and politicians of the north, lately, in which he had completely overcome every humane weakness and prejudice. His heart was exactly where yours, sir, and mine could be brought, with proper effort and cultivation. The wild look of anguish and utter despair that the woman cast on him might have disturbed one less practised; but he was used to it. He had seen that same look hundreds of times. You can get used to such things, too, my friend; and it is the great object of recent efforts to make our whole northern community used to them, for the glory of the Union. So the trader only regarded the mortal anguish which he saw working in those dark features, those clenched hands, and suffocating breathings, as necessary incidents of the trade, and merely calculated whether she was going to scream, and get up a commotion on the boat; for, like other supporters of our peculiar institution, he decidedly disliked agitation.

But the woman did not scream. The shot had passed too straight and direct through the heart, for cry or tear.

Dizzily she sat down. Her slack hands fell lifeless by her side. Her eyes looked straight forward, but she saw nothing. All the noise and hum of the boat, the groaning of the machinery, mingled dreamily to her bewildered ear; and the poor, dumb-stricken heart had neither cry not tear to show for its utter misery. She was quite calm.

The trader, who, considering his advantages, was almost as humane as some of our politicians, seemed to feel called on to administer such consolation as the case admitted of.

“I know this yer comes kinder hard, at first, Lucy,” said he; “but such a smart, sensible gal as you are, won’t give way to it. You see it’s necessary, and can’t be helped!”

“Oh! don’t, Mas’r, don’t!” said the woman, with a voice like one that is smothering.

“You’re a smart wench, Lucy,” he persisted; “I mean to do well by ye, and get ye a nice place down river; and you’ll soon get another husband, such a likely gal as you.”

“Oh! Mas’r, if you only won’t talk to me now,” said the woman, in a voice of such quick and living anguish that the trader felt that there was something at present in the case beyond his style of operation. He got up, and the woman turned away, and buried her head in her cloak...”
Uncle Tom’s Cabin
(Northern Editorial)

Date: April 15, 1852

Explanation of the Source: This was a positive editorial from the Northern newspaper (The National Era) over the book, Uncle Tom's Cabin.

“For thrilling delineation of character, and power of description, this work is unrivalled. It has been denominated, and with truth, THE STORY OF THE AGE! The fact that ten thousand copies have been sold in two weeks is evidence sufficient of its unbounded popularity. Three paper mills are constantly at work, manufacturing the paper, and three power presses are working twenty-four hours per day, in printing it, and more than one hundred bookbinders are incessantly plying their trade, to bind them, and still it has been impossible as yet to supply the demand. Testimonials of the strongest kind, numerous enough to fill a volume, have already appeared in the public journals. We have room only for the following, from the Congregationalist of the 2d inst.:

"We conceive, the, that in writing 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe has done more to diffuse real knowledge of the facts and workings of American Slavery, and to arouse the sluggish nation to shake off the curse, and abate the wrong than has been accomplished by all the orations, and anniversaries, and arguments, and documents, which the last ten years have been the witness of. Let nobody by afraid of it because it does not claim to be a memoir, or a table of statistics. It is the interlacing of a thousand memoirs, and the very quintessence of infinite statistics. It takes no extreme views. It does not seek to seize upon the most horrible atrocities, and brand the whole system as worse than it is. It is fair, and generous, and calm, and candid. A slave-holder might read it without anger, but not easily without a secret abhorrence of the system which he himself upholds. It brings out, quietly and collaterally, those incidental features of servitude which are usually little thought of, but which are the overflow of its cup of abominations. We look upon the writing of this book as providential, and upon it as the best missionary God has yet sent into the field to plead for his poor and oppressed children of the South. Such a book was a necessity of the age, and had to be written, and we are grateful to God that he put the writing of it into the hands of one who has interwoven Evangelical influences with every page of its narrative, and compressed many a Gospel sermon into its field and fireside converse. Its appeal to our sympathies is genuine. It artlessly pictures facts, and the facts make us feel. We have never read a story of more power. We doubt if anybody has. The human being who can read it through dry eyes, is commended to Barnum."

Uncle Tom’s Cabin
(ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION)

By: Anonymous, The Daily Dispatch, VA
Date: 1852

Explanation of the Source: The Southern backlash against Uncle Tom’s Cabin was predictably fierce. This is a Southern Editorial against Uncle Tom’s Cabin in the Newspaper, The Daily Dispatch.
“There seems to be no end to the expedients which the fanatics of the North are determined to resort to, to disturb the peace of the country, and produce, if they possibly can, the dissolution of the Union. Having failed in this generation, they are bending their efforts to poison the minds of those who are to come, while they are yet too young to be conscious of the dangerous doctrines to which they are to be committed. A more hateful execrable plot against the happiness and safety of millions of human beings—against the government itself—against society, and the hopes of man—was never conceived by human heart nor carried on by human intelligence. The infernal work is not for a moment still—the laborers do not rest a day from their toil. Like the evil angels whom they resemble they are awake at all times, at all times pursuing their diabolical plans, at all times exulting in the contemplation of the misery they hope to create, at all times hardening the hearts of their pupils against their bretheren of the same color. What is to come of all this, we cannot pretend to tell; what may happen in a new generation, educated as that which is coming on will have been, we cannot predict. But the immediate effect we can well enough imagine. It will operate heavily upon the colored class of the South, both slave and free—it will cause laws to be enacted and enforced which will cut up their few remaining privileges by the roots—it will not advance emancipation one iota.

We subjoin the following remarks of the New York Herald:

ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION.—Abolition meetings are being held all over the North. The most violent language is used against all who differ in opinion with the agitators. Every man who does not agree with them is sent directly to the bottomless pit the moment he dies, like Judge Woodbury and Judge Story. In fact, they will hardly wait for a man's death to send him to the devil—they want him despatched to pandemonium "right away." As another sign of the times, the fact is very remarkable that the work of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," selling a thousand copies per day, cannot half supply the demand for this species of work—anti-slavery literature—and there is a host of other publications of the same character now on the anvil, worked up red hot by the literary blacksmiths. We would not be surprised if some of these "sons of Vulcan" would fabricate a history of the renowned anti-slavery Johnson, now in the State prison for his crimes; it would be highly edifying to all candidates for a secretariatship in a society, and all aspirants to the distinction of a place in the State prison. There are many, indeed, now connected with the Anti-Slavery Society, who ought to follow him there; and some of them, perhaps, may do so much sooner than they dream of.

The Northern States will soon be inundated by a flood of abolition novels, and the effect upon the opinions, the politics, the peace and happiness of the country, is beyond calculation. The Union itself will become again perilled by this tremendous revival of anti-slavery sentiment, and the toil and up-hill work that resulted in the Compromise measures will go for nothing, and the battle of the Union and the Constitution will have to be fought again."

**Uncle Tom’s Cabin is a Caricature**

By: the Southern Press Review  
Date: 1851

**Explanation of the Source:** The Southern backlash against Uncle Tom's Cabin was predictably fierce. This review is typical of the response.

“We have just finished the perusal of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” a work in two volumes, of more than three hundred pages each, which appeared originally in the National Era, in a succession of numbers, and has recently been re-published in its present form. The papers inform us that already, within eleven weeks of its re-publication, eighty thousand copies of it have been sold at the rate of a dollar to a dollar and a quarter per copy.

The authoress of this work is HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, wife of Professor Stowe, and daughter of Dr. Beecher. She resided for many years, before and after marriage, in Cincinnati. “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” is an anti-slavery novel. It is a caricature of slavery. It selects for description the most odious features of slavery—the
escape and pursuit of fugitive slaves, the sale and separation of domestic slaves, the separation of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. It portrays the slaves of the story as more moral, intelligent, courageous, elegant and beautiful than their masters and mistresses; and where it concedes any of these qualities to the whites, it is to such only as are, even though slaveholders, opposed to slavery. Those in favor of slavery are slave-traders, slave-catchers, and the most weak, depraved, cruel and malignant of beings and demons...

The attack on the South is a novel—a romance. The system of the South relies on fact—the sentiment of the North flies to fiction...Now, what is the value of a work of fiction in this controversy? What would be its value even if even incident it contains were founded on fact, as the writer intimates? Why, just nothing at all...

Mrs. Stowe may have seen, during her residence in Cincinnati, in the arrival and departure of emigrants, and in the trade and navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi, more families separated forever; she must know that from that single city more husbands, brothers, sons and fathers have gone voluntarily, as she calls it, from wives, mothers and children, and, in the pursuit of trade, met with untimely death by fevers and cholera on the river, or in the wilderness, leaving their families to suffer from want, their children to perish from neglect, than probably all who have been separated by the slave trade. Why don’t she write a romance against emigration, and navigation and commerce? They are all permitted by our laws.

But Mrs. Stowe complains that slavery gives to one man the power over another to do these things. Well, does not freedom, as she calls it? Cannot the landlord of Cincinnati turn out a family from his dwelling if unable to pay the rent? Cannot those who have food and raiment refuse them to such as are unable to buy? And does not Mrs. Stowe herself virtually do these very things? Suppose a poor man were to present himself to her and say, “Madam, I am a poor man with a large family, and we are destitute. And unless you prevent it, I shall be compelled to-morrow to hire myself as a hand on a flatboat to New Orleans, and besides exposing myself to the cholera and yellow fever, leave my wife in delicate health, my oldest daughter to the dangers of a large city without a protector, and my young ones to the diseases that depopulate the infancy of this place every summer. Now, I have read your novel, and I understand that you have already received a large fortune by the copy-right of it. Now, we are equals—except that I have none of your education, and that is not my fault. Yet somehow or other the laws of this free soil State allow you to keep thousands of dollars in bank which you do not need, whilst I, for the want of a small part of it, am doomed to separation from all that I hold dear.” We doubt whether Mrs. Stowe would recognize the cogency of this argument. But if she would, the laws of this country do not.”