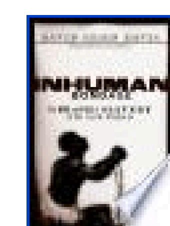

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could hardly bear to see them handled and examined like cattle; and when I heard their sobs, and saw the big tears roll down their cheeks at the thought of being separated, I could not refrain from weeping with them."[2]

Isaac Holmes, another English critic, was also appalled by the vice and corruption he saw when traveling through the South in 1823, following the explosive debates in Congress over admitting Missouri as a slave state:

> The Americans may boast of the rights of man, the great law of nature, as being the basis of their constitution; they may declaim against tyranny and oppression; yet every man who becomes a slave-holder in Missouri is a tyrant of their creation. . . . The effects of slavery are truly appalling. Where slavery exists, virtue and morality are swept away as with a flood of corruption.[3]

Of course, Holmes's England, with its exceptionally hierarchical system of social classes, was hardly free from tyranny and hypocrisy. Even many decades later, an English wage laborer who on his own prompting quit his job or moved to a new employer could easily be imprisoned for breaking a highly coercive "contract."[4] Holmes was writing at a time when British women and small children still worked on their hands and knees in unbelievably oppressive British mines. Apart from the noxious conditions in British factories and mines, there were also psychological aspects to the judgments of Britons when they thought of Americans "winning independence" from a former "mother country"—when they thought of a rebellious, English-speaking people who in the 1770s had committed a verbal and symbolic form of "regicide." By the same token, the emergence in America of so-called Jacksonian democracy presented a direct threat, similar in some ways to the Communism of the twentieth century, of bringing on class warfare in Britain and the toppling of royal and aristocratic privilege.