

CONFEDERATE CARROUSEL:  
SOUTHERN SONGS  
OF THE SIXTIES

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Reprinted from  
*The Emory University Quarterly*  
Volume VI, No. 2  
June 1950

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE, CHICAGO



## The Creed of a Propagandist: Letter from a Confederate Editor

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*Some amazingly modern views on journalism are contained in a letter written in 1864 by Henry Hotze, propaganda agent of the Confederacy in England. Mr. Harwell, who uncovered the document, is assistant librarian in charge of special collections at Emory University, Atlanta.*

IN THE TURBULENT SPRING OF 1861, among the first Southern troops to leave for the battlefields of Virginia were the élite Mobile Cadets, a military company of the socially prominent citizens of the Gulf city. Among the privates of the company was Henry Hotze, whose charm of manner and brilliancy of intellect more than compensated for his lack of Southern family background. Hotze's abilities guaranteed for him a rapid rise in the Confederate army and soon placed him in a position of responsibility in the Confederate State Department. Hardly a year after the opening of the American Civil War, Henry Hotze was the Confederacy's most effective propaganda agent and was conducting in London his own propaganda organ for the South, named *The Index*.<sup>1</sup>

Hotze was born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1834.<sup>2</sup> He came to America as

a child and was naturalized in Mobile on his 21st birthday. His intellectual accomplishments were exhibited and his thorough indoctrination into Southern ways of thinking was indicated when, at the age of 22, he published a translation and adaptation of the extreme *L'Inégalité des Races* of Count Arthur de Gobineau as *The Moral and Intellectual Diversity of Races*.<sup>3</sup> This book was a first step in the ways of propaganda that only a few years later bore out Hotze's early promise.

In 1858 Hotze was appointed by Secretary of State Lewis Cass as secretary of the American legation in Brussels. Congress, however, failed to appropriate necessary funds and, after serving as secretary and as Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels, he returned in 1859 to Mobile and found a place for himself on the

<sup>1</sup> *The Index* was published in London in semi-annual volumes from May 1, 1862 to Aug. 12, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> Biographical information concerning Hotze has been derived chiefly from an obituary editorial in the [Mobile] *Daily Register* of May 11, 1887. Acknowledgment should be made also to the master of arts thesis written at Emory University in 1948 by Robert F. Durden. An autobiographical "Three Months in the Confederate Army" was published by Hotze serially in the first volume of *The Index*.

<sup>3</sup> *The moral and intellectual diversity of races, with particular reference to their respective influence in the civil and political history of mankind*, from the French of Count A. De Gobineau: with an analytical introduction and copious historical notes, by H. Hotze; to which is added an appendix containing a summary of the latest scientific facts bearing upon the question of unity or plurality of species, by J. C. Nott, M. D., of Mobile. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1856. xvi, 512 pp. Gobineau's theories were not lost and forgotten with the military solution of the American race question but were revived by the Nazis as a basis for their nationalistic sociology.