

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## THE PRESIDENT AND THE DRAFT—VALLANDIGHAM—THE PEACE PARTY AT THE POLLS.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### THE PRESIDENT AND THE DRAFT.



URING the entire summer and autumn of 1863, Governor Seymour and his friends made the proceedings of the Government in relation to the enrollment law the object of special and vehement attack.<sup>2</sup> On the 17th of October the President made a call for 300,000 volunteers, and at the same time ordered that the draft should be made for all deficiencies which might exist on the 5th of January following, on the quotas assigned to districts by the War Department.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after this the Democratic State committee issued a circular making the military administration of the Government, and especially the law calling for troops, the object of violent attack, greatly exaggerating the demands of the Government, claiming that no credits would be allowed for those who had paid commutation, and basing these charges upon a pretended proclamation of the 27th of October which had never been issued. The President, with the painstaking care which distinguished him, prepared with his own hand the following contradiction of this misleading circular:<sup>4</sup>

The Provost-Marshal General has issued no proclamation at all. He has, in no form, announced anything recently in regard to troops in New York, except in his letter to Governor Seymour of October 21, which has been published in the newspapers of that State. It has not been announced nor decided in any form by the Provost-Marshal General, or any one else in authority of the Government, that every citizen who has paid his three hundred dollars' commutation is liable to be immediately drafted again, or that towns that have just raised the money to pay their quotas will have again to be subject to similar taxation or suffer the operation of the new conscription, nor is it probable that the like of this ever will be announced or decided.

The circular we have referred to went on to claim that the State had been thoroughly canvassed, and that the victory of the Demo-

cratic ticket was assured. But the result showed that the Democratic leaders were as far wrong in their prophecy as in their history. The Republican State ticket was elected by a majority of 30,000 over the Democratic, and the principal State of the Union decided in favor of the President the vehement controversy which had raged all the year between Seymour and Lincoln—a verdict which was repeated in the following year when Governor Seymour was a candidate for reelection.

In the early part of December the President, anxious in every way to do justice and to satisfy, if possible, the claims of Governor Seymour, consented to the appointment of a commission to inquire into the whole subject of the enrollment in New York. The principal member of the commission, chosen by Governor Seymour, was William F. Allen, his intimate friend and an ardent Democrat in politics; of the other members, General Love of Indiana was also a Democrat; Chauncey Smith of Massachusetts was a lawyer, not prominently identified with either political party. Judge Allen clearly dominated the commission, and they agreed with him in condemning the principle on which the enrollment and the draft were conducted. They reported that, instead of numbering the men of a given district capable of bearing arms and making that number the basis of the draft,—which was the course the enrolling officers, in direct obedience to the law of Congress, had pursued,—the quotas should be adjusted upon the basis of proportion to the entire population. They did not indorse the injurious attacks made by the governor upon the enrolling officers and agents, but distinctly stated that their fidelity and integrity were unimpeached. The essential point of their report was simply that the quota should be in proportion to the total population of the district, and not according to the number of valid men to be found in it. When the President required from the Provost-Marshal General his opinion upon the report, General Fry made this reasonable criticism:

The commission has evidently been absorbed by the conviction that the raising of men is, and will necessarily continue to be, equivalent to levying special taxes and raising money, and they would therefore require the same proceeds, under the en-

<sup>2</sup> See also THE CENTURY MAGAZINE for last month.—EDITOR.

<sup>3</sup> General J. B. Fry, "New York and the Conscription of 1863," p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Dated, Executive Mansion, Washington, Oct. 31, 1863. MS.

rollment act, from a district of rich women which they would from a district with the same number of men of equal means. I assume that we are looking for personal military service from those able to perform it, that we make no calls for volunteers in the sense in which the commission understand it, but that we assign to the districts under the enrollment act fair quotas of the men we have found them to contain.

The President entirely agreed with the Provost-Marshal General that it was manifestly unjust to require as many drafted men from a district that had been depleted of its young men by the patriotic impulse which filled the army at the beginning of the war as were justly called for from one that had contributed nothing to the field, a course which would have been the logical result of yielding to the demands of Governor Seymour and the recommendation of the commission. But, wishing to make all possible concessions to the State authorities, he resolved once more to reduce the quota of New York, and explained his action in a letter to the Secretary of War dated February 27, 1864.

So long as Governor Seymour remained in office he continued his warfare upon the enrollment act and the officers charged with its execution. On the 18th of July, 1864, the President made a third call for troops under the act, and the governor promptly renewed his charges and complaints. At this time, however, both he and Mr. Lincoln were candidates before the people — the one for the Presidency, and the other for the Governorship of New York; and it was probably for this reason that Mr. Seymour's correspondence was carried on at this time with the Secretary of War instead of Mr. Lincoln. But it afforded no new features; there were the same complaints of excessive quotas, of unfair, unequal, and oppressive action, as before. He said again that there had been no opportunity given to correct the enrollment, upon which the Provost-Marshal General reported that the governor had been duly informed of the opportunities to make corrections, and that an order had been issued from his own headquarters in reference to the matter. No efforts were spared by the Government to insure a rigid revision of the lists. The governor spoke with great vehemence of the disparity between the demand made upon New York and Boston, saying that in one of the cities 26 per cent. of the population was enrolled, and in the other only 12½ per cent. General Fry replied to this that the proportion of enrollment to population in Boston was not 12½ but 16.92 per cent.; that less than 17 per cent. in New York and Brooklyn were enrolled, and that, in fine, the enrollment was a mere question of fact — it was the ascertainment of the number of men of a certain de-

scription in defined areas; that the enrollments were continuously open to revision, and that any name erroneously on them would be stricken off as soon as the error was pointed out by anybody to the Board of Enrollment. He then showed that the quotas throughout New York were in fact smaller than in many other States where the proportion of men was large, and closed his report by saying that he "saw no reason why the law should not be applied to New York as well as to other States." This report Mr. Stanton<sup>1</sup> transmitted to the governor, expressing the somewhat sanguine trust that it would satisfy him that his objections against the quotas assigned to New York were not well founded. He recalled the fact that a commission had been appointed the year before with a view to ascertain whether any mistake or errors had been made by the enrolling officers, but that the commissioners bore their testimony to the fidelity with which the work was done; that with a view to harmony the President had directed a reduction in some districts, but without the increase of others recommended by the commissioners; and that a basis for the assignment being now absolutely fixed by act of Congress, the War Department had no power to change it.

The voters of New York in the autumn election decided to retire Governor Seymour to private life, and his successor, Governor Fenton, gave to the Government, during the rest of the war, a hearty and loyal support.

While the controversy between the Government and its opponents in regard to the enrollment and the draft was going on, the President, disappointed and grieved at the persistent misrepresentations of his views and his intentions by those of whom he had expected better things, and feeling that he was unable, by any power of logic or persuasion, to induce the leaders of the Democratic party to do him justice or to cooperate with him in the measures which he was convinced were for the public good, thought for a time of appealing directly to the people of the United States in defense of the conduct of the Government. He prepared a long and elaborate address, which he intended more especially for the consideration of the honest and patriotic Democrats of the North, setting forth, with his inimitable clearness of statement, the necessity for the draft, the substantial fairness of the provisions of the law, and the honesty and equity with which, as he claimed, the Government had attempted to carry it out. But, after he had finished it, doubts arose in his mind as to the propriety or the expediency of addressing the public directly in that manner, and it was never published. It is here, for the first time, printed, from Mr. Lincoln's own manuscript, and it is

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 11, 1864.

a question whether the reader will more admire the lucidity and the fairness with which the President sets forth his views, or the reserve and abnegation with which, after writing it, he resolved to suppress so admirable a paper :

“It is at all times proper that misunderstanding between the public and the public servant should be avoided ; and this is far more important now than in times of peace and tranquillity. I therefore address you without searching for a precedent upon which to do so. Some of you are sincerely devoted to the republican institutions and territorial integrity of our country, and yet are opposed to what is called the draft, or conscription.

“At the beginning of the war, and ever since, a variety of motives, pressing, some in one direction and some in the other, would be presented to the mind of each man physically fit for a soldier, upon the combined effect of which motives he would, or would not, voluntarily enter the service. Among these motives would be patriotism, political bias, ambition, personal courage, love of adventure, want of employment, and convenience, or the opposite of some of these. We already have, and have had in the service, as appears, substantially all that can be obtained upon this voluntary weighing of motives. And yet we must somehow obtain more, or relinquish the original object of the contest, together with all the blood and treasure already expended in the effort to secure it. To meet this necessity the law for the draft has been enacted. You who do not wish to be soldiers do not like this law. This is natural ; nor does it imply want of patriotism. Nothing can be so just and necessary as to make us like it if it is disagreeable to us. We are prone, too, to find false arguments with which to excuse ourselves for opposing such disagreeable things. In this case, those who desire the rebellion to succeed, and others who seek reward in a different way, are very active in accommodating us with this class of argument. They tell us the law is unconstitutional. It is the first instance, I believe, in which the power of Congress to do a thing has ever been questioned in a case when the power is given by the Constitution in express terms. Whether a power can be implied, when it is not expressed, has often been the subject of controversy ; but this is the first case in which the degree of effrontery has been ventured upon, of denying a power which is plainly and distinctly written down in the Constitution. The Constitution declares that ‘the Congress shall have power . . . to raise and support armies ; but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years.’ The whole scope of the conscription act is ‘to

raise and support armies.’ There is nothing else in it. It makes no appropriation of money, and hence the money clause just quoted is not touched by it. The case simply is, the Constitution provides that the Congress shall have power to raise and support armies ; and by this act the Congress has exercised the power to raise and support armies. This is the whole of it. It is a law made in literal pursuance of this part of the United States Constitution ; and another part of the same Constitution declares that ‘this Constitution, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, . . . shall be the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.’ Do you admit that the power is given to raise and support armies, and yet insist that by this act Congress has not exercised the power in a constitutional mode ? — has not done the thing in the right way ? Who is to judge of this ? The Constitution gives Congress the power, but it does not prescribe the mode, or expressly declare who shall prescribe it. In such case Congress must prescribe the mode, or relinquish the power. There is no alternative. Congress could not exercise the power to do the thing if it had not the power of providing a way to do it, when no way is provided by the Constitution for doing it. In fact, Congress would not have the power to raise and support armies, if even by the Constitution it were left to the option of any other, or others, to give or withhold the only mode of doing it. If the Constitution has prescribed a mode, Congress could and must follow that mode ; but, as it is, the mode necessarily goes to Congress, with the power expressly given. The power is given fully, completely, unconditionally. It is not a power to raise armies if State authorities consent ; nor if the men to compose the armies are entirely willing ; but it is a power to raise and support armies given to Congress by the Constitution, without an if.

“It is clear that a constitutional law may not be expedient or proper. Such would be a law to raise armies when no armies were needed. But this is not such. The republican institutions and territorial integrity of our country cannot be maintained without the further raising and supporting of armies. There can be no army without men. Men can be had only voluntarily or involuntarily. We have ceased to obtain them voluntarily, and to obtain them involuntarily is the draft — the conscription. If you dispute the fact, and declare that men can still be had voluntarily in sufficient numbers, prove the assertion by yourselves volunteering in such numbers, and I shall gladly give up the draft. Or if not a sufficient number, but

any one of you will volunteer, he for his single self will escape all the horrors of the draft, and will thereby do only what each one of at least a million of his manly brethren have already done. Their toil and blood have been given as much for you as for themselves. Shall it all be lost rather than that you, too, will bear your part?

"I do not say that all who would avoid serving in the war are unpatriotic; but I do think every patriot should willingly take his chance under a law, made with great care, in order to secure entire fairness. This law was considered, discussed, modified, and amended by Congress at great length, and with much labor; and was finally passed, by both branches, with a near approach to unanimity. At last, it may not be exactly such as any one man out of Congress, or even in Congress, would have made it. It has been said, and I believe truly, that the Constitution itself is not altogether such as any one of its framers would have preferred. It was the joint work of all, and certainly the better that it was so.

"Much complaint is made of that provision of the conscription law which allows a drafted man to substitute three hundred dollars for himself; while, as I believe, none is made of that provision which allows him to substitute another man for himself. Nor is the three hundred dollar provision objected to for unconstitutionality; but for inequality, for favoring the rich against the poor. The substitution of men is the provision, if any, which favors the rich to the exclusion of the poor. But this being a provision in accordance with an old and well-known practice, in the raising of armies, is not objected to. There would have been great objection if that provision had been omitted. And yet being in, the money provision really modifies the inequality which the other introduces. It allows men to escape the service who are too poor to escape but for it. Without the money provision, competition among the more wealthy might, and probably would, raise the price of substitutes above three hundred dollars, thus leaving the man who could raise only three hundred dollars no escape from personal service. True, by the law as it is, the man who cannot raise so much as three hundred dollars, nor obtain a personal substitute for less, cannot escape; but he can come quite as near escaping as he could if the money provision were not in the law. To put it another way: is an unobjectionable law which allows only the man to escape who can pay a thousand dollars, made objectionable by adding a provision that any one may escape who can pay the smaller sum of three hundred dollars? This is the exact difference at this point between the present law and all former draft laws. It is true that by this law a somewhat larger

number will escape than could under the law allowing personal substitutes only; but each additional man thus escaping will be a poorer man than could have escaped by the law in the other form. The money provision enlarges the class of exempts from actual service simply by admitting poorer men into it. How then can the money provision be a wrong to the poor man? The inequality complained of pertains in greater degree to the substitution of men, and is really modified and lessened by the money provision. The inequality could only be perfectly cured by sweeping both provisions away. This, being a great innovation, would probably leave the law more distasteful than it now is.

"The principle of the draft, which simply is involuntary or enforced service, is not new. It has been practiced in all ages of the world. It was well known to the framers of our Constitution as one of the modes of raising armies, at the time they placed in that instrument the provision that 'the Congress shall have power to raise and support armies.' It had been used just before, in establishing our independence, and it was also used under the Constitution in 1812. Wherein is the peculiar hardship now? Shall we shrink from the necessary means to maintain our free government, which our grandfathers employed to establish it and our own fathers have already employed once to maintain it? Are we degenerated? Has the manhood of our race run out?

"Again, a law may be both constitutional and expedient, and yet may be administered in an unjust and unfair way. This law belongs to a class, which class is composed of those laws whose object is to distribute burthens or benefits on the principle of equality. No one of these laws can ever be practically administered with that exactness which can be conceived of in the mind. A tax law, the principle of which is that each owner shall pay in proportion to the value of his property, will be a dead letter, if no one can be compelled to pay until it can be shown that every other man will pay in precisely the same proportion, according to value; nay, even, it will be a dead letter, if no one can be compelled to pay until it is certain that every other one will pay at all—even in unequal proportion. Again, the United States House of Representatives is constituted on the principle that each member is sent by the same number of people that each other one is sent by; and yet, in practice, no two of the whole number, much less the whole number, are ever sent by precisely the same number of constituents. The districts cannot be made precisely equal in population at first, and if they could, they would become unequal in a single day, and much more so in

the ten years, which the districts, once made, are to continue. They cannot be remodeled every day; nor, without too much expense and labor, even every year.

"This sort of difficulty applies in full force to the practical administration of the draft law. In fact, the difficulty is greater in the case of the draft law. First, it starts with all the inequality of the congressional districts; but these are based on entire population, while the draft is based on those only who are fit for soldiers, and such may not bear the same proportion to the whole in one district that they do in another. Again, the facts must be ascertained, and credit given, for the unequal numbers of soldiers which have already gone from the several districts. In all these points errors will occur in spite of the utmost fidelity. The Government is bound to administer the law with such an approach to exactness as is usual in analogous cases, and as entire good faith and fidelity will reach. If so great departures as to be inconsistent with such good faith and fidelity, or great departures occurring in any way, be pointed out they shall be corrected; and any agent shown to have caused such departures intentionally shall be dismissed.

"With these views, and on these principles, I feel bound to tell you it is my purpose to see the draft law faithfully executed."

## VALLANDIGHAM.

GENERAL BURNSIDE took command of the Department of the Ohio (March 26, 1863) with a zeal against the insurgents only heightened by his defeat at Fredericksburg. He found his department infested with a peculiarly bitter opposition to the Government and to the prosecution of the war, amounting, in his opinion, to positive aid and comfort to the enemy, and he determined to use all the powers confided to him to put an end to these manifestations, which he considered treason-

<sup>1</sup> One of Burnside's own staff-officers, Colonel J. M. Cutts, wrote to the President July 30: "Order 38 has kindled the fires of hatred and contention. Burnside is foolishly and unwisely excited, and if continued in command will disgrace himself, you, and the country, as he did at Fredericksburg."

<sup>2</sup> At the first threat of civil war Vallandigham made haste to declare himself opposed to any forcible execution of the laws. He declared the States of the Union the only judges of the sufficiency and justice of secession, and declared he would never vote one dollar of money whereby one drop of American blood should be shed in civil war; and in February preceding the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln he proposed to amend the Constitution by dividing the Union into four sections, giving each section a veto on the passage of any law or the election of Presidents or Vice-Presidents, and allowing to each State the right of secession on certain specified terms. Having thus early taken his stand, he

able; and in the execution of this purpose he gave great latitude to the exercise of his authority. He was of a zealous and impulsive character, and weighed too little the consequences of his acts where his feelings were strongly enlisted. He issued, on the 13th of April, an order which obtained wide celebrity under the name of General Order No. 38, announcing that "all persons found within our lines, who commit acts for the benefit of the enemies of our country, will be tried as spies and traitors, and, if convicted, will suffer death." He enumerated, as among the acts which came within the view of this order, the writing and carrying of secret letters; passing the lines for treasonable purposes; recruiting for the Confederate service; harboring, concealing, or feeding public enemies within our lines; and passing beyond this reasonable category of offenses, he declared that "the habit of declaring sympathies for the enemy will no longer be tolerated in this department, and persons committing such offenses will at once be arrested, with a view to being tried, as above stated, or sent beyond our lines into the lines of their friends." And in conclusion he added a clause which may be made to embrace, in its ample sweep, any demonstration not to the taste of the general in command: "It must be distinctly understood that treason, expressed or implied, will not be tolerated in this department."

This order at once excited a most furious denunciation on the part of those who, either on account of their acts, or their secret sympathies, felt themselves threatened by it, and many even of those opponents of the Administration who were entirely loyal to the Union<sup>1</sup> criticised the order as illegal in itself and liable to lead to dangerous abuses. The most energetic and eloquent of General Burnside's assailants was Clement L. Vallandigham, who had been for several years a member of Congress from Ohio, whose intemperate denunciation of the Government had caused him the loss of his seat,<sup>2</sup> and whose defeat had only heightened the acerb-

retained his position with more consistency than was shown by any other member of his party. After his defeat by General R. C. Schenck, in his canvass for reelection to Congress, he renewed his attacks upon the Government and its war policy with exaggerated vehemence.

In a speech delivered in the House of Representatives on the 14th of January, 1863, he boasted that he was of that number who had opposed abolitionism or the political development of the antislavery sentiment of the North and West from the beginning. He called it the development of the spirit of intermeddling, whose children are strife and murder. He said: "On the 14th of April I believed that coercion would bring on war, and war disunion. More than that, I believed, what you all in your hearts believe to-day, that the South could never be conquered — never. And not that only, but I was satisfied. . . . that the secret but real purpose of the war was to abolish slavery in the States,

ity of his opposition to the war. General Order No. 38 furnished him a most inspiring text for assailing the Government, and he availed himself of it in Democratic meetings throughout the State. A rumor of his violent speeches came to the ears of the military authorities in Cincinnati, and an officer was sent, in citizen's clothes, to attend a meeting which was held at Mount Vernon, Ohio, where Mr. Vallandigham and other prominent Democrats were the orators of the day. The meeting was an enthusiastic one, full of zeal against the Government and of sympathy with the South. Mr. Vallandigham, feeling his audience thoroughly in harmony with him, spoke with unusual fluency and bitterness, greatly enjoying the applause of his hearers, and unconscious of the presence of the unsympathizing recorder, who leaned against the platform a few feet away and took down some of his most malignant periods. He said it was the design of those in power to usurp a despotism; that it was not their intention to effect a restoration of the Union; that the Government had rejected every overture of peace from the South and every proposition of mediation from Europe; that the war was for the liberation of the blacks and the enslavement of the whites; that General Order No. 38 was a base usurpation of arbitrary power; that he despised it and spat upon it and trampled it under his feet. Speaking of the conscription act, he said the people were not deserving to be free men who would submit to such encroachment on their liberties. He called the President "King Lincoln," and advised the people to come up together at the ballot box and hurl the tyrant from his throne. The audience and the speaker were evidently in entire agreement. The crowd wore in great numbers the distinctive badges of "Copperheads" and "Butternuts," and amid cheers which Vallandigham's speech elicited the witness heard a shout that "Jeff Davis was a gentleman, which was more than Lincoln was."

The officer returned to Cincinnati and made his report. Three days later, on the evening of the 4th of May, a special train went up to Dayton, with a company of the 115th Ohio, to arrest Mr. Vallandigham. Reaching Dayton they went at once to his house, where they arrived shortly before daylight, and demanded admittance. The orator appeared at an upper window and, being informed of their business,

. . . and with it . . . the change of our present democratical form of government into an imperial despotism. . . . I do not support the war; and to-day I bless God that not the smell of so much as one drop of its blood is upon my garments. . . . Our Southern brethren were to be whipped back into love and fellowship at the point of the bayonet. Oh, monstrous delusion! . . . Sir, history will record that after nearly six thousand years of folly and wickedness in every

refused to allow them to enter. He began shouting in a loud voice; pistols were fired from the house; the signals were taken up in the town, and, according to some preconcerted arrangement, the fire bells began to toll. There was evidently no time to be lost. The soldiers forced their way into the house; Vallandigham was compelled to make a hasty toilet, and was hurried to the cars, and the special train pulled out of the station before any considerable crowd could assemble. Arriving at Cincinnati, Vallandigham was consigned to the military prison and kept in close confinement. During the day he contrived, however, to issue an address to the Democracy of Ohio, saying:

I am here in a military bastille for no other offense than my political opinions, and the defense of them, and of the rights of the people, and of your constitutional liberties. . . . I am a Democrat — for the Constitution, for law, for the Union, for liberty — this is my only crime. . . . Meanwhile, Democrats of Ohio, of the North-west, of the United States, be firm, be true to your principles, to the Constitution, to the Union, and all will yet be well. . . . To you, to the whole people, to Time, I appeal.

While he was issuing these fervid words his friends in Dayton were making their demonstration in another fashion. The town was filled with excitement all day. Crowds gathered on the streets discussing and denouncing the arrest. Great numbers of wagons loaded with rural friends and adherents of the agitator came in from the country and, the excitement increasing as night came on, a crowd of several hundred men moved, hooting and yelling, to the office of the Republican newspaper. Some one threw a brick at the building, then a volley of pistol shots was fired, and the excitement of the crowd wreaked itself on the unoffending building, which was first sacked, and then destroyed by fire. Later in the night a company of troops arrived from Cincinnati, and before midnight the crowd was dispersed and order was restored.

Mr. Vallandigham was promptly tried by a military commission, convened May 6 by General Burnside, consisting of officers of his staff and of the Ohio and Kentucky volunteers. Mr. Vallandigham made no individual objection to the court, but protested that they had no authority to try him; that he was in neither the land nor naval forces of the United States, nor in the militia, and was therefore amenable only to the

form and administration of government, theocratic, democratic, monarchic, oligarchic, despotic, and mixed, it was reserved to American statesmanship, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, to try the grand experiment, on a scale the most costly and gigantic in its proportions, of creating love by force and developing fraternal affection by war, and history will record, too, on the same page, the utter disastrous and most bloody failure of the experiment."

civil courts. This protest was, of course, disregarded, and his trial went on. It was proved that he made the speech of which we have already given an abstract. He called as witness in his defense Mr. S. S. Cox, who was also one of the orators of the occasion, and who testified that the speech of Mr. Vallandigham, though couched in strong language, was in no respect treasonable. When the evidence was all in, the accused entered a protest against the entire proceeding, repeating the terms of his original protest, and adding that his alleged offense itself was not known to the Constitution nor to any law thereof. "It is," he said, "words spoken to the people of Ohio, in an open and public political meeting, lawfully and peaceably assembled under the Constitution and upon full notice. It is words of criticism of the public policy of the public servants of the people, by which policy it was alleged that the welfare of the country was not promoted. It was an appeal to the people to change that policy, not by force, but by free elections and the ballot box. It is not pretended that I counseled disobedience to the Constitution or resistance to laws and lawful authority. I never have. Beyond this protest, I have nothing further to submit." There were no speeches either in prosecution or in defense. When the court was cleared it remained in deliberation for three hours and returned a decision that the accused was guilty of the charge of "publicly expressing, in violation of General Order No. 38, from Headquarters Department of the Ohio, his sympathy for those in arms against the Government of the United States, declaring disloyal sentiments and opinions, with the object and purpose of weakening the power of the Government in its efforts to suppress an unlawful rebellion." They therefore sentenced him to be placed in close confinement in some fortress of the United States, to be designated by the commanding officer of the department, there to be kept during the continuance of the war. General Burnside approved the finding and the sentence, and designated Fort Warren, Boston Harbor, as the place of confinement in accordance with the sentence.

But before the finding of the commission was made public, Mr. George E. Pugh, as counsel for Vallandigham, applied to Judge Leavitt of the United States Circuit Court, sitting in Cincinnati, for a writ of habeas corpus. On the 11th of May the case was heard, and extended arguments were made by Mr. Pugh in favor of the motion, and by Mr. Perry, who appeared on behalf of General Burnside, against it. But the most noticeable feature of the trial was a written address from General Burnside himself, presented to the district attorney, in which he explained and defended his

action. He began by saying that he was prohibited by law and by his duty from criticising the policy of the Government; that such abstention from injurious criticism was binding on every one in the service. He then went on to say:

If it is my duty and the duty of the troops to avoid saying anything that would weaken the army by preventing a single recruit from joining the ranks, by bringing the laws of Congress into disrepute, or by causing dissatisfaction in the ranks, it is equally the duty of every citizen in the department to avoid the same evil. . . . If I were to find a man from the enemy's country distributing in my camp speeches of their public men that tended to demoralize the troops, or to destroy their confidence in the constituted authorities of the Government, I would have him tried and hung, if found guilty, and all the rules of modern warfare would sustain me. Why should such speeches from our own public men be allowed?

He even went so far as to disapprove the use of party names and party epithets, saying, "The simple names of patriot and traitor are comprehensive enough."

If the people [he said] do not approve the policy of the Government they can change the constitutional authorities at the proper time and by the proper method. Let them freely discuss the policy in a proper tone; but my duty requires me to stop license and intemperate discussion, which tend to weaken the authority of the Government and army: whilst the latter is in the presence of the enemy it is cowardly so to weaken it. . . . There is no fear of the people losing their liberties; we all know that to be the cry of demagogues, and none but the ignorant will listen to it.

Judge Leavitt denied the motion for habeas corpus in a long decision, in which he thoroughly reviewed the legal points involved in the case. The essential point of his decision was this: General Burnside, by order of the President, had been appointed to the military supervision of the Department of the Ohio, including, among other States, the State of Ohio. The precise extent of his authority was not known to the court, but it might properly be assumed that the President had clothed him with all the powers necessary to the efficient discharge of his duties. It is not claimed that in time of war the President is above the Constitution. He derives his power, on the contrary, expressly from the provision of that instrument that he shall be commander-in-chief of the army and navy. The Constitution does not specify the powers he may rightfully exercise in this character, nor are they defined by legislation. No one denies, however, that the President, in this character, is invested with very high powers, which he has exercised, as commander-in-chief, from time to time during the present rebellion.

His acts in this capacity must be limited to such as are deemed essential to the protection and preservation of the Government and the Constitution. And in deciding what he may rightfully do under this power, where there is no express legislative declaration, the President is guided solely by his own judgment, and is amenable only for an abuse of his authority by impeachment. The occasion which calls for the exercise of this power exists only from the necessity of the case; and when the necessity exists there is a clear justification of the act. The judge concludes that if this view of the power of the President is correct, it implies the right to arrest persons who, by their mischievous acts of disloyalty, impede or endanger the military operations of the Government.

And if the necessity exists, I see no reason [he said] why the power does not attach to the officer in command of a military department. The President cannot discharge the duties in person; he, therefore, constitutes an agent to represent him, clothed with the necessary power for the efficient supervision of the military interests of the Government throughout the department. . . . In the exercise of his discretion General Burnside issued the order (No. 38) which has been brought to the notice of the court.

Judge Leavitt would not comment on that order, but only referred to it because General Burnside had stated his motives for issuing it, and also because it was for its supposed violation that he ordered the arrest of Mr. Vallandigham. He had done this under his responsibility as the commanding general of the department, and in accordance with what he supposed to be the power vested in him by the appointment of the President. It was virtually an act of the Executive Department under the power vested in the President by the Constitution, and the court therefore refused to annul or reverse it.

The arrest, trial, and sentence of Vallandigham took the President somewhat by surprise, and it was only after these proceedings were consummated that he had an opportunity seriously to consider the case. If he had been consulted before any proceedings were initiated there is reason to believe he would not have permitted them;<sup>1</sup> but finding himself in presence of an accomplished fact, the question

now given him to consider was, whether he should approve the sentence of the court, or, by annulling it, weaken the authority of the general commanding the district, and greatly encourage the active and dangerous secession element in the West. He concluded to accept the act of Burnside as within his discretion as military commander; but as the imprisonment of Vallandigham in the North would have been a constant source of irritation and political discussion, the President concluded to modify his sentence to one which could be immediately and finally executed, and the execution of which would excite far less sympathy with the prisoner, and, in fact, seriously damage his prestige and authority among his followers. The method of punishment which he chose was doubtless suggested by a paragraph in Burnside's Order No. 38, which had mentioned, as a form of punishment for the declaration of sympathies with the enemy, deportation "beyond our lines into those of their friends." He therefore commuted the sentence of Vallandigham, and directed that he be sent within the Confederate lines.<sup>2</sup> This was done about a fortnight after the court-martial. Mr. Vallandigham was sent to Tennessee, and, on the 25th of May, was escorted by a small cavalry force to the Confederate lines near Murfreesboro'. After a short parley with the rebel videttes, who made no objection to receiving the prisoner, he was delivered into the hands of a single private soldier of an Alabama regiment, Mr. Vallandigham making a formal protest to the effect that he was within the Confederate lines by force and against his will, and that he surrendered as a prisoner of war.

The arrest and sentence of this distinguished Democrat produced a profound sensation throughout the country. It occasioned general rejoicing in the South. The Government in Richmond saw in it a promise of counter-revolution in the North, and some of the Confederate generals built upon it the rosiest hopes for future campaigns. General Beauregard, writing to a friend in Mobile,<sup>3</sup> said the Yankees, by sending Vallandigham into Bragg's lines, had indicated a point of attack. He suggested that, Hooker being disposed of for the next six months at least, Lee should act on the

<sup>1</sup> General Burnside, feeling, after the trial, that his act had subjected the Administration to violent attack, thought proper to signify to the President that his resignation was at his service if desired, to which the President answered: "When I shall wish to supersede you I will let you know. All the Cabinet regretted the necessity of arresting, for instance, Vallandigham, some perhaps doubting there was a real necessity for it; but, being done, all were for seeing you through with it." [Lincoln to Burnside, May 29, 1863. MS.]

<sup>2</sup> The order under which Vallandigham was sent South was dated the 19th of May and transmitted by telegraph from Washington to General Burnside: "The President directs that, without delay, you send C. L. Vallandigham, under secure guard, to the headquarters of General Rosecrans, to be put by him beyond our military lines, and in case of his return within our lines, he be arrested and kept in close custody for the term specified in his sentence." [McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 162.]

<sup>3</sup> May 26, 1863. War Records, Vol. XIV., p. 955.



defensive, and send Bragg 30,000 men to take the offensive at once. Let Bragg—or some better soldier who is sufficiently shadowed forth in parenthesis—“destroy or capture (as it is done in Europe) Rosecrans’s army; then march into Kentucky; raise 30,000 more men there and in Tennessee; then get into Ohio and call upon the friends of Vallandigham to rise for his defense and support; then call upon Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri to throw off the yoke of the accursed Yankee nation; then”—his plan growing more and more magnificent as it took grandeur and color under his pen—“call upon the whole North-west to join in the movement, form a Confederacy of their own, and join us by a treaty of alliance, defensive and offensive. What would then become of the North-east?” demanded the doughty creole. “How long would it take us to bring it back to its senses?” The feeling in the North, if less exuberant in its expression, was equally serious. No act of the Government has been so strongly criticised, and none having relation to the rights of an individual created a feeling so deep and so widespread. No further legal steps were taken in the case, except an application which was made by Vallandigham’s counsel for a writ of certiorari to bring up the proceedings of the military commission for review in the Supreme Court of the United States. This motion was denied, on the evident ground that no such writ could be issued by the Supreme Court to any such military commission, as the court had no jurisdiction over the proceedings of such a tribunal. But in the Democratic newspapers, in public meetings, in a multitude of leading articles and pamphlets, the question was discussed with the greatest earnestness and even violence, the orators and politicians of the Democratic party regarding the incident as the most valuable bit of political capital which had fallen to them during the year. Even some of the most loyal newspapers of the North joined in the general attack, saying that by the statutes Vallandigham was a prisoner of state, and that the Secretary of War was bound to report him as such to the circuit judge of the district in which his supposed offenses were committed, to be regularly tried by the civil tribunal. But the principal criticism was, of course, confined to the ranks of the opposition. Their newspapers and public men vied with one another in a chorus of condemnation. To a meeting, held in Albany on the 16th of May, Governor Seymour wrote:

It is an act which has brought dishonor upon our country; it is full of danger to our persons and our homes; it bears upon its front a conscious violation of law and justice. . . . The transaction involved a series of offenses against our most sacred rights. It interfered with the freedom of speech; it violated

our rights to be secure in our homes against unreasonable searches and seizures; it pronounced sentence without trial, save one which was a mockery—which insulted as well as wronged. . . . If this proceeding is approved by the Government, and sanctioned by the people, it is not merely a step towards revolution—it is revolution; it will not only lead to military despotism, it establishes military despotism. . . . If it is upheld, our liberties are overthrown. . . . The action of the Administration will determine, in the minds of more than one-half of the people of the loyal States, whether the war is waged to put down rebellion at the South, or destroy free institutions at the North. We look for its decision with most solemn solicitude.

The meeting to which Governor Seymour sent this passionate address passed a series of resolutions insisting upon their loyalty and the services they had rendered the country, but demanding that the “Administration shall be true to the Constitution, shall recognize and maintain the rights of the States and the liberties of the citizen, shall everywhere outside the lines of military occupation and the scenes of insurrection exert all its powers to maintain the supremacy of the civil over military law”; and in view of these principles they denounced “the recent assumption of a military commander to seize and try a citizen of Ohio, Clement L. Vallandigham, for no other reason than words addressed to a public meeting in criticism of the military orders of that general.” The resolutions further set forth that such an assumption of military power strikes a fatal blow at the supremacy of law. They enumerated the provisions of the Constitution defining the crime of treason and the defenses to which those accused of that crime are entitled, and said “that these safeguards of the rights of the citizen against the pretensions of arbitrary power were intended more especially for his protection in times of civil commotion.” They further resolved:

That in the election of Governor Seymour the people of this State, by an emphatic majority, declared their condemnation of the system of arbitrary arrests, and their determination to stand by the Constitution. And that, regarding the blow struck at a citizen of Ohio as aimed at the rights of every citizen of the North, they denounce it as against the spirit of our laws and Constitution, and most earnestly call upon the President of the United States to reverse the action of the military tribunal which has passed a cruel and unusual punishment upon the party arrested, prohibited in terms by the Constitution, and to restore him to the liberty of which he has been deprived.

A copy of these resolutions was sent to the President and received his most careful consideration. He answered on the 12th of June, in a letter which demands the close perusal of every student of our history. He accepted in

the beginning, and thanked the meeting for, the resolutions expressing the purpose of sustaining the cause of the Union despite the folly and wickedness of any administration. He referred to the safeguards of the Constitution for the defense of persons accused of treason, and contended that these provisions of the Constitution had no application to the case in hand. The arrests complained of were not made for the technical crime of treason. He then proceeded, in language so terse and vigorous that it is difficult to abridge a paragraph without positive mutilation, to describe the circumstances under which this rebellion began, and the hopes of the insurgents, which were founded upon the inveterate respect of the American people for the forms of law.

Prior to my installation here [he said] it had been inculcated that any State had a lawful right to secede from the National Union, and that it would be expedient to exercise the right whenever the devotees of the doctrine should fail to elect a President to their own liking. I was elected contrary to their liking; and, accordingly, so far as it was legally possible, they had taken seven States out of the Union, had seized many of the United States forts, and had fired upon the United States flag, all before I was inaugurated, and, of course, before I had done any official act whatever. The rebellion thus begun soon ran into the present civil war; and, in certain respects, it began on very unequal terms between the parties. The insurgents had been preparing for it for more than thirty years, while the Government had taken no steps to resist them. The former had carefully considered all the means which could be turned to their account. It undoubtedly was a well-pondered reliance with them that in their own unrestricted efforts to destroy Union, Constitution, and law all together the Government would, in a great degree, be restrained by the same Constitution and law from arresting their progress. Their sympathizers pervaded all departments of the Government and nearly all communities of the people. From this material, under cover of "liberty of speech," "liberty of the press," and "habeas corpus," they hoped to keep on foot amongst us a most efficient corps of spies, informers, suppliers, and aiders and abettors of their cause in a thousand ways. They knew that in times such as they were inaugurating, by the Constitution itself, the "habeas corpus" might be suspended; but they also knew they had friends who would make a question as to who was to suspend it; meanwhile their spies and others might remain at large to help on their cause. Or if, as has happened, the Executive should suspend the writ, without ruinous waste of time, instances of arresting innocent persons might occur, as are always likely to occur in such cases, and then a clamor could be raised in regard to this, which might be at least of some service to the insurgent cause. It needed no very keen perception to discover that part of the enemy's programme, so soon as, by open hostilities, their machinery was fairly put in motion. Yet, thoroughly imbued with a reverence for the guaranteed rights of individuals, I was slow to adopt the strong measures which by degrees I have been forced to regard

as being within the exceptions of the Constitution, and as indispensable to the public safety. Nothing is better known to history than that courts of justice are utterly incompetent to such cases. Civil courts are organized chiefly for trials of individuals, or, at most, a few individuals acting in concert, and this in quiet times and on charges of crimes well defined in the law. Even in times of peace bands of horse-thieves and robbers frequently grow too numerous and powerful for the ordinary courts of justice. But what comparison in numbers have such bands ever borne to the insurgent sympathizers, even in many of the loyal States? Again, a jury too frequently has at least one member more ready to hang the panel than to hang the traitor. And yet again, he who dissuades one man from volunteering, or induces one soldier to desert, weakens the Union cause as much as he who kills a Union soldier in battle. Yet this dissuasion or inducement may be so conducted as to be no defined crime of which any civil court would take cognizance.

He then applied to the case in hand the clear provision of the Constitution that "the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended unless, when in case of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it," and went on to say:

This is precisely our present case — a case of rebellion wherein the public safety does require the suspension. Indeed, arrests by process of courts and arrests in cases of rebellion do not proceed altogether upon the same basis. The former is directed at the small percentage of ordinary and continuous perpetration of crime, while the latter is directed at sudden and extensive uprisings against the Government, which, at most, will succeed or fail in no great length of time. In the latter case arrests are made, not so much for what has been done as for what probably would be done. The latter is more for the preventive and less for the vindictive than the former. In such cases the purposes of men are much more easily understood than in cases of ordinary crime. The man who stands by and says nothing when the peril of his Government is discussed cannot be misunderstood. If not hindered, he is sure to help the enemy; much more if he talks ambiguously — talks for his country with "buts" and "ifs" and "ands." Of how little value the constitutional provisions I have quoted will be rendered, if arrests shall never be made until defined crimes shall have been committed, may be illustrated by a few notable examples. General John C. Breckinridge, General Robert E. Lee, General Joseph E. Johnston, General John B. Magruder, General William B. Preston, General Simon B. Buckner, and Commodore Franklin Buchanan, now occupying the very highest places in the rebel war service, were all within the power of the Government since the rebellion began, and were nearly as well known to be traitors then as now. Unquestionably, if we had seized and held them, the insurgent cause would be much weaker. But no one of them had then committed any crime defined in the law. Every one of them, if arrested, would have been discharged on habeas corpus were the writ allowed to operate. In view of these and similar cases, I think the time not

unlikely to come when I shall be blamed for having made too few arrests rather than too many.

Referring to the charge made in the resolutions that Mr. Vallandigham was arrested for no other reason than words addressed to public meetings in criticism of the course of the Administration, Mr. Lincoln said :

If this assertion is the truth and the whole truth,—if there was no other reason for the arrest,—then I concede that the arrest was wrong. But [he went on] Mr. Vallandigham was not arrested because he was damaging the political prospects of the Administration, or the personal interests of the commanding general, but because he was damaging the army, upon the existence and vigor of which the life of the nation depends. He was warring upon the military, and this gave the military constitutional jurisdiction to lay hands upon him.

If it could be shown that his arrest was made on mistake of fact, the President would be glad to correct it. But, he said :

Long experience has shown that armies cannot be maintained unless desertion shall be punished by the severe penalty of death. The case requires, and the law and the Constitution sanction, this punishment. Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert? This is none the less injurious when effected by getting a father, or brother, or friend into a public meeting, and there working upon his feelings until he is persuaded to write the soldier boy that he is fighting in a bad cause, for a wicked Administration of a contemptible Government, too weak to arrest and punish him if he shall desert. I think that in such a case to silence the agitator and to save the boy is not only constitutional, but, withal, a great mercy.

He then stated clearly his belief that certain proceedings are constitutional when, in case of rebellion or invasion, the public safety requires them, which would not be constitutional when, in absence of rebellion or invasion, the public safety does not require them.

The Constitution itself [he said] makes the distinction, and I can no more be persuaded that the Government can constitutionally take no strong measure in time of rebellion, because it can be shown that the same could not be lawfully taken in time of peace, than I can be persuaded that a particular drug is not good medicine for a sick man, because it can be shown to not be good food for a well one. Nor am I able to appreciate the danger apprehended by the meeting that the American people will, by means of military arrests during the Rebellion, lose the right of public discussion, the liberty of speech and the press, the law of evidence, trial by jury, and habeas corpus, throughout the indefinite peaceful future, which I trust lies before them, any more than I am able to believe that a man could contract so strong an appetite for emetics, during temporary illness, as to persist in feeding upon them during the remainder of his healthful life.

The President parried the political thrust in the resolutions by reminding the gentlemen of Albany that although they addressed him as "Democrats," not all Democrats were of their way of thinking.

He on whose discretionary judgment Mr. Vallandigham was arrested and tried is a Democrat, having no old party affinity with me; and the judge who rejected the constitutional view expressed in these resolutions by refusing to discharge Mr. Vallandigham on habeas corpus is a Democrat of better days than these, having received his judicial mantle at the hands of President Jackson. And still more, of all those Democrats who are nobly exposing their lives and shedding their blood on the battlefield, I have learned that many approve the course taken with Mr. Vallandigham, while I have not heard of a single one condemning it.

The President fortified his argument by an incident of pertinent history especially adapted to touch the sympathies of Democrats—the arbitrary arrests made by General Jackson at New Orleans; his defiance of the writ of habeas corpus, and his imprisonment of the judge who had issued it. Near the close of this strong and adroit defense of the action of Burnside the President made a remarkable admission in these words :

And yet let me say that in my own discretion I do not know whether I would have ordered the arrest of Mr. Vallandigham. While I cannot shift the responsibility from myself, I hold that, as a general rule, the commander in the field is the better judge of the necessity in any particular case. . . . It gave me pain when I learned that Mr. Vallandigham had been arrested,—that is, I was pained that there should have seemed to be a necessity for arresting him,—and it will afford me great pleasure to discharge him so soon as I can, by any means, believe the public safety will not suffer by it. I further say that as the war progresses it appears to me, opinion and action, which were in great confusion at first, take shape and fall into more regular channels, so that the necessity for strong dealing with them gradually decreases. I have every reason to desire that it should cease altogether, and far from the least is my regard for the opinions and wishes of those who, like the meeting at Albany, declare their purpose to sustain the Government in every constitutional and lawful measure to suppress the rebellion. Still I must continue to do so much as may seem to be required by the public safety.

There are few of the President's state papers which produced a stronger impression upon the public mind than this. Its tone of candor and courtesy, which did not conceal his stern and resolute purpose; his clear statement of the needs of the country; his terse argument of his authority under the Constitution to suspend the writ of habeas corpus when, in case of rebellion, the public safety required it; his contrast of the venial crime of the simple-minded soldier boy, which was punished by

death, with the deeper guilt of the wily agitator, who claimed immunity through the Constitution he was endeavoring to destroy; the strong, yet humorous, common sense of his doubt whether a permanent taste for emetics could be contracted during a fit of sickness—met with an immediate and eager appreciation among the citizens of the country, and rendered this letter remarkable in the long series of Mr Lincoln's political writings. It is needless to say that it did not meet with equal approbation in all quarters. It was received by the politicians of New York, to whom it was addressed, with the gravest displeasure. They answered in an angry yet forcible paper, claiming that the original act of tyranny by which Mr. Vallandigham was arrested had been aggravated by the claim of despotic power which they assumed to find in the President's letter. They wrote with so much heat and feeling that they hardly paused to measure their epithets; otherwise they would scarcely have been guilty of the impertinence of speaking to the President of his "pretensions to more than legal authority," and of criticising his crystal-clear statement as the "misty and cloudy forms of expression" in which these pretensions are set forth. But it is not worth while to rescue either of these letters from the oblivion which soon overtook them. In the words of Mr. Lincoln on another occasion, "the world little noted nor long remembered them." Their first letter had no function nor result but to call into being the President's admirable reply, and the second was little more than a cry under punishment.

In the State of Ohio the arrest of Mr. Vallandigham had precipitated an issue which was in its solution greatly to the advantage of the cause of the Union. When, on the 11th of June, the Democratic convention of the State met at Columbus, it was found to be completely under the control of those opposed to the war, and the excitement consequent upon Vallandigham's arrest and banishment designated him as the only serious candidate for the office of governor. Nominating him by acclamation was the readiest and most practical way of signifying their disapproval of the proceedings of the Government. They passed a series of resolutions affirming their devotion to the Union, denouncing the arrest and banishment of Vallandigham as a forcible violation of the Constitution and a direct insult offered to the sovereignty of the people of Ohio, saying that the Democratic party was fully competent to decide whether Mr. Vallandigham was a fit man to be nominated for governor, and that the attempt to deprive them of that right by his arrest and banishment was an unmerited imputation upon their intelligence and loyalty.

They therefore called upon the President to restore Mr. Vallandigham to his home in Ohio. The committee appointed to present these resolutions accompanied them with a long letter signed by the most prominent Democrats of Ohio, arguing, upon lines similar to those followed in the Albany letter, that the action of the Government towards Vallandigham was illegal and unconstitutional; that it had created widespread and alarming disaffection among the people of the State; that it was not an offense against any law to contend that the war could not be used as a means of restoring the Union, or that a war directed against slavery would inevitably result in the final destruction of both the Constitution and the Union. They took up the President's letter to the Albany committee and insisted that Mr. Vallandigham was not warring upon the military; they disagreed entirely with the President on the subject of the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus; they represented the President as claiming that the Constitution is different in time of insurrection or invasion from what it is in time of peace or public security, and that he had the right to engraft limitations or exceptions upon these constitutional guarantees whenever, in his judgment, the public safety required it. Having attributed to him these absurd pretensions, they proceeded solemnly to deny them, and ask:

If an indefinable kind of constructive treason is to be introduced and engrafted upon the Constitution unknown to the laws of the land and subject to the will of the President whenever an insurrection or invasion shall occur in any part of this vast country, what safety or security will be left for the liberties of the people?

The President sent a reply to this letter, briefer than the one he had devoted to Albany, and not so full in its discussion of the constitutional question at issue. For his views in this regard he referred the Ohio committee to his Albany letter. He simply repudiated the opinions and intentions which the Ohio committee had gratuitously imputed to him. But he assumed the full responsibility for the exercise of the enormous powers which he believed the Constitution, under the circumstances, conferred upon him.

You ask, in substance, whether I really claim that I may override all the guaranteed rights of individuals on the plea of conserving the public safety—when I may choose to say the public safety requires it. This question, divested of the phraseology calculated to represent me as struggling for an arbitrary personal prerogative, is either simply a question who shall decide, or an affirmation that nobody shall decide, what the public safety does require in cases of rebellion or invasion. The Constitution contemplates the question as likely to occur for decision,

but it does not expressly declare who is to decide it. By necessary implication, when rebellion or invasion comes, the decision is to be made, from time to time, and I think the man whom, for the time, the people have, under the Constitution, made the commander-in-chief of their army and navy, is the man who holds the power, and bears the responsibility of making it. If he uses the power justly, the same people will probably justify him; if he abuses it, he is in their hands to be dealt with by all the modes they have reserved to themselves in the Constitution.

He disclaimed, in courteous language, any purpose of insult to Ohio in Mr. Vallandigham's case; and referring to the peremptory request of the committee that Vallandigham should be released from his sentence, and to the further claim of the committee that the Democracy of Ohio are loyal to the Union, he proposed, on what he considered very easy conditions, to comply with their request. He offered them the following propositions:

1. That there is now a rebellion in the United States, the object and tendency of which is to destroy the National Union, and that, in your opinion, an army and navy are constitutional means for suppressing that rebellion.
2. That no one of you will do anything which, in his own judgment, will tend to hinder the increase or favor the decrease or lessen the efficiency of the army and navy, while engaged in the effort to suppress that rebellion; and
3. That each of you will, in his sphere, do all he can to have the officers, soldiers, and seamen of the army and navy, while engaged in the effort to suppress the rebellion, fed, clad, and otherwise well provided for and supported.

If the committee, or a majority of them, would write their names upon the back of the President's letter, thus committing themselves to these propositions and to nothing else, he would then publish the letter and the names, which publication would be, within itself, a revocation of Vallandigham's sentence. This would leave Mr. Vallandigham himself absolutely unpledged; the President's object being to gain for the cause of the Union so large a moral reinforcement from this clear definition of the attitude of the other gentlemen as to compensate for any damage that Mr. Vallandigham could possibly do on his return. The President concluded this letter with the same frankness

that he used in that to Albany. "Still," he said, "in regard to Mr. Vallandigham and all others, I must hereafter, as heretofore, do so much as the public service may seem to require." This overture of the President was promptly rejected by the committee. They treated it as an evasion on his part of the questions involved in the case, and as implying not only an imputation upon their own sincerity and fidelity as citizens of the United States, but also a concession of the legality of Mr. Vallandigham's arrest and banishment.

Evidently nothing could come from negotiations with parties whose points of view were so far apart as those of the President and the Democratic leaders in New York and Ohio. The case must be resolved by the people of the State whose sovereignty it was said had been violated, and the issue was made in the clearest possible manner by the nomination of Mr. Vallandigham for governor of Ohio. The convention which nominated him determined to leave no doubt of their position, not only denouncing the action of General Burnside and the President, but expressing their deep humiliation and regret at the failure of Governor Tod of Ohio to protect the citizens of the State in the enjoyment and exercise of their constitutional rights. The Union party, meeting at Columbus, nominated for governor John Brough, a war Democrat, and adopted a brief platform of unqualified devotion to the Union, in favor of a most vigorous prosecution of the war, and the laying aside of personal preferences and prejudices, and pledging hearty support to the President. Upon this issue the canvass proceeded to its close. Before it ended, Mr. Vallandigham himself intervened once more—not in person, indeed, but by letters from Canada. On entering the rebel lines he had gone at once to Richmond, where he was kindly and courteously received by the Confederate authorities, although both on his side and on theirs the forms appropriate to the fiction that he was a prisoner of war were carefully observed.<sup>1</sup> After a conference with the leading men of the Confederate Government, he went southward and arrived on the 22d of June at Bermuda in a vessel called the *Lady Davis*, which had run the blockade at Wilmington. He made only a brief stay in Bermuda and then took

<sup>1</sup> John B. Jones, a clerk in the rebel war office, made on the 22d of June, 1863, the following entry in his diary: "To-day I saw the memorandum of Mr. Ould, of the conversation held with Mr. Vallandigham, for file in the archives. He says if we can only hold out this year that the peace party of the North would sweep the Lincoln dynasty out of political existence. He seems to have thought that our cause was sinking, and feared we would submit, which would, of course, be ruinous to his party. But he advises strongly against any invasion of Pennsylvania, for that would unite all

parties at the North, and so strengthen Lincoln's hands that he would be able to crush all opposition and trample upon the constitutional rights of the people. Mr. V. said nothing to indicate that either he or the party had any other idea than that the Union would be reconstructed under Democratic rule. The President [Davis] indorsed with his own pen on this document that in regard to invasion of the North experience proved the contrary of what Mr. V. asserted." [Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. I., pp. 357, 358.]

passage for Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he arrived on the 5th of July. From the Canadian side of Niagara Falls he issued an address to the people of Ohio,<sup>1</sup> which began with this clever and striking exordium :

Arrested and confined for three weeks in the United States a prisoner of state, banished thence to the Confederate States, and there held as an alien enemy and prisoner of war, though on parole, fairly and honorably dealt with, and given leave to depart, an act possible only by running the blockade at the hazard of being fired upon by ships flying the flag of my own country, I found myself first a free man when on British soil. And to-day, under protection of the British flag, I am here to enjoy and, in part, to exercise the privileges and rights which usurpers insolently deny me at home. . . . Six weeks ago, when just going into banishment because an audacious but most cowardly despotism caused it, I addressed you as a fellow-citizen. To-day, and from the very place then selected by me, but after wearisome and most perilous journeyings for more than four thousand miles by land and upon sea, still in exile, though almost within sight of my native State, I greet you as your representative.

He thanked and congratulated the Democrats of Ohio upon the nominations they had made. He indorsed their platform, which he called "elegant in style, admirable in sentiment." He claimed that his arrest was the issue before the country. "The President," he said, "accepts the issue. . . . In time of war there is but one will supreme—his will; but one law—military necessity, and he the sole judge." He was convinced that the war could never be prosecuted to a successful termination.

If this civil war [he said] is to terminate only by the subjugation or submission of the Southern force in arms, the infant of to-day will not see the end of it. . . . Traveling a thousand miles or more, through nearly one-half of the Confederate States, and sojourning for a time at widely different points, I met not one man, woman, or child who was not resolved to perish rather than to yield to the pressure of arms, even in the most desperate extremity.

He announced, therefore, that he returned with his opinion in favor of peace not only unchanged, but confirmed and strengthened.

<sup>1</sup> "Rebellion Records," Vol. VII. Documents, pp. 438, 439.

<sup>2</sup> While sojourning at Niagara Falls, Mr. Vallandigham had come into communication with a person who called himself William Cornell Jewett of Colorado, who passed his time writing letters to the newspapers and to public men in favor of putting an end to the war by foreign mediation. After the result of the Ohio election had convinced Vallandigham that little was to be expected in the way of peace from the efforts of the Democratic party, he wrote Jewett a letter strongly favoring an immediate acceptance of the mediation of France in the controversy between the States. He said: "The South and the North are both

But nothing availed. Mr. Vallandigham was defeated by the unprecedented majority of 101,000 votes, 62,000 of which were cast in the State and 39,000 by the soldiers in the field, to whom a State statute had given the privilege of voting.

In view of this overwhelming defeat, Mr. Vallandigham thought it prudent to remain during the winter beyond the jurisdiction of the United States. He was in constant correspondence, however, with his associates and adherents,<sup>2</sup> and demonstrations were made from time to time against the Government for its treatment of him. On the 29th of February, 1864, Mr. Pendleton of Ohio offered a resolution in the House of Representatives that the arrest and banishment of Mr. Vallandigham were "acts of mere arbitrary power in palpable violation of the Constitution and laws of the United States," which was rejected by a strict party vote, 47 Democrats voting in favor of it, and 77 Union members voting against it, only two Democrats voting with the majority. Vallandigham's course in opposition to the war had been so exasperating to the Union sentiment of the country, his speeches had been so full of vehement malice, that even those who thought his original arrest an unjustifiable stretch of military power felt no sympathy with the object of it and were inclined to acquiesce in the President's disposition of the case. The situation was not without a humorous element also, to which the American mind is always hospitable. The spectacle of this furious agitator, condemned by court-martial to a long imprisonment and then handed over by the contemptuous mercy of the President to the care and keeping of his friends beyond the Union lines; his frantic protests that the Confederates were not his friends, but that he was their most formidable and dreaded enemy; the friendly receptions and attentions he met with in the South and among the sympathizing British officials in the West Indies and the Northern provinces; his nomination by the Democratic convention of his State, which was forced immediately to apply to the President to give them back their candidate—affected the popular mind as an event rather ridiculous than

indebted to the great powers of Europe for having so long withheld recognition from the Confederate States. The South has proved her ability to maintain herself by her own strength and resources, without foreign aid, moral or material; and the North and West—the whole country, indeed—these great powers have served incalculably, by holding back a solemn proclamation to the world that the Union of these States was finally and formally dissolved. They have left to us every motive and every chance for reunion. . . . Foreign recognition now of the Confederate States could avail little to delay or prevent final reunion." (W. C. Jewett, Letter to "Liverpool Mercury," November 4.)

serious, and the constitutional question involved received probably less attention than it deserved. His letters from Canada aroused little or no sympathy, and when, in June, 1864, he returned to the United States, the President declined to take any notice of his presence.<sup>1</sup>

Emboldened by impunity, Vallandigham began at political meetings a new series of speeches more violent in tone than those which had caused his arrest. But as the effect of them was clearly beneficial to the Union cause, no means were taken to silence him. He defied the Government and the army; he made vague threats that in case he was arrested the persons and property of those instigating such a proceeding should be held as hostages.<sup>2</sup> He was not molested, and in August was allowed to take a prominent part in the National Democratic Convention at Chicago, where he rendered valuable service to the Union party<sup>3</sup> as chairman of the Committee on Resolutions, and offered the motion that the nomination of General McClellan should be made unanimous.

#### THE DEFEAT OF THE PEACE PARTY AT THE POLLS.

THE reverses sustained by the Union arms during the summer and autumn of 1862 had their direct effect in the field of politics. Every unsuccessful movement, and especially every defeat of the National forces, increased the strength and the audacity of the opposition to the Government and the war. There were, it is true, hundreds of thousands of Democratic soldiers in the ranks fighting to uphold the Union; and as a result of this—because men's sentiments are far more influenced by their actions than their actions are inspired by their sentiments—they were generally induced to take the Republican view of public affairs, and by degrees to unite themselves with the Republican party. But they seemed to exert no influence whatever upon their friends and re-

lations at home. The Democratic party remained as solid in its organization, as powerful in its resistance to the Government, as ever. The great liberating measure of the President, the proclamation of September, had its influence also in exasperating and consolidating the opposition. This act, which not only renders his name immortal, but glorifies the age in which he lived, contributed to the defeat of his party in some of the most important States of the Union. In the autumn of 1862 the Democrats carried New York, electing Horatio Seymour governor over that patriotic and accomplished gentleman, General James S. Wadsworth; the adjoining State of New Jersey was also carried by them. There were heavy losses of congressmen in the great States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana; and even in the President's own State of Illinois the opposition inflicted upon him a peculiarly painful defeat, electing nine of his opponents and only four of his friends.

The Union sentiment was still sufficiently powerful throughout the North to elect an easy working majority in the House of Representatives, and the Republican predominance in the Senate was, of course, untouched; so that so far as legislation was concerned there was no danger that the Government would be embarrassed by an opposition majority. But the losses it met with in the elections were none the less serious and discouraging. A war disapproved by a free people cannot long be carried on by the will of the Government, and if the ratio of losses indicated by the elections of 1862 had continued another year the permanency of the Republic would have been gravely compromised. But the intelligence of the American people gradually acknowledged the wisdom and accepted the leadership of the President, and moved forward to the advanced platform upon which Mr. Lincoln had placed himself. The right of suffrage given by the State legislatures to the soldiers in the field reinforced the voting strength of the Republicans

<sup>1</sup> When Mr. Lincoln first heard of Vallandigham's return he wrote a joint letter to Governor Brough and General Heintzelman, who had succeeded Burnside in command of the department, directing them to "consult together freely; watch Vallandigham and others closely, and upon discovering any palpable injury or imminent danger to the military proceeding from him, them, or any of them, arrest all implicated; otherwise do not arrest without further order. Meanwhile report the signs to me from time to time." But, after writing the letter, he concluded not to send it. [Unpublished MS., June 20, 1864.]

He was, in fact, a little nonplused by Vallandigham's return. He had seriously thought of annulling the sentence of exile, but had been too much occupied with other matters to do it. After he had returned, the President said: "The only question to decide was whether he could afford to disregard the contempt of authority and breach of discipline displayed in Vallandigham's

action; otherwise, it could not but result in benefit to the Union cause to have so violent and indiscreet a man go to Chicago as a firebrand to his own party." Fernando Wood had told him that he could do nothing more politic than to bring Vallandigham back. "In that case," he said, "he could promise him two Democratic candidates for the Presidency this year. These war Democrats," said Mr. Wood, "are scoundrelly hypocrites; they want to oppose you and favor the war at once, which is nonsense. There are but two sides in this fight—yours and mine; war and peace. You will succeed while the war lasts, I expect, but we shall succeed when the war is over. I intend to keep my record clear for the future."

<sup>2</sup> McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> The Illinois Democrats were greatly troubled by Vallandigham's apparition. W. R. Morrison said to J. H., June 18, "How much did you fellows give Fernandy Wood for importing him?" [J. H., Diary.]

at home, and the ballot and the bullet worked harmoniously together. Nevertheless, in the autumn of 1862 Mr. Lincoln was exposed to the bitterest assaults and criticisms from every faction in the country. His conservative supporters reproached him with having yielded to the wishes of the radicals; the radicals denounced him for being hampered, if not corrupted, by the influence of the conservatives. On one side he was assailed by a clamor for peace, on the other by vehement and injurious demands for a more vigorous prosecution of the war. He stood unmoved by these attacks, converging upon him from every quarter, and rarely took the trouble to defend himself against them. Coming from every side, the pressure neutralized itself, like that of the atmosphere. To one friend who assailed him with peculiar candor, he made a reply which may answer as a sufficient defense to all the radical attacks which were so rife at the time.

I have just received and read your letter of the 20th. The purport of it is that we lost the late elections, and the Administration is failing because the war is unsuccessful, and that I must not flatter myself that I am not justly to blame for it. I certainly know that if the war fails, the Administration fails, and that I will be blamed for it, whether I deserve it or not. And I ought to be blamed, if I could do better. You think I could do better; therefore you blame me already. I think I could not do better; therefore I blame you for blaming me. I understand you now to be willing to accept the help of men who are not Republicans, provided they have "heart in it." — Agreed. I want no others. But who is to be the judge of hearts, or of "heart in it"? If I must discard my own judgment, and take yours, I must also take that of others; and by the time I should reject all I should be advised to reject, I should have none left, Republicans or others — not even yourself. For be assured, my dear sir, there are men who have "heart in it" that think you are performing your part as poorly as you think I am performing mine. I certainly have been dissatisfied with the slowness of Buell and McClellan; but before I relieved them I had great fears I should not find successors to them who would do better; and I am sorry to add, that I have seen little since to relieve those fears. I do not clearly see the prospect of any more rapid movements. I fear we shall at last find out the difficulty is in our case rather than in particular generals. I wish to disparage no one — certainly not those who sympathize with me; but I must say I need success more than I need sympathy, and that I have not seen the so much greater evidence of getting success from my sympathizers than from those who are denounced as the contrary. It does seem to me that in the field the two classes have been very much alike in what they have done and what they have failed to do. In sealing their faith with their blood, Baker, and Lyon, and Bohlen, and Richardson, Republicans, did all that men could do; but did they any more than Kearney, Stevens, and Reno, and Mansfield, none of whom were Republicans, and some at least

of whom have been bitterly and repeatedly denounced to me as secession sympathizers? I will not perform the ungrateful task of comparing cases of failure. In answer to your question, Has it not been publicly stated in the newspapers, and apparently proved as a fact, that from the commencement of the war the enemy was continually supplied with information by some of the confidential subordinates of as important an officer as Adjutant-General Thomas? I must say "No," as far as my knowledge extends. And I add that if you can give any tangible evidence upon the subject, I will thank you to come to this city and do so.<sup>1</sup>

The movements for peace which were made at this period on both sides of the line were feeble and without result. Mr. Foote of Tennessee introduced a resolution in the Confederate House of Representatives to the effect "that the signal success with which Divine Providence has so continually blessed our arms for several months past would fully justify the Confederate Government in dispatching a commissioner or commissioners to the Government at Washington City, empowered to propose the terms of a just and honorable peace." Mr. Holt of Georgia offered as a substitute a resolution setting forth that the people of the Confederate States have been always anxious for peace, and that "whenever the Government of the United States shall manifest a like anxiety it should be the duty of the President of the Confederate States to appoint commissioners to treat upon the subject." But both resolution and substitute were laid on the table by a large majority. In the Senate of the United States Mr. Garrett Davis offered a resolution<sup>2</sup> recommending to the States to choose delegates to a convention to be held at Louisville, Kentucky, to take into consideration the condition of the United States and the proper means for a restoration of the Union; this was laid upon the table. Mr. Vallandigham also offered resolutions for peace in the House of Representatives; but neither in the North nor in the South was there at that time a party sufficiently powerful to bring any measures for peace to the point of legislation, though on both sides there was a strong current of agitation for the termination of the war, which, being regarded and treated as treasonable, was easily held in check.

From time to time there were unauthorised attempts of individuals, inspired by restlessness or a love of notoriety, to set on foot amateur negotiations for peace. One of the most active and persistent of the peace politicians of the North was Fernando Wood of New York. He held a unique position in his party. While strongly sympathizing with the secessionists, and openly affiliating with them in public, he

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Schurz, Nov. 24, 1862. MS.

<sup>2</sup> "Congressional Globe," third session Thirty-seventh Congress, Part I., p. 4, Dec. 2, 1862.



nevertheless tried to keep up a sort of furtive confidential relation with the leading members of the Government. He frequently visited the White House, the State Department, and the Treasury Department, but emulated the discretion of Nicodemus as to the hour of his visits. No rebuffs daunted him; he apparently cared nothing for the evident distrust with which his overtures were received. He kept them up as long as the war lasted, probably in the hope that the time might come for him to play a conspicuous and important part in the final negotiations for peace. He used every occasion to ingratiate himself with the President. He wrote, congratulating him on the change in the War Department in the beginning of 1862, as indicating the President's "ability to govern, and also his executive power and will."<sup>1</sup> Later in the same year he wrote complaining that the radical abolitionists of New York represented him as hostile to the Administration and as in sympathy with the States in rebellion against the Government. He denied these charges, and begged the President to "rely upon his support in his efforts to maintain the integrity of the Union."<sup>1</sup> In September, after making a speech furiously denouncing the Government for its arbitrary arrests, he wrote a confidential note to the President, making the usual explanation that he had been incorrectly reported: "All I said applied to those arrests that had been made through error or misrepresentation, and exclusively as to the truly loyal." In November, after a similar tirade, he wrote to Mr. Seward, with a striking lack of originality, making the same plea of an incorrect report. "I did not," he said, "utter the treasonable sentiments reported." Having in this way, as he thought, established himself in the confidence of the President, he wrote him a letter on the 8th of December, 1862, pretending that he had "reliable and truthful authority" to say that the Southern States would send representatives to the next Congress provided that a full and general amnesty should permit them to do so, no guaranty or terms being asked for other than the amnesty referred to.

As an humble but loyal citizen [he said], deeply impressed with the great necessity of restoring the Union of these States, I ask your immediate attention to this subject. The magnitude of the interests at stake warrant some executive action predicated upon this information, if it be only to ascertain if it be grounded upon even probable foundation. If it shall prove groundless no harm shall have been done, provided the inquiry be made, as it can be, without compromising the Government or injury to the cause in which it is now engaged. If, however, it shall prove well founded, there is no estimate too high to place upon its national value.

<sup>1</sup> MS.

<sup>2</sup> McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 296.

The immediate object of his letter became evident in the following paragraph:

Now, therefore, Mr. President, I suggest that gentlemen whose former political and social relations with the leaders of the Southern revolt [*sic*] may be allowed to hold unofficial correspondence with them on this subject—the correspondence to be submitted to you. It may be thus ascertained what, if any, credence may be given to these statements, and also whether a peaceful solution of the present struggle may not be attainable.<sup>2</sup>

The President answered on the 12th of December. Referring to the first paragraph above quoted, he said:

I strongly suspect your information will prove to be groundless; nevertheless, I thank you for communicating it to me. Understanding the phrase in the paragraph above quoted, "the Southern States would send representatives to the next Congress," to be substantially the same as that the people of the Southern States would cease resistance, and would re-inaugurate, submit to, and maintain the national authority within the limits of such States, under the Constitution of the United States, I say that in such case the war would cease on the part of the United States, and that if, within a reasonable time, "a full and general amnesty" were necessary to such end, it would not be withheld. I do not think it would be proper now for me to communicate this formally or informally to the people of the Southern States. My belief is that they already know it; and when they choose, if ever, they can communicate with me unequivocally. Nor do I think it proper now to suspend military operations to try any experiment of negotiation. I should nevertheless receive with great pleasure the exact information you now have, and also such other as you may in any way obtain. Such information might be more valuable before the 1st of January than afterwards.

These last words refer, of course, to the impending proclamation of emancipation.

Between the date of Mr. Lincoln's letter and Mr. Wood's reply came the frightful carnage at Fredericksburg, which emboldened Mr. Wood to say that the President's reply had filled him with profound regret.

It declines [he said] what I had conceived to be an innocent effort to ascertain the foundation for information in my possession of a desire in the South to return to the Union. It thus appears to be an indication on your part [*sic*] to continue a policy which, in my judgment, is not only unwise, but, in the opinion of many, is in conflict with the constitutional authority vested in the Federal Government.

He protested earnestly against this policy, and felt encouraged to renew the suggestions of his letter of the 8th.

I feel [he said] that military operations so bloody and exhausting as ours must sooner or later be suspended. The day of suspension must come. The

only question is whether it shall be before the whole American people, North and South, shall be involved in general ruin, or whether it shall be whilst there is remaining sufficient of the recuperative element of life by which to restore our once happy, prosperous, and peaceful American Union.

To this letter the President made no reply.

Other volunteers from time to time tendered their services in the same field. Mr. Duff Green, a Virginia politician, wrote to the President from Richmond as early as the 20th of January, asking permission to visit Washington. He said that if he could see Mr. Lincoln and converse with him on the subject he could do much to pave the way for an early termination of the war. Receiving no encouragement from Washington, he asked the same permission from Richmond, but this request came to nothing. In the summer of 1863, however, an effort for peace negotiations was made, which came with such high sanction and involved personages of such individual and political importance that it requires particular mention.

About the middle of June, Mr. Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Southern Confederacy, became convinced that the time was auspicious for initiating negotiations for peace. He thought he saw reasons for great encouragement in the attitude of the North; the great gains of the Democratic party in the last autumnal elections, the pamphlet of Mr. George Ticknor Curtis attacking the measures of the Administration, a public meeting in favor of peace held without disturbance in the city of New York in which violent speeches were made by Mr. Fernando Wood and others, and the nomination for governor of Ohio of Vallandigham are all mentioned by him<sup>1</sup> as facts going to show that the people of the North were wearying of the war. On this insufficient evidence he wrote to Mr. Davis proposing that he should go to Washington, ostensibly to negotiate some questions involving the exchange of prisoners, but saying that he "was not without hopes that indirectly he could now turn attention to a general adjustment, upon such basis as might ultimately be acceptable to both parties, and stop the further effusion of blood in a contest so irrational, unchristian, and so inconsistent with all recognized American principles." He assured Mr. Davis that he entertained but one idea of the basis of final adjustment—the recognition of the sovereignty of the States, and the right of each in its sovereign capacity to determine its own destiny. He did not believe the Federal Government was yet ripe for such acknowledgment, but he did believe that the time had come for a

proper presentation of the question to the authorities at Washington. "While, therefore," he says, "a mission might be dispatched on a minor point, the greater one could possibly, with prudence, discretion, and skill, be opened to view and brought in discussion, in a way that would lead eventually to successful results. This would depend upon many circumstances," he adds complacently, "but no little upon the character and efficiency of the agent. . . . So feeling, I have been prompted to address you these lines." Upon the receipt of this letter Mr. Davis sent a telegram requesting his Vice-President to go immediately to Richmond. He arrived there on the 22d of June; but in the ten days which had elapsed since his letter was written he found that changes of the utmost importance had taken place in the military situation. On the one hand the Confederate authorities had despaired of the condition of Pemberton at Vicksburg, and expected that any day might bring them tidings of his surrender, but on the other hand they were anticipating with sanguine enthusiasm the most magnificent results from Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania. Mr. Stephens, in the work which he wrote at his leisure after the war was ended, represents that in these changed conditions he was inclined to give up his mission, thinking that no good could result from it, as the movement of Lee into Pennsylvania would greatly excite the war spirit and strengthen the war party—a view of the case in which Mr. Davis positively declined to agree. He thought Mr. Lincoln would be more likely to receive a commissioner for peace if General Lee's army was actually threatening Washington than if it was lying quietly south of the Rappahannock. The Confederate Cabinet being called together, they agreed with Mr. Davis; they thought the Federal Government might be best approached while under the threat of the guns of Lee, and before they should receive fresh hope and encouragement from the surrender of Pemberton, which was now considered inevitable. An arrangement was made for Stephens to proceed by land on the route taken by Lee's army, and to communicate with the Washington authorities from his headquarters;<sup>2</sup> but excessive rains and the badness of the roads caused a change of route, and the invalid Vice-President was therefore saved a most distressing journey, from which he would have come "bootless home and weather-beaten back." Mr. Mallory, the Secretary of the Confederate Navy, gave him a small steamer, and accompanied by Mr. Robert Ould as his secretary, he steamed away to Fort Monroe. In any case his mission

<sup>1</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., p. 558.

<sup>2</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., p. 566.

would probably have been fruitless, but he states only the truth when he claims that he arrived at an unlucky moment. He communicated with Admiral Lee in Hampton Roads on the Fourth of July, just after Lee's march to the North had ended in disastrous failure at Gettysburg. He sent the admiral a letter stating that he was "bearer of a communication in writing from Jefferson Davis, Commander-in-Chief of the Confederate land and naval forces, to Abraham Lincoln, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States," and that he desired to proceed directly to Washington in his own steamer, the *Torpedo*. The titles by which Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Davis were designated in this note had been the subject of anxious consultation in Richmond. Stephens's commission from the Confederate President gave Mr. Lincoln the title above quoted to avoid the necessity of claiming the style of President for Mr. Davis; but in case Mr. Lincoln should stand upon his dignity and refuse the letter addressed to him as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, Mr. Davis had prepared for Mr. Stephens a duplicate letter addressed to Mr. Lincoln as President and signed by Mr. Davis in the same style; if to this letter objections were made, on the ground that Mr. Davis was not recognized to be President of the Confederacy, Mr. Stephens's mission was then to be at an end, "as such conference," Mr. Davis said, "is admissible only on a footing of perfect equality." But all this care, foresight, and punctilio went for nothing. As soon as Mr. Lincoln received the telegram in which Admiral Lee announced to the Secretary of the Navy the arrival of Mr. Stephens, he immediately wrote on the back of the dispatch a note to be sent by Mr. Welles to Admiral Lee, in which, without paying any attention whatever to the style of Mr. Stephens's application, he went directly to the heart of the matter. This draft of an order ran:

You will not permit Mr. Stephens to proceed to Washington or to pass the blockade. He does not make known the subjects to which the communication in writing from Mr. Davis relates, which he bears and seeks to deliver in person to the President, and upon which he desires to confer. Those subjects can only be military, or not military, or partly both. Whatever may be military will be readily received if offered through the well understood military channel. Of course nothing else will be received by the President when offered, as in this case, in terms assuming the independence of the so-called Confederate States, and anything will be received and carefully considered by him when offered by any influential person, or persons, in terms not assuming the independence of the so-called Confederate States.<sup>1</sup>

This note he afterwards evidently considered as entering too much into detail, and he there-

fore caused the Secretary of the Navy to send this brief reply to Admiral Lee:

The request of A. H. Stephens is inadmissible. The customary agents and channels are adequate for all needful communication and conferences between the United States forces and the insurgents.

Mr. Stephens, when he came afterwards to relate the history of this abortive mission,<sup>2</sup> frankly admitted that his ulterior purpose was not so much to act upon Mr. Lincoln and the then ruling authorities at Washington as through them, when the correspondence should be published, upon the great mass of the people in the Northern States, who were becoming, he thought, so sensitively alive to the great danger of their own liberties. He wanted, he said, "to deeply impress the growing constitutional party at the North with a full realization of the true nature and ultimate tendencies of the war"; to show them "that the surest way to maintain their liberties was to allow us the separate enjoyment of ours."

Though this hope was baffled by the rebuff which Mr. Stephens received at Fort Monroe, which prevented him from laying before his sympathizing friends of the North his view of their endangered liberties and the best means of preserving them, it may be doubted whether the partisans of peace at the North lost anything by this incident. Certainly, throughout the whole summer of 1863, they fought their losing battle with a courage and a determination equal to that which their sympathizers were displaying in the South. But the very energy and malice with which they carried on the contestrous the loyal people of the North to still greater efforts and increased the dimensions of their ultimate triumph. The election in New Hampshire, the first which took place in the spring of 1863, while it brought victory to the Republicans, still gave painful evidence of the bitter hostility of the Democratic party to the prosecution of the war. Senator Daniel Clark, writing to Mr. Lincoln,<sup>3</sup> said:

Scarcely a Democrat supported the Administration. Almost every one who had heretofore avowed himself for the Union and the country turned in for peace and party. Yet we have beaten them. They have retired from the field. The two houses in convention will choose a Republican governor, and Frank Pierce in retirement will not have beaten Abraham Lincoln in office.

There were after this, during the summer and early autumn, moments of depression and discouragement in which it seemed that the malignant energy displayed by the opposition

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln, autograph MS.

<sup>2</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., p. 561.

<sup>3</sup> March 13. MS.

could not be without disastrous effect, and as the day of election drew near in the "October States" both sides felt justified in renewing their utmost efforts. In Pennsylvania the contest presented features of special interest. Andrew G. Curtin,<sup>1</sup> who, as governor of the State, had given not only efficient but enthusiastic support to the war, was opposed by Judge George W. Woodward, who, as one of the Democratic justices of the Supreme Court of the State, had just aimed a blow at the prosecution of the war which would have been fatal if followed up and sustained by other courts. He had declared the enrollment law unconstitutional, and upon the record thus made had been nominated for governor. The friends of Mr. Curtin relied on the war spirit to carry their candidate through, and towards the close of the campaign they claimed, most unjudiciously, that General McClellan, whose popularity was still great among the Democrats of Pennsylvania, was in favor of the election of Curtin, with whom he had always sustained friendly personal relations. Just on the eve of election this matter came to the attention of McClellan. Desiring to keep his political standing with his party intact, he sought an interview with Judge Woodward and published a letter declaring that, "having had a full conversation with the judge, he found that their views agreed, and that he regarded his election as governor of Pennsylvania called for by the interests of the nation."<sup>2</sup> But even this dilatory reënforcement of the peace party was not enough to save their canvass; the Republicans of the State were as thoroughly alive to the emergency as their opponents, and the vote polled was greater by many thousands than had ever been cast before. Governor Curtin was reëlected by a majority of over fifteen thousand, and Chief-Justice Lowrie, who with Woodward had aimed from the bench the most mischievous blow ever dealt at the enrollment bill, was defeated for reëlection by Daniel Agnew, and the court, thus reconstituted, reversed its previous judgment.

In Ohio the contest was marked with equal bitterness and enthusiasm. The Democrats, working against hope, but with undaunted persistency for their banished candidate, Vallandigham, were buried under the portentous

majority of one hundred thousand votes. This overwhelming triumph of the Union party in the October States made success certain in the general election of the next month. The tide had turned, and the current now swept steadily onward in one way. The great State of New York, which had been shaken to its center by the frightful crimes and excitement incident to the draft riots, now witnessed a great popular political reaction; and reversing the majority of ten thousand given to Seymour in 1862, the Republican State ticket was elected by thirty thousand, and the legislature also passed into the hands of the Unionists. The success of the year which was dearest to the heart of the President was that attained in Maryland. The second passage of rebel armies over her territory seemed at last to have purged the secession sentiment from that State, and four Unionists out of her five districts were elected to Congress, and an emancipation State ticket was carried by twenty thousand majority.

Throughout the West the Union sentiment asserted itself with irresistible strength. An attempt marked with singular boldness and energy had been made during the year by the leaders of the peace party to gain control of the great States of the North-west, which for a time seemed to them so promising that the rebel emissaries in Canada, being informed of it, gave encouragement to their principals in Richmond to hope for the formation of a North-western Confederacy in opposition to the National Government. Meetings were continually held, secret societies were everywhere active, and every effort was made in public and in private to form a basis of organized hostility against the Government. The culmination of this important and dangerous movement may be regarded as having taken place at Springfield, Illinois, on the 17th of June. A great mass meeting, enormous in numbers and wild with enthusiasm, under the presidency of Senator Richardson, listened during all a summer's day to the most furious and vehement oratory, and at last passed resolutions demanding nothing less than submission to the South. They resolved "that a further offensive prosecution of this war tends to subvert the Constitution and the Government, and entails upon this nation all the disastrous conse-

<sup>1</sup> To show how the political emergency overcame the most inveterate personal hostilities, we give a characteristic letter which Simon Cameron wrote to Lincoln September 18, 1863. He said that Curtin would be reëlected, and that all his friends would support him, but that "if the result were to operate simply on his own private fortunes, there are many good Republicans and pious Christians who would see him in — first. He will cheat us when it is over, and, if he can, sell us to our enemies. But he is now, by one of those accidents which sometimes control great events, the rep-

resentative of the loyalty of this State, and his defeat might be disastrous to the country. My heart is too much engaged in the struggle for ending the rebellion to allow me to hesitate at even the support of Mr. Curtin."

<sup>2</sup> This letter of McClellan was a severe disappointment to Curtin, who had regarded him as his friend. A friend (now Sir John Puleston, M. P.) who was with him when the newspaper containing McClellan's letter was received said, "'*Et tu, Brute!*'" was not a circumstance to it." [J. H., Diary.]

quences of misrule and anarchy"; that they were "in favor of peace upon a basis of restoration of the Union"; for the accomplishment of which they proposed "a national convention to settle upon terms of peace, which should have in view the restoration of the Union as it was, and the securing by constitutional amendment of such rights of the several States and people thereof as honor and justice demand."

This bold challenge was accepted by the Republicans with equal determination and superior means. The guns of Vicksburg and of Gettysburg might have been regarded as sufficient answer to the resolutions of the Springfield mass meeting, but the Copperheads<sup>1</sup> of that State only clamored the louder for peace after these great victories, and the political canvass went on with tenfold vehemence in the tacit truce of arms that followed the battles of July. The Republicans prepared for the beginning of September the greatest mass meeting of the campaign; and to give especial significance to the occasion, it was to take place at the home of Lincoln, on the very spot where defiant treason had trumpeted to the world its challenge in June.

It was the ardent wish of the Illinois Republicans that Mr. Lincoln might be with them on this important day. Mr. James C. Conkling, chairman of the committee of arrangements, wrote urging him to come in person.

There is a bad element [he said] in this State, as well as others, and every public demonstration in favor of law and order and constitutional government will have a favorable influence. The importance of our meeting, therefore, at the capital of a State which has sent so many soldiers into the army, and which exercises such a controlling power in the West, cannot be overestimated.<sup>2</sup>

For a moment the President cherished the hope of going to Springfield and once more in his life renewing the sensation, so dear to politicians, of personal contact with great and enthusiastic masses, and of making one more speech to shouting thousands of his fellow-citizens. The temptation, however, only lasted for a moment, and instead of going he wrote a letter which was read amid the hushed attention of an immense auditory, and passed in a moment into the small number of American political classics. The meeting was an enormous one in numbers and in hot, tumultuous feeling; it was addressed by the greatest orators of the Republican party; speaking went on

continuously at many stands from morning until twilight. The speeches were marked by the most advanced and unflinching Republican doctrine; the proclamation of emancipation, the arming of negroes, received universal adhesion, and of course every reference to Mr. Lincoln's name was received with thunders of applause; but with all these features of the highest interest and importance, the meeting can only live in the memories of men as the occasion of the letter which Mr. Lincoln wrote to its chairman:

Your letter, inviting me to attend a mass meeting of unconditional Union men, to be held at the capital of Illinois on the 3d day of September, has been received. It would be very agreeable to me to thus meet my old friends at my own home, but I cannot just now be absent from here so long as a visit there would require.

The meeting is to be of all those who maintain unconditional devotion to the Union, and I am sure my old political friends will thank me for tendering, as I do, the nation's gratitude to those other noble men whom no partisan malice or partisan hope can make false to the nation's life.

There are those who are dissatisfied with me. To such I would say: You desire peace, and you blame me that we do not have it. But how can we attain it? There are but three conceivable ways. First, to suppress the rebellion by force of arms. This I am trying to do. Are you for it? If you are, so far we are agreed. If you are not for it, a second way is to give up the Union. I am against this. Are you for it? If you are, you should say so plainly. If you are not for force, nor yet for dissolution, there only remains some imaginable compromise.

I do not believe any compromise embracing the maintenance of the Union is now possible. All I learn leads to a directly opposite belief. The strength of the rebellion is its military—its army. That army dominates all the country and all the people within its range. Any offer of terms made by any man or men within that range, in opposition to that army, is simply nothing for the present, because such man or men have no power whatever to enforce their side of a compromise if one were made with them.

To illustrate: Suppose refugees from the South and peace-men of the North get together in convention and frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union; in what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania, and I think can ultimately drive it out of existence. But no paper compromise to which the controllers of Lee's army are not agreed can at all affect that army. In an effort at such compromise we should waste time which the enemy would improve to our disadvantage, and that would be all.

Democrats, who in some instances wore butternuts as breastpins, and in others, with a clever return upon their opponents, cut the copper head of the Goddess of Liberty from the old-fashioned red cent and bore it as their cognizance.

<sup>2</sup> Conkling to Lincoln, Aug. 21. MS.

<sup>1</sup> The "peace Democrats" of the North were variously nicknamed "Butternuts" and "Copperheads." The former name referred to the domestic dye which gave color to the uniforms of the Confederate soldiers, and the latter was the name of the most venomous snake in the West. In each case the nickname was assumed and borne with bravado by the younger

A compromise, to be effective, must be made either with those who control the rebel army, or with the people first liberated from the domination of that army by the successes of our own army. Now, allow me to assure you that no word or intimation from that rebel army, or from any of the men controlling it, in relation to any peace compromise, has ever come to my knowledge or belief. All charges and insinuations to the contrary are deceptive and groundless. And I promise you that if any such proposition shall hereafter come, it shall not be rejected and kept a secret from you. I freely acknowledge myself the servant of the people according to the bond of service,—the United States Constitution,—and that as such I am responsible to them.

But, to be plain, you are dissatisfied with me about the negro. Quite likely there is a difference of opinion between you and myself upon that subject. I certainly wish all men could be free, while I suppose you do not. Yet I have neither adopted nor proposed any measure which is not consistent with even your view, provided you are for the Union. I suggested compensated emancipation, to which you replied you wished not to be taxed to buy negroes. But I had not asked you to be taxed to buy negroes, except in such way as to save you from greater taxation to save the Union exclusively by other means.

You dislike the Emancipation Proclamation, and perhaps would have it retracted. You say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said—if so much—is that slaves are property. Is there, has there ever been, any question that by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it helps us or hurts the enemy? Armies, the world over, destroy enemies' property when they cannot use it, and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel. Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes and non-combatants, male and female.

But the proclamation, as law, either is valid or is not valid. If it is not valid it needs no retraction. If it is valid it cannot be retracted, any more than the dead can be brought to life. Some of you profess to think its retraction would operate favorably for the Union. Why better after the retraction than before the issue? There was more than a year and a half of trial to suppress the rebellion before the proclamation issued, the last one hundred days of which passed under an explicit notice that it was coming, unless averted by those in revolt returning to their allegiance. The war has certainly progressed as favorably for us since the issue of the proclamation as before.

I know, as fully as one can know the opinion of others, that some of the commanders of our armies in the field, who have given us our most important successes, believe the emancipation policy and the use of the colored troops constitute the heaviest blow yet dealt to the rebellion, and that at least one of these important successes could not have been achieved when it was but for the aid of black

soldiers. Among the commanders holding these views are some who have never had any affinity with what is called "Abolitionism" or with "Republican party politics," but who hold them purely as military opinions. I submit these opinions as being entitled to some weight against the objections often urged that emancipation and arming the blacks are unwise as military measures, and were not adopted as such in good faith.

You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you—but no matter. Fight you, then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes. I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that extent it weakened the enemy in his resistance to you. Do you think differently? I thought that whatever negroes can be got to do as soldiers leaves just so much less for white soldiers to do in saving the Union. Does it appear otherwise to you? But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us, they must be prompted by the strongest motive, even the promise of freedom. And the promise, being made, must be kept.

The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great North-west for it. Nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they met New England, Empire, Keystone, and Jersey, hewing their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a hand. On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one, and let none be banned who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro', Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's web-feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou; and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been and made their tracks. Thanks to all. For the great Republic—for the principle it lives by and keeps alive—for man's vast future—thanks to all.

Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And there will be some black men who can remember that with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet they have helped mankind on to this great consummation; while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they strove to hinder it.

Still let us not be over sanguine of a speedy, final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently

apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in His own good time, will give us the rightful result.<sup>1</sup>

Among all the state papers of Mr. Lincoln from his nomination to his death this letter is unique. It may be called his last stump speech, the only one made during his Presidency. We find in it all the qualities that made him in Illinois the incomparable political leader of his party for a generation. There is the same close, unerring logic, the same innate perception of political conduct, the same wit and sarcasm, the same touch of picturesque eloquence, which abounded in his earlier and more careless oratory, but all wonderfully heightened, strengthened, and chastened by a sense of immense responsibility. In this letter, which the chairman took only ten minutes to read, he said more than all the orators at all the stands. It was, like most of his speeches, addressed principally to his opponents, and in this short space he appealed successively to their reason, to their sympathies, and to their fears. By a succession of unanswerable syllogisms he showed them how untenable was their position. He appealed to their generosity, to their sense of duty, to their patriotism, even to their love of glory, and in the end he held out to them with dignified austerity the prospect of shame and self-reproach which lay before them if they continued their hostility to the sacred cause of humanity and nationality. The style of this letter is as remarkable as its matter; each sentence, like a trained athlete, is divested of every superfluous word and syllable, yet nowhere is there a word lacking, any more than a word too much. Modest as he was, he knew the value of his own work, and when a friend called to ask him if he was going to Springfield he replied, "No, I shall send them a letter instead; and it will be a rather good letter."<sup>2</sup>

The Springfield convention, taking up the gauntlet thrown down by the disloyal mass-meeting of June, resolved "that we will lay aside all party questions and forget all party prejudices and devote ourselves unreservedly to the

support of our Government, until the rebellion shall be finally and forever crushed": they resolved that "whatever else may die, the Union shall live to perpetuate civil liberty; whatever else may perish, the Government shall survive in all its constitutional integrity; whatever else may be destroyed, the nation shall be preserved in its territorial unity; and to this end we pledge anew our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."<sup>3</sup>

In this spirit the campaign was fought through to its victorious close, and on the night of the 3d of November the President, sitting in the War Department, had the pleasure of learning from all the clicking wires about him that the cause of nationality and freedom was triumphant from one end of the Union to the other; that the people had come up fully abreast of him on the question of emancipation, and that the nation was now substantially united in the resolute purpose to prosecute the war to its legitimate conclusion. These victories at the polls made sure the good results of this summer of battles; the Administration felt itself confirmed anew and strengthened for the work before it. To those members of the Administration who had formerly acted with the Democratic party there was a certain sense of humiliation and disappointment. Mr. Stanton said, "The disheartening thing in the affair was that there seemed to be no patriotic principle left in the Democratic party, the whole organization voting solidly against the country."<sup>4</sup> Mr. Seward, on the contrary, came back from Auburn, where he had gone home to vote, in the highest spirits. He considered the political attitude of New York absolutely safe in the present and future. He thought "the crowd that follows power had come over to the Republicans; the Democrats had lost their leaders when Toombs and Davis and Breckinridge forsook them and went South; the inferior Northern Democrats who succeeded to the leadership had proved their incompetence; the best and most energetic portion of the rank and file of the party were now voting shoulder to shoulder with the Republicans."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to James C. Conkling, Aug. 26, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Nothing he ever uttered had a more instantaneous success. Mr. Sumner immediately wrote to him: "Thanks for your true and noble letter. It is a historical document. The case is admirably stated, so that all but the wicked must confess its force. It cannot be answered." Henry Wilson wrote him: "God Almighty bless you for your noble, patriotic, and Christian letter. It will be on the lips and in the hearts of hundreds of thousands this day." Among the letters which the President most appreciated was one from the venerable Josiah Quincy, then ninety-one years of age, who wrote: "Old age has its privileges, which I hope this letter will not exceed; but I cannot refrain from expressing to you my gratification and my gratitude for your letter to the Illinois convention — happy, timely, conclusive, and effective. What you say concerning emancipation, your proclamation, and your course of

proceeding in relation to it was due to truth and to your own character, shamefully assailed as it has been. The development is an imperishable monument of wisdom and virtue." After discussing the question of emancipation, he continued: "I write under the impression that the victory of the United States in this war is inevitable; compromise is impossible. Peace on any other basis would be the establishment of two nations, each hating the other, both military, both necessarily warlike, their territories interlocked with a tendency of never-ceasing hostility. Can we leave to posterity a more cruel inheritance, or one more hopeless of happiness and prosperity?" Mr. Lincoln answered this letter in a tone expressive of his reverence for the age and illustrious character of the writer.

<sup>3</sup> "History of Sangamon County," p. 315.

<sup>4</sup> J. H., Diary, Nov. 3. MS.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 8. MS.

No party," he said, "can survive an opposition to a war. The Revolutionary heroes were political oracles till 1812, and afterwards the 'soldiers of the late war' succeeded to their honors. But we are hereafter a nation of soldiers. These people will be trying to forget years hence that they ever opposed this war. I had to carry affidavits to prove I had nothing to do with the Hartford Convention. Now the party that gained eminence by the folly of the Federalists in opposing the war have the chalice commended to their own lips. I told the Democratic leaders," he said, with his habitual sub-acid good nature, "how they might have saved themselves and carried the next Presidential election, by being more loyal and earnest in support of the Administration than the Republican party. The Lord knows that would not have been hard."

Although in this memorable contest the Republicans presented a united front to the common enemy, within their own organization there were those bitter differences of opinion which always arise among men of strong convictions. The President's anteroom was thronged with earnest men who desired to warn him in person against the machinations of other men equally earnest, and his mail was encumbered by letters from every part of the country, and every shade of faction, filled with similar denunciations and warnings. The pure and able Senator Dixon of Connecticut wrote: "The heresies of Sumner are doing immense harm in a variety of ways. If his doctrine prevails, this country will be ruined. I do hope you and Mr. Seward will stand firm." From the other wing of the party came the most passionate denunciations of Seward and those who were associated with him in the popular mind; and after the election Senator Chandler of Michigan, one of the most powerful of the Republicans who had by this time assumed to themselves the title of Radicals, having seen in the newspapers a paragraph that Mr. Thurlow Weed and Governor Morgan had been in consultation with the President in regard to his message, wrote a vehement letter to the President, telling him there was a "patriotic organization in all the free and border States, containing over one million voters, every man of whom is your friend upon the Radical measures of your Administration; but there is not a Seward, Weed, or Blair man among them. How are these men," he asked, "to be of service to you in any way? They are a millstone about your neck. You drop them and they are politically ended forever. Conservatives and traitors are buried together. For God's sake do not exhume their remains in your message. They will smell

worse than Lazarus after he had been buried three days."<sup>1</sup> There was no man slower than Mr. Lincoln to take personal offense at even the most indiscreet advice or censure; but he answered this letter of Mr. Chandler in a tone of unusual dignity and severity. "I have seen," he said, "Governor Morgan and Thurlow Weed separately, but not together, within the last ten days; but neither of them mentioned the forthcoming message, or said anything, so far as I can remember, which brought the thought of the message to my mind. I am very glad the elections this autumn have gone favorably and that I have not by native depravity, or under evil influences, done anything bad enough to prevent the good result. I hope to 'stand firm' enough to not go backward, and yet not go forward fast enough to wreck the country's cause."<sup>2</sup>

In the month of October Mr. Hood, the postmaster at Chattanooga, wrote to the President a letter setting forth the particulars of a scheme which Emerson Etheridge, Clerk of the House of Representatives, had entered into to give control of the next House to the opposition. Etheridge was a member of Congress from Tennessee before the war, and his sincere attachment to the Union in the face of much obloquy and persecution at home had endeared him to the Republicans in Congress and caused him to be given the post of Clerk of the House; but in the course of two years of war he had become separated from his former political affiliations and now sympathized with the opposition. Mr. Hood, who wrote apparently with great regret as a personal friend of Etheridge, claimed to have become aware of Etheridge's intention to leave off the rolls of the House the names of all members whose certificates did not bear on their face the statement that they had been elected "according to the laws of the State or of the United States." He based this action upon the provisions of a law which had been hurriedly passed during the last day of the Thirty-seventh Congress. At the same time it was understood that he had intimated to the Democratic members what his action would be, so as to allow them to provide themselves with certificates in the form required. The President, on the receipt of this news, put himself confidentially in communication with leading Republicans in all the loyal States, requesting them, without publicity, to have prepared duplicate certificates meeting the objection which it was thought that Etheridge would raise to the ordinary ones. This was in most cases attended to, but not in all, so that when the members began to arrive in Washington a few days before the day fixed for the opening of Congress, a general impression of the contemplated action of Etheridge

<sup>1</sup> Chandler to Lincoln, Nov. 15, 1863. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln to Chandler, Nov. 20, 1863. MS.



had transpired and there was some uneasiness in regard to the issue. The President had done what he could to meet the legal requirements of the case; but, that having been done, he was not inclined to rely exclusively upon moral force. In view of the threatened outrage he sent for some of the leading members of Congress and told them the main thing was to be sure that all the Union members should be present. "Then," he said, "if Mr. Etheridge undertakes revolutionary proceedings, let him be carried out on a chip, and let our men organize the House."<sup>1</sup> This practical solution of the trouble had occurred to others, and the Rev. Owen Lovejoy, disregarding for a moment the etiquette of his sacred calling, announced that he was quite ready himself to take charge of Etheridge, and was confident of his muscular superiority to the Tennessean.

There was not so much uncertainty in regard to the issue as to prevent an animated contest among the Republicans for the caucus nomination for the speakership. The prominent candidates were Mr. Schuyler Colfax of Indiana and Mr. Elihu B. Washburne of Illinois. Mr. Cox of Ohio was the principal candidate for the barren honor of the caucus nomination among the Democrats; though for some time before the meeting of Congress there was a good deal of not very practical talk in regard to the nomination of General Frank P. Blair of Missouri as a compromise candidate to be supported by the Democrats and by a few of the so-called Conservative Republicans. General Blair, while one of the earliest and ablest Republicans of the border States, one who had distinguished himself equally in politics and in the field in the cause of freedom and of progress, had, through the vehemence of the factional fight which had so long been raging in Missouri, been gradually forced, partly by the denunciations of his enemies, and partly by his own combative instincts, into an attitude almost of hostility to the Republican party of the nation. Mr. Lincoln saw this with great regret. He had a high personal regard for Blair, and deplored the predicament into which his passionate temper and the assaults of his enemies were gradually crowding him. In the autumn of 1863 the Postmaster-General, in conversation with the President, said that his brother Frank would be guided by the President's wishes as to whether he should continue with his command in the field or take the seat in Congress to which he had been elected from Missouri. The President answered in a letter, dated 2d of November, saying:

Some days ago I understood you to say that your brother, General Frank Blair, desired to be guided by my wishes as to whether he will occupy his seat

in Congress or remain in the field. My wish, then, is compounded of what I believe will be best for the country and best for him; and it is that he will come here, put his military commission in my hands, take his seat, go into caucus with our friends, abide the nominations, help elect the nominees, and thus aid to organize a House of Representatives which will really support the Government in the war. If the result shall be the election of himself as Speaker, let him serve in that position. If not, let him retake his commission and return to the army. For the country this will heal a dangerous schism; for him it will relieve from a dangerous position. By a misunderstanding, as I think, he is in danger of being permanently separated from those with whom only he can ever have a real sympathy—the sincere opponents of slavery. It will be a mistake if he shall allow the provocations offered him by insincere time-servers to drive him from the house of his own building. He is young yet. He has abundant talent—quite enough to occupy all his time without devoting any to temper. He is rising in military skill and usefulness. His recent appointment to the command of a corps, by one so competent to judge as General Sherman, proves this. In that line he can serve both the country and himself more profitably than he could as a member of Congress upon the floor. The foregoing is what I would say if Frank Blair were my brother instead of yours.<sup>2</sup>

In pursuance of this letter Blair came to Washington, though before Congress assembled his candidacy for the speakership had passed out of sight. He took his seat, served for some months, and went back to the army in command of a corps, as the President had promised. This relinquishment of and restoration to a high command in the army occasioned much feeling and a violent attack upon the President on the part of the Radical Republicans, which continued even after he had submitted in a message to Congress the entire correspondence, which reflected nothing but credit upon all parties.

The canvass for Speaker closed on Saturday night, the 5th of December, Washburne withdrawing from the field, and Colfax being nominated by acclamation. All the next day there was great excitement at the hotels frequented by politicians in regard to Etheridge's proposed course of action, which was now no longer a secret to any one. The comments he everywhere heard upon his conduct had its effect upon his nerves, and he began to talk in a complaining and apologetic tone, saying he was simply obeying the law and there was no reason why Republicans should regard him vindictively. The next day, when the House opened, while he did not flinch from the position he had occupied, he did nothing arbitrary or revolutionary. He left off the roll the names of all those members whose certificates were not, in his opinion, in due form, but readily

<sup>1</sup> J. G. N., MS. Memoranda.

<sup>2</sup> MS.

entertained a motion to restore them. This met with a hot protest from some of the pro-slavery members, but a vote was taken showing a majority of twenty for the Government. Mr. Washburne nominated Mr. Colfax, and he was elected by the same majority in a total vote of 181, the Democratic vote being scattered among many members, Mr. Cox receiving more than any other.

As soon as Congress came together Mr. Fernando Wood renewed his furtive overtures with the Government for the appointment of peace commissioners from what he called his wing of the Democratic party, making no secret of his belief that he himself was the most appropriate choice which could be made for such a function. He urged the President to publish some sort of amnesty for the Northern sympathizers with the rebellion which would include Mr. Vallandigham and permit him to return to the country. He promised that in that case there should be two Democratic candidates in the field at the next Presidential election. The President declined his proposition, but he would not take no for an answer. He called again on the morning of the 14th of December and the President refused to see him, merely sending word by a servant that he had nothing further to say to him.<sup>1</sup> Later in the day Mr. Wood offered, in the House of Representatives, a resolution "that the President be requested to appoint three commissioners, who shall be empowered to open negotiations with the authorities at

<sup>1</sup> J. G. N.. MS. Memoranda.

Richmond to the end that this bloody, destructive, and inhuman war shall cease, and the Union be restored upon terms of equity, fraternity, and equality under the Constitution." This resolution was laid upon the table by a party vote, and Mr. Green Clay Smith of Kentucky offered resolutions opposing "any armistice, or intervention, or mediation, or proposition for peace from any quarter so long as there shall be found a rebel in arms against the Government; and we ignore," the resolutions continued, "all party names, lines, and issues, and recognize but two parties in this war—patriots and traitors." Second: "That we hold it to be the duty of Congress to pass all necessary bills to supply men and money, and the duty of the people to render every aid in their power to the constituted authorities of the Government in the crushing out of the rebellion and in bringing the leaders thereof to condign punishment." The third resolution tendered the thanks of Congress to the soldiers in the field. The first resolution was passed by a party vote of ninety-three to sixty-five; the second and third were passed unanimously, with the exception of Mr. B. G. Harris of Maryland. Several times during the session this battle of resolutions was renewed, but always with the same result; the Democratic party constantly favoring negotiations for peace while as constantly declaring their devotion to the Union, and the Republicans repudiating every suggestion of negotiation or compromise so long as the enemies of the Republic bore arms against it.

## THE WESTERN SOLDIER.



WHEN General Sherman said to General Grant, "Your belief in victory I can compare to nothing but the faith of the Christian in the Saviour," he specified one of the leading characteristics of the typical Western soldier. At no time, from Sumter to Appomattox, did that devoted servant of the demands of courage and fortitude doubt the success of the Union cause. It was a part of his temperament, of his philosophy, to look for triumph. Not that he was simply a good-humored optimist, unregardful of adverse conditions, nor yet a victim of blind superstition, political or theological, but that heredity and experience had equipped him with a sense of confidence in himself, in his country, and in the force called fortune that was alike heroic

and logical. He came of a stock that had conquered the frontier wilderness through a long and hard discipline of toil, vigilance, and sacrifice, and in so doing had exalted self-reliance as the first of virtues. His idea of duty had its root in a deep growth of previous endurance, which was also a present possession of honor and practical advantage. The past appealed to him at a short distance and in voices that were personally familiar; the Union meant to him a tangible daily blessing, purchased for him by the direct efforts of his father and grandfather in the founding of new States; and he scorned to think for a moment that he could not repeat such service with similar results upon the field of battle.

In the beginning, to be sure, he misjudged the proportions of the undertaking; but when the whole truth was made plain to him it only served to emphasize his loyalty and confirm

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## THE POMEROY CIRCULAR — THE CLEVELAND CONVENTION — THE RESIGNATION OF CHASE.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### THE POMEROY CIRCULAR.



BEFORE the close of the year 1863 the public mind became greatly preoccupied with the subject of the next presidential election. Though the general drift of opinion was altogether in favor of intrusting to Mr. Lincoln the continuation of the work which he had thus far so well conducted, this feeling was by no means unanimous. It will seem strange to future students of the events of this time that the opposition in the Republican party to Mr. Lincoln, whose name will stand in history as the liberator of the slaves, came almost entirely from the radical antislavery element. The origins of this opposition have been so fully stated in other portions of this work, that it is not worth while to set them forth at any length in this place. They were principally the action of the President in regard to the administration of affairs in Missouri; the conflict between General Frémont and the Missouri conservatives, and between General Schofield and the Missouri radicals; the retention in command of various generals, who, from the radical point of view, had "no heart in the cause"; the deliberation with which the great antislavery acts of the President were performed; and, in general, the dissatisfaction with the slow progress of the war, of eager and ardent spirits imperfectly informed as to the processes of the Government and the facts of the situation. At the end of the year 1863 and the beginning of the following year all these elements of discord were seeking a rallying-point. This it was not easy to find. Every one sufficiently acquainted with practical politics to note the drift of public opinion saw the hopelessness of contending against the popularity of the President. There was not a Republican general in the field, of sufficient prominence to be thought of, who would give the least encouragement for the use of his name against Mr. Lincoln. In neither House of Congress was there a statesman who for a moment would enter into such a contest; and in the higher circles of the Administration there was only one man so short-sighted as not to perceive the expediency of the President's

renomination and the impossibility of preventing it. Mr. Chase alone had the indiscretion to encourage the overtures of the malcontents, and the folly to imagine that he could lead them to success. Pure and disinterested as he was, and devoted with all his energies and powers to the cause of the country, he was always singularly ignorant of the current of public thought and absolutely incapable of judging men in their true relations. He was surrounded by sycophants who constantly assured him of his own strength with the people, and who convinced him at last that all manifestations to the contrary were the result of mystifications set on foot by his enemies. He regarded himself as the friend of Mr. Lincoln; to him and to others he made strong protestations of friendly feeling, which he undoubtedly thought were sincere; but he held so poor an opinion of the President's intellect and character in comparison with his own, that he could not believe the people so blind as deliberately to prefer the President to himself. In November, 1863, he wrote to his son-in-law, Governor Sprague: "If I were controlled by merely personal sentiments, I should prefer the reelection of Mr. Lincoln to that of any other man; but I doubt the expediency of reelecting anybody, and I think a man of different qualities from those the President has will be needed for the next four years." Of course, he adds, "I am not anxious to be regarded as that man; and I am quite willing to leave that question to the decision of those who agree in thinking that some such man should be chosen." To another he wrote early in December: "I have not the slightest wish to press any claims upon the consideration of friends or the public. There is certainly a purpose, however, to use my name, and I do not feel bound to object to it."<sup>2</sup> He never admitted to himself that he had any personal desire for the place, and in this letter he continued: "Were the post in which these friends desire to place me as low as it is high, I should feel bound to render in it all the service possible to our common country." Yet he always felt that he could render better service in the higher places than in the lower, and when it was once in contemplation

<sup>2</sup> Chase to Spencer, Dec. 4, 1863.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by J. G. Nicolay and John Hay, 1886. All rights reserved.

to offer him a seat on the Supreme Bench he distinctly intimated he would accept no place there but that of Chief-Justice. There never was a man who found it so easy to delude himself. He believed that he was indifferent to advancement and anxious only for the public good; yet in the midst of his enormous labors he found time to write interminable letters to every part of the country, all protesting his indifference to the Presidency but indicating his willingness to accept it, and painting pictures so dark of the chaotic state of affairs among his colleagues that the irresistible inference was that only he could save the country. For instance, he wrote to the editor of a religious newspaper, saying:

Had there been here an Administration in the true sense of the word — a President conferring with his Cabinet and taking their united judgments, and with their aid enforcing activity, economy, and energy in all departments of public service — we could have spoken boldly and defied the world. But our condition here has always been very different. I preside over the funnel; everybody else, and especially the Secretaries of War and the Navy, over the spigots — and keep them well open, too. Mr. Seward conducts the foreign relations with very little let or help from anybody. There is no unity and no system, except so far as it is departmental. There is progress, but it is slow and involuntary; just what is coerced by the irresistible pressure of the vast force of the people. How, under such circumstances, can anybody announce a policy which can only be made respectable by union, wisdom, and courage?<sup>1</sup>

A few days later he wrote to another:

The Administration cannot be continued as it is. There is, in fact, no Administration, properly speaking. There are departments and there is a President. The latter leaves administration substantially to the heads of the former, deciding himself comparatively few questions. These heads act with almost absolute independence of each other.<sup>2</sup>

He could not bring himself to feel that the universal demonstrations in favor of the reelection of Mr. Lincoln were genuine. He regarded himself all the while as the serious candidate, and the opposition to him as knavish and insincere. To one of his adherents he wrote:

It is impossible to reform and investigate without stirring up slanderers and revilers, both among those whose wrong-doings are exposed and unrighteous profits taken away, and among those, too, who think they see a good chance to take advantage of clamor to the injury of a public man, who, they fear, stands too well with the people.<sup>3</sup>

To another adherent in Ohio he wrote:

I cannot help being gratified by the preference expressed for me in some quarters, for those who express it are generally men of great weight, and high character, and independent judgment. . . . They think there will be a change in the current, which, so far as it is not spontaneous, is chiefly managed by the Blairs.<sup>4</sup>

He said that he should be glad to have Ohio decidedly on his side, and that if Ohio should express a preference for any other person he would not allow his name to be used. This was quite an unnecessary engagement, as no candidate could possibly be nominated without the support of his own State.

Indifferent as he claimed to be in regard to his personal prospects, he yet wrote on the 6th of February<sup>5</sup> promising to try to find a place for a man recommended by the editor of the "Evening Post," and complaining with some bitterness that that paper had not uttered a kind word in reference to him for some months past. There was, in fact, no limit to these overtures of the Secretary in every direction which he thought might be serviceable to him. A few days after the death of Archbishop Hughes, we find him writing to Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati, reporting the efforts which he is making in every quarter to have the Western prelate appointed the successor of the dead archbishop.<sup>6</sup> On the 18th of January he wrote to a friend of his in Toledo, Ohio, Mr. James C. Hall, formally announcing his candidacy for the Presidency. He told him that a committee of prominent senators, representatives, and citizens had been organized to promote his election; that a sub-committee had conferred with him, and he had consented to their wishes. He then went on to say:

If I know my own heart, I desire nothing so much as the suppression of this rebellion and the establishment of union, order, and prosperity on sure and safe foundations; and I should despise myself if I felt capable of allowing any personal objects to influence me to any action which would affect, by one jot or tittle, injuriously, the accomplishment of those objects. And it is a source of real gratification to believe that those who desire my nomination desire it on public grounds alone, and will not hesitate in any matter which may concern me to act upon such grounds and on such grounds only.

He added that he desired the support of Ohio, and that if he did not receive it he would cheerfully acquiesce.

All through the winter this quasi-candidacy continued. It seemed of the utmost importance to the Secretary and his few adherents, though

<sup>1</sup> Chase to the Rev. J. Leavitt, Jan. 24, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 562.

<sup>2</sup> Chase to Dickson, Jan. 27, 1864. *Ibid.*, p. 564.

<sup>3</sup> Chase to Gilbert, Jan. 30, 1864. *Ibid.*, p. 567.

<sup>4</sup> Chase to Flamen Ball, Feb. 2, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 570.

<sup>5</sup> Chase to Bailey. *Ibid.*, p. 571.

<sup>6</sup> Chase to Purcell, Feb. 1, 1864. *Ibid.*, p. 568.

it really formed an imperceptible eddy beside the vast current in which the will of the people was sweeping forward to its purpose. Being confined exclusively to politicians, it had, of course, its principal manifestation in the city of Washington. It played its little part in the election of Speaker of the House of Representatives. An attempt was made to identify Mr. Colfax, the most popular candidate for that office, with the adherents of Mr. Chase; but upon hearing of this he at once sought an audience with the President and positively repudiated any such connection. When Congress had organized, the message of the President was received with an enthusiasm which for the moment swept out of sight every trace of opposing opinion. From that moment there was no further question in regard to the Republican nomination.

There was at one time an effort on the part of some of the leading spirits in the Union League, a secret Republican organization which had been very zealous and effective in political work throughout the Union, to commit it to some measure hostile to Mr. Lincoln. This had alarmed even so experienced and astute an observer as Thurlow Weed, who sent to Mr. Seward in the autumn of 1863 a warning that "loyal leagues, into which Odd Fellows and Know Nothings rush, are fixing to control delegate appointments for Mr. Chase."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Seward accepted this warning somewhat too readily, induced by his inveterate anti-masonic prejudices; these fears had no substantial foundation. Some of the leaders of the League, sympathizing strongly with the radicals of Missouri, had indeed from time to time made efforts to commit the order against the President; but such attempts failed there, as elsewhere, on account of the overwhelming tide of contrary opinion, and when the principal chapter of the order met in Washington on the 10th of December, they elected a list of officers who were almost all either friends of Mr. Lincoln or men of sufficient sagacity not to oppose him.

From the beginning Mr. Lincoln had been fully aware of Mr. Chase's candidacy and of everything that was done for its promotion. It was impossible for him to remain unconscious of it; and although he discouraged all conversation on the subject and refused to read letters relating to it, he could not entirely shut the matter out from his cognizance. He had his own opinion of the taste and judgment displayed by Mr. Chase in his criticisms of himself and of his colleagues in the Cabinet; but he took no notice of them.

I have determined [he said] to shut my eyes, so far as possible, to everything of the sort. Mr. Chase

<sup>1</sup> MS.

makes a good Secretary, and I shall keep him where he is. If he becomes President, all right. I hope we may never have a worse man. I have observed with regret his plan of strengthening himself. Whenever he sees that an important matter is troubling me, if I am compelled to decide in a way to give offense to a man of some influence, he always ranges himself in opposition to me and persuades the victim that he has been hardly dealt with, and that he would have arranged it very differently. It was so with General Frémont, with General Hunter when I annulled his hasty proclamation, with General Butler when he was recalled from New Orleans, with these Missouri people when they called the other day. I am entirely indifferent as to his success or failure in these schemes so long as he does his duty at the head of the Treasury Department.<sup>2</sup>

When Rosecrans was removed from the command of the Army of the Cumberland, Mr. Chase pursued the same course. His spiteful comments on that act were reported to the President, who simply laughed at the zealous friend who brought him the news. When told that such tactics might give Mr. Chase the nomination, he said he hoped the country would never do worse. He regretted, however, that the thing had begun, because although it did not annoy him, his friends thought it ought to. He went on appointing by the dozen Mr. Chase's partisans and adherents to places in the Government. He knew perfectly what he was doing, and allowed himself the luxury of a quiet smile as he signed their commissions. He heard more of such gossip than was amusing or agreeable to him. He said on one occasion, "I wish they would stop thrusting that subject of the Presidency into my face. I do not want to hear anything about it."

Of course one reason for the magnanimity with which Mr. Lincoln endured this rivalry of his able and ambitious minister of finance was his consciousness of the inequality of the match between them. Although his renomination was a matter in regard to which he refused to converse much, even with intimate friends, he was perfectly aware of the drift of things. In capacity of appreciating popular currents and in judgment of individual character Mr. Chase was as a child beside him; and he allowed the opposition to himself in his own Cabinet to continue, without question or remark, with all the more patience and forbearance because he knew how feeble it was.

The movement in favor of Mr. Chase culminated in the month of February in a secret circular signed by Senator Pomeroy of Kansas, and widely circulated through the Union. It is admitted by Mr. Chase's sincerest admirers that the weak point of his character was the incapacity shown in his judgment of men and

<sup>2</sup> J. H., Diary, Oct. 16, 1863.

his choice of intimates; and in no instance was this defect more glaringly exhibited than in the selection of such a man as Senator Pomeroy to conduct his canvass for the Presidency. The two Kansas senators, Lane and Pomeroy, hated each other intensely, and as long as they were in office together wrangled persistently over the patronage of their State. The President once wrote to Pomeroy, after declining an interview with him :

I wish you and Lane would make a sincere effort to get out of the mood you are in. It does neither of you any good; it gives you the means of tormenting my life out of me, and nothing else.<sup>1</sup>

Each thought the other got the advantage of him, each abused the President roundly behind his back; but Lane, being the more subtle and adroit politician of the two, never allowed himself to be put in an attitude of open hostility to the Administration. Pomeroy's resentment drove him at last into a mood of sullen animosity towards the President, and it was under his weak leadership that the elements of opposition to Mr. Lincoln at last came together. As the confidential circular issued by the committee of which Pomeroy was the head was the most considerable effort made within the Republican party to defeat the renomination of Mr. Lincoln, we give the document, to show upon how slender a foundation this opposition was based.

The movements recently made throughout the country to secure the renomination of President Lincoln render necessary counter-action on the part of those unconditional friends of the Union who differ from the policy of the Administration.

So long as no efforts were made to forestall the political action of the people, it was both wise and patriotic for all true friends of the Government to devote their influence to the suppression of the rebellion; but when it becomes evident that party and the machinery of official influence are being used to secure the perpetuation of the present Administration, those who conscientiously believe that the interests of the country and of freedom demand a change in favor of vigor and purity and nationality, have no choice but to appeal at once to the people before it is too late to secure a fair discussion of principles.

Those in behalf of whom this appeal is made have thoughtfully surveyed the political field, and have arrived at the following conclusions: *First*, that even were the reëlection of Mr. Lincoln desirable, it is practically impossible against the union of influences which will oppose him. *Second*, that should he be reëlected, his manifest tendency towards compromises and temporary expedients of policy will become stronger during a second term than it has been in the first, and the cause of human liberty, and the dignity of the nation, suffer proportionately, while the war may continue to languish

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Pomeroy, May 12, 1864. MS.

during his whole Administration, till the public debt shall become a burden too great to be borne. *Third*, that the patronage of the Government through the necessities of the war has been so rapidly increased, and to such an enormous extent, and so loosely placed, as to render the application of the one-term principle absolutely essential to the certain safety of our republican institutions. *Fourth*, that we find united in Hon. Salmon P. Chase more of the qualities needed in a President during the next four years than are combined in any other available candidate. His record is clear and unimpeachable, showing him to be a statesman of rare ability and an administrator of the highest order, while his private character furnishes the surest available guarantee of economy and purity in the management of public affairs. *Fifth*, that the discussion of the Presidential question, already commenced by the friends of Mr. Lincoln, has developed a popularity and strength in Mr. Chase unexpected even to his warmest admirers; and while we are aware that its strength is at present unorganized, and in no condition to manifest its real magnitude, we are satisfied that it only needs a systematic and faithful effort to develop it to an extent sufficient to overcome all opposing obstacles. For these reasons the friends of Mr. Chase have determined on measures which shall present his claims fairly and at once to the country. A central organization has been effected, which already has its connections in all the States, and the object of which is to enable his friends everywhere most effectually to promote his elevation to the Presidency. We wish the hearty coöperation of all those who are in favor of the speedy restoration of the Union on the basis of universal freedom, and who desire an administration of the Government during the first period of its new life which shall to the fullest extent develop the capacity of free institutions, enlarge the resources of the country, diminish the burdens of taxation, elevate the standard of public and private morality, vindicate the honor of the Republic before the world, and in all things make our American nationality the fairest example for imitation which human progress has ever achieved. If these objects meet your approval, you can render efficient aid by exerting yourself at once to organize your section of the country, and by corresponding with the chairman of the National Executive Committee for the purpose either of receiving or imparting information.

Of this circular, sent broadcast over the country, many copies of course fell into the hands of the President's friends, and they soon began to come to the Executive Mansion. The President, who was absolutely without curiosity in regard to attacks upon himself, refused to look at them, and they accumulated unread in the desk of his secretary. At last, however, the circular got into print, and it appeared in the "National Intelligencer" of Washington on the morning of the 22d of February. Mr. Chase at once wrote to the President to assure him that he had no knowledge of the existence of the letter before seeing it in print. He gave a brief account of the solicitations of his friends, in compliance with which he had

consented to be a candidate for the Presidency, adding, with his usual nobility of phrase :

I have never wished that my name should have a moment's thought in comparison with the common cause of enfranchisement and restoration, or be continued before the public a moment after the indication of a preference by the friends of that cause for another. I have thought this explanation due to you as well as to myself. If there is anything in my action or position which in your judgment will prejudice the public interests under my charge, I beg you to say so. I do not wish to administer the Treasury Department one day without your entire confidence. For yourself I cherish sincere respect and esteem, and, permit me to add, affection. Differences of opinion as to administrative action have not changed these sentiments, nor have they been changed by assaults upon me by persons who profess themselves the special representatives of your views and policy. You are not responsible for acts not your own ; nor will you hold me responsible except for what I do or say myself. Great numbers now desire your reelection. Should their wishes be fulfilled by the suffrage of the people, I hope to carry with me into private life the sentiments I now cherish, whole and unimpaired.

The President next day acknowledged the receipt of this letter, and promised to answer it more fully when he could find time to do so. The next week he wrote at greater length :<sup>1</sup>

I would have taken time to answer yours of the 22d sooner, only that I did not suppose any evil could result from the delay, especially as, by a note, I promptly acknowledged the receipt of yours, and promised a fuller answer. Now, on consideration I find there is really very little to say. My knowledge of Mr. Pomeroy's letter having been made public came to me only the day you wrote, but I had, in spite of myself, known of its existence several days before. I haven't yet read it, and I think I shall not. I was not shocked or surprised by the appearance of the letter, because I had had knowledge of Mr. Pomeroy's committee and of secret issues which, I supposed, came from it and of secret agents who, I supposed, were sent out by it, for several weeks. I have known just as little of these things as my friends have allowed me to know. They bring the documents to me, but I do not read them ; they tell me what they think fit to tell me, but I do not inquire for more. I fully concur with you that neither of us can be justly held responsible for what our respective friends may do without our instigation or countenance ; and I assure you, as you have assured me, that no assault has been made upon you by my instigation or with my countenance. Whether you shall remain at the head of the Treasury Department is a question which I do not allow myself to consider from any standpoint other than my judgment of the public service, and, in that view, I do not perceive occasion for a change.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Chase, Feb. 29, 1864. MS.

<sup>2</sup> After this correspondence had passed, Mr. Pomeroy, who, whatever his defects of character, did not lack courage, rose in his place in the Senate (March 10), reiterated with added energy his criticisms of the

Before the President wrote this letter the candidacy of Mr. Chase had already passed completely out of sight. In fact, it never could have been said to exist except in the imagination of Mr. Chase and a narrow circle of adherents. He was by no means the choice even of the great body of the radicals who were discontented with Mr. Lincoln. So early as the 17th of December, 1863, Mr. Medill, the editor of the "Chicago Tribune," who represented the most vehement Republican sentiment of the North-west, wrote:

I presume it is true that Mr. Chase's friends are working for his nomination, but it is all lost labor ; Old Abe has the inside track so completely that he will be nominated by acclamation when the convention meets. . . . The people will say to Chase : "You stick to finance and be content until after 1868" ; and to Grant, "Give the rebels no rest ; put them through ; your reward will come in due time" ; but Uncle Abe must be allowed to boss the reconstruction of the Union.

And from the opening of the year 1864 the feeling in favor of the renomination of Lincoln grew so ardent and so restless that it was almost impossible for the most discreet of the Republican leaders to hold the manifestations of the popular preference in check. An attempt was made by the Treasury officials in Indiana to prevent the State convention which met in February from declaring for Lincoln, but it was all in vain. Wherever any assembly of Republicans came together fresh from the people the only struggle was as to who should get first on the floor to demand the President's renomination. Mr. Chase's principal hope was, of course, founded upon the adhesion of his friends in Ohio ; but the result there, as elsewhere, proved how blind he was to the course of politics. The governor of the State wrote to the President<sup>3</sup> that he was mortified to hear that he had been set down as a Chase man.

The fact that Mr. Chase has been laboring, for the past year at least, with an eye single to promoting his own selfish purposes, totally regardless of the consequences to the Government, as I believe has been the case, is alone sufficient to induce me to oppose him ; but aside from this, the policy inaugurated under your lead must be maintained, and it would be suicidal to change leaders in the midst of the contest.

This is only a specimen of dozens of letters which came from the leading men of the State, who had been relied upon by Mr. Chase to promote his canvass ; and finally the feeling grew so strong in Ohio that although no au-

President and his eulogy of Mr. Chase, and claimed that the latter had nothing to do with the circular, but had been "drafted into the service" without his consent.

<sup>3</sup> Tod to Lincoln, Feb. 24, 1864.

thorized convention of Republicans was to meet at that time, the Union members of the legislature took the matter in hand and gave, on the 25th of February, the *coup de grâce* to the Secretary's candidacy. They held a full caucus, and nominated Mr. Lincoln for reelection, at the demand, as they said, of the people and the soldiers of Ohio. The State of Rhode Island, which Mr. Chase had expected the personal influence of his son-in-law, Governor Sprague, to secure for him, also made haste to range itself with the other States of the North; and as more than a month before the great State of Pennsylvania had by the unanimous expression of the Union members of its legislature declared for Lincoln, the Secretary at last concluded that the contest was hopeless, and wrote another letter to Mr. Hall, referring to his former statement that should his friends in Ohio manifest a preference for another he would acquiesce in that decision, and adding:

The recent action of the Union members of our legislature indicates such a preference. It becomes my duty, therefore,—and I count it more a privilege than a duty,—to ask that no further consideration be given to my name. It was never more important than now that all our efforts and all our energies should be devoted to the suppression of the rebellion, and to the restoration of order and prosperity, on solid and sure foundations of union, freedom, and impartial justice; and I earnestly urge all with whom my counsels may have weight to allow nothing to divide them while this great work, in comparison with which persons and even parties are nothing, remains unaccomplished.

In the closing line of this letter occurs the first intimation of that feeling of revolt against the Republican party which afterwards led Mr. Chase to seek the nomination of the Democrats. In numerous letters written during the spring he reiterated his absolute withdrawal from the contest, but indulged in sneers and insinuations against the President, which show how deeply he was wounded by his discomfiture.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE CLEVELAND CONVENTION.

BEFORE the snows melted, it had become evident to the most narrow and malignant of Mr. Lincoln's opponents that nothing could

prevent his renomination by the Republican convention which was to meet at Baltimore in June. There was no voice of opposition to him in any organized Republican assembly, except in Missouri, and even there the large majority of radical Republicans were willing to accept the universal verdict of their party; but there were a few earnest spirits scattered throughout the country to whom opposition to the Administration had become the habit of a lifetime. There were others not so honest, who had personal reasons for disliking the President. To these it was impossible to stand quietly by and see Mr. Lincoln made his own successor without one last effort to prevent it. The result of informal consultations among them was the publication of a number of independent calls for a mass convention of the people to meet at Cleveland, Ohio, on the 31st of May, a week before the assembling of the Republican convention at Baltimore.

The two centers of this disaffection were in St. Louis and New York. In the former city it was composed of a small fraction of a faction. The large majority of those radical politicians who had been for two years engaged in the bitter struggle with Blair and his associates still retained their connection with the Republican party, and had no intention of breaking off their relations with the Union party of the nation. It was a small fraction of their number which issued its call to the disaffected throughout the nation. Harking back to the original cause of quarrel, they had attached themselves blindly to the personal fortunes of General Frémont; they now put themselves in communication with a small club of like-minded enthusiasts in New York called the "Central Frémont Club," and invited their radical fellow-citizens to meet them in convention at Cleveland. They made no pretense of any purpose of consultation or of independent individual action. The object stated in their call was "in order then and there to recommend the nomination of John C. Frémont for the Presidency of the United States, and to assist in organizing for his election." They denounced "the imbecile and vacillating policy of the present Administration in the con-

<sup>1</sup> In an article published in "The Galaxy," July, 1873, by Mr. J. M. Winchell, whom Mr. Schuckers in his "Life of Chase" calls the author of the Pomeroy circular (see Schuckers' "Life of Chase," p. 500), occurs this singular passage: "The movement in favor of the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Chase, had culminated in disaster; that gentleman's chief supporters, including his senatorial son-in-law, having manifested a plentiful lack of nerve or zeal, when the critical question became public, of arraying him against his official chief, and made haste to take him at his word of declination, diplomatically spoken, in order to rouse their flagging

spirits." In a letter of the 7th of May (Chase to Riddle, Warden, p. 576) Mr. Chase said: "I am trying to keep all Presidential aspiration out of my head. I fancy that as President I could take care of the Treasury better with the help of a Secretary than I can as Secretary without the help of a President. But our Ohio folks don't want me enough, if they want me at all, to make it proper for me to allow my name to be used. I hope the time is not distant when I can honorably separate myself from political affairs altogether, leaving the new era to the new men whom God may raise up for it."



duct of the war, . . . its treachery to justice, freedom, and genuine democratic principles in its plan of reconstruction, whereby the honor and dignity of the nation have been sacrificed to conciliate the still existing and arrogant slave power and to further the ends of an unscrupulous partisan ambition"; they demanded the immediate extinction of slavery throughout the whole United States by congressional action, the absolute equality of all men before the law, and a vigorous execution of the laws confiscating the property of the rebels. This circular was stronger in its epithets than in its signatures; the names of the signers were, as a rule, unknown to fame. One column was headed by the name of the Rev. George B. Cheever, another by the apparently farcical signature of "Pantaleon Candidus." Perhaps the most important name affixed to this document was that of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who wrote desiring to sign her name to the call, "taking it for granted," she said, "that you use 'men' in its largest sense." She informed the committee that they had "lifted politics into the sphere of morals and religion, and made it the duty of all true men and women to unite with them in building up the New Nation." She spelled "new nation" with capital letters, and gave occasion for a malicious accusation that her letter was merely an advertisement of a radical Frémont paper of that name which was then leading a precarious existence in New York. Mr. Samuel Bowles inferred from her letter that the convention was to be composed of "the gentler sex of both genders."

Another call was issued by the People's Committee of St. Louis, though signed by individuals from several other States. These gentlemen felt themselves

impelled on their own responsibility to declare to the people that the time had come for all independent men, jealous of their liberties and of the national greatness, to confer together and unite to resist the swelling invasion of an open, shameless, and unrestrained patronage which threatens to engulf under its destructive wave the rights of the people, the liberty and dignity of the nation;

declaring that they did not recognize in the Baltimore convention the essential conditions of a truly national convention: it was to be held, they thought, too near Washington and too far from the center of the country, its mode of convocation giving no guarantee of wise or honest deliberation. This circular was signed by B. Gratz Brown of Missouri and by a number of old-time abolitionists in the East, though its principal signers were from the ranks of the most vehement German radicals of St. Louis. Still another call was drawn up and issued by Lucius Robinson, Controller of the

State of New York. The terms of this address were properly applicable to all the Administration Republicans. It called upon the

citizens of the United States who mean to uphold the Union, who believe that the rebellion can be suppressed without infringing the rights of individuals or of States, who regard the extinction of slavery as among the practical effects of the war for the Union, and favor an amendment of the Federal Constitution for the exclusion of slavery, and who demand integrity and economy in the administration of government.

The signers of this call approached the question from an entirely different point of view from that of the radical Germans of St. Louis. In their view Mr. Lincoln, instead of being a craven and a laggard, was going entirely too fast and too far. Their favorite candidate was General Grant. Mr. Wendell Phillips, the stormy petrel of all our political disturbances, found enjoyment even in this teapot tempest. He strongly approved the convention at Cleveland, and constructed beforehand a brief platform for it.

Subdue the South as rapidly as possible. The moment territory comes under our flag reconstruct States thus: confiscate and divide the lands of rebels; extend the right of suffrage broadly as possible to whites and blacks; let the Federal Constitution prohibit slavery throughout the Union, and forbid the States to make any distinction among their citizens on account of color or race.<sup>1</sup>

He also advised the nomination "for the Presidency of a statesman and a patriot"; by which terms he intended to exclude Mr. Lincoln.

The convention might have met, deliberated, and adjourned for all the people of the United States cared about it, had it not been for the violent and enthusiastic admiration it excited in Democratic newspapers and the wide publicity they gave to its proceedings. They described it as a gathering of the utmost dignity and importance; they pretended to discern in it a distinct line of cleavage through the middle of the Republican party. For several days before it assembled they published imaginary dispatches from Cleveland representing the streets and hotels as crowded with a throng of earnest patriots determined on the destruction of the tyrant Lincoln. The papers of Cleveland tell another story. There was no sign of political upheaval in the streets or hotels of that beautiful and thriving city. Up to the very day of the meeting of the convention there was no place provided for it, and when the first stragglers began to arrive they found no preparation made to receive them. All the public halls of any consequence were

<sup>1</sup> Phillips to Stallo, April 21.

engaged, and the convention at last took shelter in a small room called "Chapin's Hall." Its utmost capacity was five or six hundred persons, and it was much too large for the convention; delegates and spectators together were never numerous enough to fill it. The delegates were for the most part Germans from St. Louis. They held a preliminary meeting the night before the convention opened, and passed vigorous and loyal resolutions of the usual character. To the resolution that the rebellion must be put down, some one moved to amend by adding the words, "with God's assistance," which was voted down with boisterous demonstrations. *Non tali auxilio* was the sentiment of these materialist Missourians.

The convention met at 10 o'clock in a hall only half filled. Hoping for later arrivals, they delayed organization until nearly noon. The leaders who had been expected to give character and direction to the movement did not appear. It was hoped until the last moment that Mr. Greeley would be present, though he had never given any authority for such an expectation. He said, in answer to an inquiry, that "the only convention he took any interest in was that one Grant was holding before Richmond." Mr. Gratz Brown, the real head of the movement, was also absent. Emil Pretorius and Mr. Cheever, who, from the two extremities of the country, had talked most loudly in favor of the convention, staid away. The only persons present whose names were at all known were General John Cochrane of New York; Colonel Moss, a noisy politician from Missouri; Caspar Butz of Illinois; two or three of the old-school abolitionists; and several (not the weightiest) members of the staff of General Frémont. The delegates from the German Workingmen's Union of Chicago were discredited in advance by the publication of a card from the majority of the association they pretended to represent, declaring their intention to support the nominees of the Baltimore convention. Some one moved, as usual, the appointment of a committee on credentials; but as no one had any valid credentials, it was resolved instead to appoint a committee to enroll the names of the delegates. No action was taken even upon this proposition, because the act of enrollment would have been too fatal a confession of weakness. The committee on organization reported the name of General Cochrane for president of the convention, who made a discreet and moderate speech. He was a man of too much native amiability of character to feel personal bitterness towards any one, and too adroit and experienced a politician to commit himself irrevocably against any contingency. He had, in fact, thrown an anchor to windward by visiting the President

before the convention met and assuring him of his continued friendship. A delegate from Iowa, who seemed to have taken the convention seriously, then offered a resolution that no member of it should hold, or apply for, office under the next Administration—a proposition which was incontinently smothered. While waiting for the report of the committee on the platform, speeches were made by several delegates. Mr. Plumb attacked Mr. Lincoln as a pro-slavery politician. Colonel Moss of Missouri denounced him as the principal obstacle to freedom in America. A debate now arose on the proposition of the committee on rules that in voting for President the vote should be by States according to their representation in Congress. This was in the interest of the Grant delegates and was violently opposed by the Missourians, who formed a large majority of the convention, and had come for no purpose but to nominate Frémont. In the course of this debate the somewhat dreary proceedings were enlivened by a comic incident. A middle-aged man, who gave his name as Carr, addressed the chair, saying that he had come from Illinois as a delegate under the last call and did not want to be favored "a single mite." His ideas not flowing readily, he repeated this declaration three times in a voice continually rising in shrillness with his excitement. Something in his tone stirred the risibles of the convention, and loud laughter saluted the Illinoisan. As soon as he could make himself heard he cried out, "These are solemn times." This statement was greeted with another laugh, and the delegate now shouted at the top of his voice, "I believe there is a God who holds the universe in his hands as you would hold an egg." This comprehensive scheme of theocracy was too much for the Missouri agnostics, and the convention broke out in a tumult of jeers and roars. The rural delegate, amazed at the reception of his confession of faith, and apparently in doubt whether he had not stumbled by accident into a lunatic asylum, paused, and asked the chairman in a tone of great seriousness whether he believed in a God. The wildest merriment now took possession of the assembly, in the midst of which the Illinois theist solemnly marched down the aisle and out of the house, shaking from his feet the dust of that unbelieving convention. As soon as the laughing died away the committee on resolutions reported a set of judicious and, on the whole, undeniable propositions, such as, the Union must and shall be preserved, the constitutional laws of the United States must be obeyed, the rebellion must be suppressed by force of arms and without compromise. The platform did not greatly differ from that of Baltimore, except that it spoke in favor of one

Presidential term, declared that to Congress instead of the President belonged the question of reconstruction, and advocated the confiscation of the property of the rebels and its distribution among the soldiers.

The platform was adopted after brief debate, and a letter from Mr. Wendell Phillips was read to the convention, full of the vehement unreason which distinguished all the attempts of this matchless orator to apply his mind to the practical affairs of life. He predicted the direst results from four more years of Lincoln's administration.

Unless the South is recognized [which he apparently thought not improbable under Lincoln's nerveless policy], the war will continue; the taxation needed to sustain our immense debt, doubled by that time, will grind the laboring man of the North down to the level of the pauper labor of Europe; and we shall have a government accustomed to despotic power for eight years—a fearful peril to democratic institutions.

He denounced Mr. Lincoln's plan of reconstruction, and drew this comical parallel between him and Frémont:

The Administration, therefore, I regard as a civil and military failure, and its avowed policy ruinous to the North in every point of view. Mr. Lincoln may wish the end peace and freedom, but he is wholly unwilling to use the means which can secure that end. If Mr. Lincoln is reëlected I do not expect to see the Union reconstructed in my day, unless on terms more disastrous to liberty than even disunion would be. If I turn to General Frémont, I see a man whose first act was to use the freedom of the negro as his weapon; I see one whose thorough loyalty to democratic institutions, without regard to race, whose earnest and decisive character, whose clear-sighted statesmanship and rare military ability, justify my confidence that in his hands all will be done to save the state that foresight, skill, decision, and statesmanship can do.

With characteristic reliance on his own freedom from prejudice, he continued:

This is an hour of such peril to the Republic that I think men should surrender all party and personal partiality, and support any man able and willing to save the state.

This was, in fact, the attitude of mind of the vast majority of the people of the country; but all it meant in Mr. Phillips's case was that he was willing to vote for either Frémont or Butler to defeat Lincoln.

A feeble attempt was now made by the delegates from New York, who called themselves "War Democrats," to induce the convention to nominate General Grant. Mr. Colvin read a letter from Mr. Lucius Robinson of New York—afterwards governor of that State—attacking the errors and blunders "of the weak Executive and Cabinet," and claiming that the

hope of the people throughout the country rested upon General Grant as a candidate. Although Mr. Colvin supplemented the reading of this letter by promising a majority of one hundred thousand for Grant in the State of New York, the Missourians cheered only the louder for Frémont; and when a last effort was made by Mr. Demers of Albany to nominate Grant, he was promptly denounced as a Lincoln hireling. Colonel Moss, in the uniform of a general of the Missouri militia, arose and put a stop to the profitless discussion by moving in a stentorian voice the nomination of General Frémont by acclamation, which was at once done; and the assembly completed its work by placing John Cochrane on the ticket as its candidate for Vice-President. No one present seemed to have any recollection of the provision of the Constitution which forbids both of these officers being taken from the same State.

The convention met again in the evening and listened to dispirited and discouraging speeches of ratification. The committee appointed in the afternoon to give a name to the new party brought in that of the "Radical Democracy," and in this style it was formally christened. An executive committee was appointed, of men destitute of executive capacity, and the convention adjourned.

Its work met with no response from the country. On the day of its meeting the German press of Cleveland expressed its profound disappointment at the smallness and insignificance of the gathering, and with a few unimportant exceptions the newspapers of the country greeted the work of the convention with an unbroken chorus of ridicule. Its absurdities and inconsistencies were indeed too glaring for serious consideration. Its movers had denounced the Baltimore convention as being held too early for an expression of the deliberate judgment of the people, and now they had made their own nominations a week earlier; they had claimed that Baltimore was not sufficiently central in situation, and they had held their convention on the northern frontier of the country; they had claimed that the Baltimore delegates were not properly elected, and they had assumed to make nominations by delegates not elected at all; they had denounced the Baltimore convention as a close corporation and invited the people to assemble in mass, and when they came together they were so few they never dared to count themselves; they had pretended to desire a stronger candidate than Mr. Lincoln, and had selected the most conspicuous failure of the war; they clamored loudly against corruption in office, and one of the leading personages in the convention was a member of Frémont's staff who had been

dismissed the service for dishonesty in Government contracts.

The whole proceeding, though it excited some indignation among the friends of Mr. Lincoln, was regarded by the President himself only with amusement. On the morning after the convention a friend, giving him an account of it, said that, instead of the many thousands who had been expected, there were present at no time more than four hundred men. The President, struck by the number mentioned, reached for the Bible which commonly lay on his desk, and after a moment's search, read these words :

And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him ; and he became a captain over them : and there were with him about four hundred men.<sup>1</sup>

It was only among the Democratic papers that the Cleveland convention met with any support or applause. They gave it solemn and unmeasured eulogies for its independence, its patriotism, its sagacity, and even its numbers. The Copperhead papers in New York urged the radicals not to give up their attitude of uncompromising hostility to Lincoln, and predicted a formidable schism in the Republican party as a consequence of their action. But the motive of this support was so evident that it deceived nobody ; and it was compared by a sarcastic observer to the conduct of the Spanish urchins accompanying a condemned Jew to an *auto-da-fé*, and shouting, in the fear that he might recant and rob them of their holiday, "Stand fast, Moses." The ticket of the two New Yorkers met with a gust of ridicule which would have destroyed more robust chances than theirs. "The New York Major-General John C. and the New York Brigadier-General John C." formed a matched ticket fated to laughter.

But if no one else took them seriously, the two generals at least saw in the circumstances no occasion for smiling. General Frémont promptly accepted his nomination.<sup>2</sup> He said :

This is not an ordinary election. It is a contest for the right even to have candidates, and not merely, as usual, for the choice among them. . . . The ordinary rights secured under the Constitution and the laws of the country have been violated, and extraordinary powers have been usurped by the Executive. It is directly before the people now to say whether or not the principles established by the Revolution are worth maintaining. . . . To-day we have in the country the abuses of a military dictation without its unity of action and vigor of execution—an Administration marked at home by disregard of constitutional rights, by its violation of

personal liberty and the liberty of the press, and, as a crowning shame, by its abandonment of the right of asylum.

The feebleness and want of principle of the Administration, its incapacity and selfishness, were roundly denounced by General Frémont, but he repudiated the cry of the Cleveland convention for confiscating the property of rebels. In conclusion he said :

If the convention at Baltimore will nominate any man whose past life justifies a well-grounded confidence in his fidelity to our cardinal principles, there is no reason why there should be any division among the really patriotic men of the country. To any such I shall be most happy to give a cordial and active support. . . . But if Mr. Lincoln should be nominated—as I believe it would be fatal to the country to indorse a policy and renew a power which has cost us the lives of thousands of men, and needlessly put the country on the road to bankruptcy—there will remain no other alternative but to organize against him every element of conscientious opposition with the view to prevent the misfortune of his reëlection.

He therefore accepted the nomination, and informed the committee that he had resigned his commission in the army. General Cochrane accepted in briefer and more judicious language, holding the same views as his chief on the subject of confiscation. Later in the summer some of the partisans of Frémont, seeing that there was positively no response in the country to his candidacy, wrote to him suggesting that the candidates nominated at Cleveland and Baltimore should withdraw, and leave the field entirely free for a united effort for "a new convention which should represent the patriotism of all parties." They asked him whether in case Mr. Lincoln would withdraw he would do so.<sup>3</sup> Although the contingency referred to was more than sufficiently remote, General Frémont with unbroken dignity refused to accede to this proposition.

Having now definitely accepted the Cleveland nomination [he said], I have not the right to act independently of the truly patriotic and earnest party who conferred that honor upon me. . . . It might, beside, have only the effect still further to unsettle the public mind and defeat the object you have in view if we should disorganize before first proceeding to organize something better.<sup>4</sup>

But a month later<sup>5</sup> he seemed to have regarded the public mind as beyond the risk of unsettling, and he then wrote to his committee, withdrawing his name from the list of candidates. He could not, however, withhold a parting demonstration against the President.

<sup>1</sup> This, it will be remembered, was several years in advance of the famous reference to the Cave of Adulam in the British Parliament.

<sup>2</sup> June 4, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> August 20.

<sup>4</sup> August 25.

<sup>5</sup> September 21.

In respect to Mr. Lincoln [he said] I continue to hold exactly the sentiments contained in my letter of acceptance. I consider that his administration has been politically, militarily, and financially a failure, and that its necessary continuance is a cause of regret for the country. There never was a greater unanimity in a country than was exhibited here at the fall of Sumter, and the South was powerless in the face of it; but Mr. Lincoln completely paralyzed this generous feeling. He destroyed the strength of the position and divided the North when he declared to the South that slavery should be protected. He has built up for the South a strength which otherwise they could have never attained, and this has given them an advocate on the Chicago platform.

With a final denunciation of the leading men whose reticence had "established for Mr. Lincoln a character among the people which leaves now no choice," General Frémont at last subsided into silence. General Cochrane on the same day withdrew his name from the Cleveland ticket, which had already passed into swift oblivion. His letter had none of the asperity which characterized that of his chief. He genially attacked the Chicago resolutions, and, while regretting the omissions of the Baltimore platform, he approved it in substance.

We stand within view [he said] of a rebellion suppressed, within hail of a country reunited and saved. War lifts the curtain and discloses the prospect. War has given to us Atlanta, and war offers to us Richmond. . . . Peace and division, or war and the Union. Other alternative there is none.

Two incidents which occurred in the spring of 1864 caused unusual excitement among both wings of the opposition to Mr. Lincoln. The one was the delivery of Arguelles to the Spanish authorities; the other was the seizure of two New York newspapers for publishing a forged proclamation. It was altogether natural that the pro-slavery Democrats and peace men should have objected to these acts, as one of the injured parties was a slave trader, and the others opponents of the war; but it was not the least of the absurdities of the Cleveland protestants that they also, in their anxiety to find a weapon against the President, at the very moment that they were assailing him for not overriding all law and precedent in obedience to their demand, still belabored him for these instances of energetic action in the very direction in which they demanded that he should proceed.

The case of Arguelles was a perfectly clear one; and if the surrender of a criminal is ever justified as an exercise of international comity in the absence of treaty stipulations, no objections could reasonably be made in this instance. He was a colonel in the Spanish army and lieutenant-governor of the district of Colon in Cuba. He had captured a cargo of African slaves in his official capacity, and had received

much credit for his efficiency and a considerable sum of money as his share of the prize. He went to New York immediately afterwards and purchased a Spanish newspaper which was published there; but after his departure from Cuba it was ascertained that in beginning so expensive a business in New York he did not rely exclusively upon the money he had received from the Government, but that in concert with a curate of Colon he had sold one hundred and forty-one of the recaptured Africans, had put the money in his own pocket, and had officially reported them as having died of small-pox. The Cuban Government laid these facts before the State Department at Washington, and represented that the return of this miscreant to Cuba was necessary to secure the liberation of the unfortunate victims of his cruelty and greed. It was impossible to bring the matter before the courts, as no extradition treaty existed at that period between Spain and the United States, and the American authorities could not by any legal procedure take cognizance of the crime. The President and Mr. Seward at once assumed the responsibility of acting in the only way indicated by the laws of common humanity and international courtesy. Arguelles was arrested in New York by the United States marshal, put in charge of a Spanish officer commissioned for the purpose, and by him taken to Havana. The action of the Government was furiously attacked by all the pro-slavery organs. A resolution was introduced by Mr. Johnson in the Senate demanding an explanation of the circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Seward answered,<sup>2</sup> basing the action of the Government upon the stipulations of the ninth article of the treaty of 1842 with Great Britain, by which the two countries agreed to use all the measures in their power to close the market for slaves throughout the world, and added:

Although there is a conflict of authorities concerning the expediency of exercising comity towards a foreign government by surrendering, at its request, one of its own subjects charged with the commission of crime within its territory, and although it may be conceded that there is no obligation to make such a surrender upon a demand therefor, unless it is acknowledged by treaty or by statute law, yet a nation is never bound to furnish asylum to dangerous criminals who are offenders against the human race; and it is believed that if in any case the comity could with propriety be practiced, the one which is understood to have called forth the resolution furnished a just occasion for its exercise.

The Captain-General of Cuba, on the arrival of Arguelles, sent his thanks to Mr. Seward<sup>3</sup>

1 "Congressional Globe," May 26, 1864.

2 May 30, 1864.

3 McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 355.

for the service which he had rendered to humanity by furnishing the medium through which a great number of human beings will obtain their freedom whom the desertion of the person referred to would have reduced to slavery. His presence alone in this island a very few hours has given liberty to eighty-six.

The grand jury of New York nevertheless indicted Marshal Murray for the arrest of Arguelles on the charge of kidnapping. The marshal pleaded the orders of the President as the authority for his action, and based upon this a petition that the case be transferred to the United States court; and although the judges before whom he was taken, who happened to be Democrats, denied this petition, the indictment was finally quashed, and the only result of the President's action was the denunciation which he received in the Democratic newspapers, combined with the shrill treble of the clamor from the Cleveland convention.

The momentary suppression of the two New York newspapers, of which mention has been made, was a less defensible act, and arose from an error which was, after all, sufficiently natural on the part of the Secretary of War. On the 19th of May the "Journal of Commerce" and the "World," two newspapers which had especially distinguished themselves by the violence of their opposition to the Administration, published a forged proclamation signed with the President's name calling in terms of exaggerated depression not far from desperation for four hundred thousand troops. It was a scheme devised by two young Bohemians of the press, probably with no other purpose than that of making money by stock-jobbing. In the tremulous state of the public mind which then prevailed, in the midst of the terrible slaughter of Grant's opening campaign, the country was painfully sensitive to such news, and the forged proclamation, telegraphed far and wide, accomplished for the moment the purpose for which it was doubtless intended. It excited everywhere a feeling of consternation; the price of gold rose rapidly during the morning hours, and the Stock Exchange was thrown into violent fever. The details of the mystification were managed with some skill, the paper on which the document was written being that employed by the Associated Press in delivering its news to the journals, and it was left at all the newspaper offices in New York just before the moment of going to press. If all the newspapers had printed it the guiltlessness of each would have been equally evident; but unfortunately for the victims of the trick, the only two papers which published the forgery were those whose previous conduct had rendered them liable to the suspicion of bad faith. The fiery Secretary

of War immediately issued orders for the suppression of the "World" and "Journal of Commerce," and the arrest of their editors. The editors were never incarcerated; after a short detention, they were released. The publication of the papers was resumed after two days of interruption. These prompt measures and the announcement of the imposture sent over the country by telegraph soon quieted the excitement, and the quick detection of the guilty persons reduced the incident to its true rank in the annals of vulgar misdemeanors.

But in the memories of the Democrats of New York the incident survived, and was vigorously employed during the summer months as a means of attack upon the Administration. Governor Seymour interested himself in the matter and wrote a long and vehement letter to the district attorney of New York, denouncing the action of the Government. "These things," he said in his exclamatory style, "are more hurtful to the national honor and strength than the loss of battles. The world will confound such acts with the principles of our Government, and the folly and crimes of officials will be looked upon as the natural results of the spirit of our institutions. Our State and local authorities must repel this ruinous inference." He predicted the most dreadful consequences to the city of New York if this were not done. The harbor would be sealed up, the commerce of New York paralyzed, the world would withdraw from the keeping of New York merchants its treasures and its commerce if they did not unite in this demand for the security of persons and of property. In obedience to these frantic orders Mr. Oakey Hall, the district attorney, did his best, and was energetically seconded by Judge Russell, who charged the grand jury that the officers who took possession of these newspaper establishments were "liable as for riot"; but the grand jury, who seem to have kept their heads more successfully than either the governor or the judge, resolved that it was "inexpedient to examine into the subject." The governor could not rest quiet under this contemptuous refusal of the grand jury to do his bidding. He wrote again to the district attorney, saying, "As the grand jury have refused to do their duty, the subject of the seizure of these journals should at once be brought before some proper magistrate." He promised him all the assistance he required in the prosecution of the investigations. Thus egged on by the chief executive of the State, Mr. Hall proceeded to do the work required of him. Upon warrants issued at his instance by City Judge Russell, General Dix and several officers of his staff were arrested.<sup>1</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> July 1.

submitted with perfect courtesy to the behest of the civil authorities, and appeared before Judge Russell to answer for their acts. The judge held them over on their own recognizance to await the action of another grand jury, which, it was hoped, might be more subservient to the wishes of the governor than the last; but no further action was ever taken in the matter.

During the same week which witnessed the radical fiasco at Cleveland, an attempt was made in New York to put General Grant before the country as a Presidential candidate. The committee having the matter in charge made no public avowal of their intentions; they merely called a meeting to express the gratitude of the country to the general for his signal services. They even invited the President to take part in the proceedings, an invitation which he said it was impossible for him to accept.

I approve [he wrote], nevertheless, whatever may tend to strengthen and sustain General Grant and the noble armies now under his direction. My previous high estimate of General Grant has been maintained and heightened by what has occurred in the remarkable campaign he is now conducting, while the magnitude and difficulty of the task before him do not prove less than I expected. He and his brave soldiers are now in the midst of their great trial, and I trust that at your meeting you will so shape your good words that they may turn to men and guns, moving to his and their support.<sup>1</sup>

With such a gracious approval of the movement, the meeting naturally fell into the hands of the Lincoln men. General Grant, neither at this time nor at any other, gave the least countenance to the efforts which were made to array him in political opposition to the President.

#### THE RESIGNATION OF MR. CHASE.

AFTER Mr. Chase's withdrawal from his hopeless contest for the Presidency, his sentiments toward Mr. Lincoln, as exhibited in his letters and his diary, took on a tinge of bitterness which gradually increased until their friendly association in the public service became no longer possible. There was something almost comic in the sudden collapse of his candidacy; and the American people, who are quick to detect the ludicrous in any event, could not help smiling when the States of Rhode Island and Ohio ranged themselves among the first on the side of the President. This was intolerable to Mr. Chase, who, with all his great and noble qualities, was deficient in humor. His wounded self-love could find

no balm in these circumstances except in the preposterous fiction which he constructed for himself, that through "the systematic operations of the Postmaster-General and those holding office under him a preference for the reëlection of Mr. Lincoln was created."<sup>2</sup> Absurd as this fancy was, he appears firmly to have believed it; and the Blairs, whom he never liked, now appeared to him in the light of powerful enemies. An incident which occurred in Congress in April increased this impression to a degree which was almost maddening to the Secretary. The quarrel between General Frank Blair and the radicals in Missouri had been transferred to Washington; and one of the Missouri members having made charges against him of corrupt operations in trade permits, he demanded an investigation, which resulted, of course, in his complete exoneration from such imputations. It was a striking instance of the bewildering power of factious hatred that such charges should ever have been brought. Any one who knew Blair, however slightly, should have known that personal dishonesty could never have offered him the least temptation. In defending himself on the floor of Congress the natural pugnacity of his disposition led him to what soldiers call an offensive return,—in fact, Frank Blair always preferred to do his fighting within the enemy's lines,—and believing the Secretary of the Treasury to be in sympathy, at least, with the assault which had been made upon his character, he attacked him with equal vigor and injustice by way of retaliation. As we have seen in another chapter, before this investigation was begun the President had promised when Blair should resign his seat in the House to restore him to the command in the Western army which he had relinquished on coming to Washington. Although he greatly disapproved of General Blair's attack upon Mr. Chase, the President did not think that he was justified on this account in breaking his word; and doubtless reasoned that sending Blair back to the army would not only enable him to do good service in the field, but would quiet an element of discord in Congress. The result, however, was most unfortunate in its effect on the feelings of Mr. Chase. He was stung to the bitterest resentment by the attack of Blair; and he held that restoring Blair to his command made the President an accomplice in his offense. From that time he took a continually darkened view both of the President's character and of his chances for reëlection. "No good could come," he said, "of the probable identification of the next Administration with the Blair family." His first thought was to resign his place in the Cabinet; but on consulting his friends and finding them unani-

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to F. A. Conkling, June 3, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Chase to General Blunt, May 4, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 583.

mous against such a course, he gave it up.<sup>1</sup> But his letters during this month are full of ill-will to the President. To his niece he wrote: "If Congress gives me the measures I want, and Uncle Abe will stop spendings so fast," he, Chase, would bring about resumption within a year. To another, he blamed the President for the slaughter at Fort Pillow.<sup>2</sup> To Governor Buckingham, who had written him a sympathetic note, he said:<sup>3</sup> "My chief concern in the attacks made on me springs from the conviction that the influence of the men who make them must necessarily divide the friends of the Union and freedom, unless the President shall cast it off, of which I have little hope. I am willing to be myself its victim, but grieve to think our country may be also"; and adds this compliment to his correspondent at the expense of his colleagues in the Government: "How strikingly the economy and prudence shown by the narration of your excellent message contrasts with the extravagance and recklessness which mark the disbursement of national treasure." Writing to another friend, he indulges in this lumbering pleasantry: "It seems as if there were no limit to expense. . . The spigot in Uncle Abe's barrel is made twice as big as the bung-hole. He may have been a good flatboatman and rail-splitter, but he certainly never learned the true science of cooping." This was a dark month to him; his only fortress of refuge was his self-esteem: secure in this, he lavished on every side his criticisms and his animadversions upon his associates. "Congress," he said,<sup>4</sup> "is unwilling to take the decisive steps which are indispensable to the highest degree of public credit; and the Executive does not, I fear, sufficiently realize the importance of an energetic and comprehensive policy in all departments of administration." Smarting as he did under the attack of the Blairs, he pretended to treat them with contempt. "Do not trouble yourself about the Blairs," he wrote to an adherent. "Dogs will bark at the moon, but I have never heard that the moon stopped on that account." By constantly dwelling on the imaginary coalition of Lincoln with the Blairs against him, he began at last to take heart again and to think that against adversaries so weak and so wicked there might still be a chance of victory. Only a fortnight before the gathering of the Republican convention at Baltimore he began to look beyond the already certain event of that convention, and to contemplate the possibility of defeating Mr. Lincoln after he should be nominated.

It has become quite apparent now [he said] that the impertunity of Mr. Lincoln's special friends for an early convention, in order to make his nomination sure, was a mistake both for him and for the country. The convention will not be regarded as a Union convention, but simply as a Blair-Lincoln convention, by a great body of citizens whose support is essential to success. Few except those already committed to Mr. Lincoln will consider themselves bound by a predetermined nomination. Very many who may ultimately vote for Mr. Lincoln will wait the course of events hoping that some popular movement for Grant, or some other successful general, will offer a better hope of saving the country. Others, and the number seems to be increasing, will not support his nomination in any event; believing that our ill-success thus far in the suppression of the rebellion is due mainly to his course of action and inaction, and that no change can be for the worse. But these are speculations merely from my standpoint.<sup>5</sup>

The Secretary's relations with the President and his colleagues while he was in this frame of mind were naturally subject to much friction, and this frame of mind had lasted with little variation for more than a year. It was impossible to get on with him except by constant agreement to all his demands. He chose in his letters and his diaries to represent himself as the one just and patriotic man in the Government, who was striving with desperate energy, but with little hope, to preserve the Administration from corrupt influences. It cannot be doubted that his motives were pure, his ability and industry unusual, his integrity, of course, beyond question. He held, and justly held, that, being responsible for the proper conduct of affairs in his department, he should not be compelled to make appointments contrary to his convictions of duty. He was unquestionably right in insisting that appointments should be made on public grounds, and that only men of ability and character should be chosen to fill them; but he had an exasperating habit of assuming that nobody agreed with him in this view, and that all differences of opinion in regard to persons necessarily sprung from corrupt or improper motives on the part of those who differed with him. At the slightest word of disagreement he immediately put on his full armor of noble sentiments and phrases, appealed to Heaven for the rectitude of his intentions, and threatened to resign his commission if thwarted in his purpose. When he was not opposed he made his recommendations, as his colleagues did, on grounds of political expediency as well as of personal fitness. One day, for instance, he recommended the appointment of Rheinhold Solger as Assistant Register of

<sup>1</sup> Chase to Jay Cooke, May 5, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 584.

<sup>2</sup> Chase to D. T. Smith, May 9, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 587.

<sup>3</sup> May 9, 1864. *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Chase to Hamilton, May 15, 1864. *Ibid.*, p. 590.

<sup>5</sup> Chase to Brough, May 19, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 593.



the Treasury on the ground that "the German supporters of the Administration have had no considerable appointment in the department." He frequently gave in support of his nominees the recommendation of senators and representatives of the States where the appointments were to be made. But he always sturdily resented any suggestions from the President that an appointment proposed by him would have a bad effect politically. He had the faculty of making himself believe that his obstinacy in such matters arose purely from devotion to principle. He would not only weary the President with unending oral discussions, but, returning to the department, would write him letters filled with high and irrelevant morality, and at evening would enter in his diary meditations upon his own purity and the perversity of those he chose to call his enemies. It would hardly be wise for the ablest man of affairs to assume such an attitude. To justify it at all one should be infallible in his judgment of men. With the Secretary of the Treasury this was far from being the case. He was not a good judge of character; he gave his confidence freely to any one who came flattering him and criticizing the President, and after having given it, it was almost impossible to make him believe that the man who talked so judiciously could be a knave. His chosen biographer, Judge Warden, says: "He was indeed sought less by strong men and by good men than by weak men and by bad men."<sup>1</sup> A much better authority, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, while giving him unmeasured praise for other qualities calls him "profoundly ignorant of men," and says, "The baldest charlatan might deceive him into trusting his personal worth."<sup>2</sup>

Early in the year 1864 the Federal appointments in New York City began to be the subject of frequent conversation between the President and the Secretary of the Treasury. So many complaints of irregularity and inefficiency in the conduct of affairs in the New York custom house had reached Mr. Lincoln that he began to think a change in the officers there would be of advantage to the public service. Every suggestion of this sort, however, was met by Mr. Chase with passionate opposition. Mr. Lincoln had not lost confidence in the integrity or the high character of Mr. Barney, the collector of customs; he was even willing to give him an important appointment abroad in testimony of his continued esteem; but he was not satisfied with what he heard of the conduct of his office. Several of his subordinates had been detected in improper and corrupt practices, and after being defended by Mr. Chase until defense was impossible, they had been

dismissed, and in some cases punished. In the month of February, while the conduct of the custom house was under investigation in Congress, a special agent of the Treasury Department named Joshua F. Bailey came to Washington, having been summoned as a witness to testify before the committee of the House of Representatives in charge of the matter. He called on the chairman in advance, and endeavored to smother the investigation by saying, among other things, that, whatever might be developed, the President would in no case take any action. The chairman of the committee reported this impudent statement to the President, who at once communicated the fact to the Secretary of the Treasury, saying, "The public interest cannot fail to suffer in the hands of this irresponsible and unscrupulous man"; and he proposed at the same time to send Mr. Barney as minister to Portugal.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Chase defended Bailey, and resisted with such energy the displacement of Mr. Barney that midsummer came with matters in the custom house unchanged. Mr. Chase, in his diary, gives a full account of a conversation between himself and the President<sup>4</sup> in regard to this matter, in which the Secretary reiterates his assurances of confidence in the conduct of the custom house, and gives especially warm expression to his regard for Bailey, meeting the positive assertion of the chairman of the committee of the House of Representatives by saying, "I think Mr. Bailey is not the fool to have made such a suggestion." So long as he remained in office he gave this blind confidence to Bailey, who finally showed how ill he deserved it by the embezzlement of a large sum of public money, and by his flight in ruin and disgrace from the country.

In February, 1863, the Senate rejected the nomination of Mr. Mark Howard as collector of internal revenue for the district of Connecticut. Mr. Chase, hearing that this rejection was made at the instance of Senator Dixon, immediately wrote a letter demanding the renomination of Howard; or, if the President should not agree with him in this, of some one not recommended by Senator Dixon. A few days later the President wrote to Mr. Chase that after much reflection and with a great deal of pain that it was adverse to his wish, he had concluded that it was not best to renominate Mr. Howard. He recognized the constitutional right of the Senate to reject his nominations without being called to account; and to take the ground in advance that he would nominate no one for the vacant place who was favored by a senator so eminent in character and ability as Mr. Dixon seemed to him pre-

<sup>1</sup> Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> Reid, "Ohio in the War," Vol. I., p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Chase, Feb. 12, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> June 6.

posterous. The only person from Connecticut recommended for the vacancy was Mr. Goodman, in favor of whom Senator Dixon and Mr. Loomis, the Representative in the House, cordially united. The President therefore asked Mr. Chase to send him a nomination for Goodman.<sup>1</sup> Immediately on the receipt of this letter Mr. Chase wrote out his resignation as Secretary of the Treasury in these words:

Finding myself unable to approve the manner in which selections for appointment to important trusts in this department have been recently made, and being unwilling to remain responsible for its administration, under existing circumstances, I respectfully resign the office of Secretary of the Treasury.<sup>2</sup>

This letter, however, never reached the President, as Senator Dixon came in before it was dispatched and discussed the matter in a spirit so entirely different from that of the Secretary that no quarrel was possible with him; and after he left, Mr. Chase wrote a letter to the President, in which he said:

I do not insist on the renomination of Mr. Howard; and Mr. Dixon and Mr. Loomis, as I understand, do not claim the nomination of his successor. . . . My only object—and I think you so understand it—is to secure fit men for responsible places, without admitting the rights of senators or representatives to control appointments, for which the President, and the Secretary, as his presumed adviser, must be responsible. Unless this principle can be practically established, I feel that I cannot be useful to you or the country in my present position.<sup>3</sup>

It is possible that the Secretary may have thought that this implied threat to resign brought both the President and the senator to reason, for the matter ended at this time by their allowing him to have absolutely his own way. Mr. Dixon wrote to the President,<sup>4</sup> saying that he "preferred to leave the whole matter to the Secretary of the Treasury, believing his choice would be such as to advance the interests of the country and the Administration"; and the President, who heartily detested these squabbles over office, was glad of this arrangement. There was not a shade of difference between him and Mr. Chase as to the duty of the Administration to appoint only fit men to office, but the President always preferred to effect this object without needlessly offending the men upon whom the Government depended for its support in the war.

<sup>1</sup> March 2, 1863. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 524.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 524, 525.

<sup>3</sup> March 3, 1863. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 525.

<sup>4</sup> Dixon to Lincoln, March 5, 1863. MS.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Schuckers was private secretary to Mr. Chase and author of a biography of him, q. v., p. 423.

<sup>6</sup> Lincoln to Chase, May 8, 1863; MS. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 527.

A few months later Mr. Lincoln was subjected to great trouble and inconvenience by the constant complaints which came to him by every mail from Puget Sound against the collector for that district, one Victor Smith, from Ohio, a friend and appointee of Mr. Chase. This Smith is described by Schuckers<sup>5</sup> as

a man not very likely to become popular on the Pacific coast—or anywhere else. He believed in spirit rappings and was an avowed abolitionist; he whined a great deal about "progress"; was somewhat arrogant in manner and intolerant in speech, and speedily made himself thoroughly unpopular in his office.

No attention was paid by the Secretary to these complaints, which were from time to time referred to him by the President; but at last the clamor by letter and by deputations from across the continent became intolerable, and the President, during a somewhat protracted absence of the Secretary from Washington, ordered a change to be made in the office. In a private note to Mr. Chase, wishing to avoid giving him personal offense, he said:

My mind is made up to remove Victor Smith as collector of the customs at the Puget Sound district. Yet in doing this I do not decide that the charges against him are true. I only decide that the degree of dissatisfaction with him there is too great for him to be retained. But I believe he is your personal acquaintance and friend, and if you desire it, I will try to find some other place for him.<sup>6</sup>

Three days later the Secretary, having returned to Washington, answered in his usual manner, protesting once more his ardent desire to serve the country faithfully, and claiming that he had a right to be consulted in matters of appointment. He sent a blank commission for the person whom the President had concluded to appoint, but protested against the precedent, and tendered his resignation. This time again the President gave way. He drove to the Secretary's house, handed his petulant letter back to him, and begged him to think no more of the matter.<sup>7</sup> Two days afterward, in a letter assenting to other recommendations for office which had come to him from the Treasury Department, he said, "Please send me over the commission for Louis C. Gunn, as you recommend, for collector of customs at Puget Sound."<sup>8</sup>

Any statesman possessing a sense of humor

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Maunsell B. Field, in his "Memories of Many Men and Some Women," p. 303, quotes Mr. Lincoln as saying: "I went directly up to him with the resignation in my hand, and, putting my arm around his neck, said to him, 'Chase, here is a paper with which I wish to have nothing to do; take it back and be reasonable.' It was difficult to bring him to terms. I had to plead with him a long time; but I finally succeeded, and heard nothing more of that resignation."

<sup>8</sup> Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 528.

would have hesitated before repeating this identical proceeding; but, as we have said, Mr. Chase was deficient in this saving sense, and he apparently saw no reason why it should not be repeated indefinitely.

Mr. John J. Cisco, the assistant treasurer at New York, who had served the Government with remarkable ability and efficiency through three administrations, resigned his commission in May, to take effect at the close of the fiscal year, the 30th of June, 1864. It was a post of great importance in a financial point of view, and not insignificant in the way of political influence. Up to this time, Mr. Chase had made all the important appointments in New York from his own wing of the supporters of the Union—the men who had formerly been connected with the Democratic party, and who now belonged to what was called the radical wing of the Republican. This matter was the source of constant complaint from those who were sometimes called the Conservative Republicans of New York, or those who had in great part formerly belonged to the Whig party, and who in later years acknowledged the leadership of Mr. Seward. The President was anxious that in an appointment so important as that which was now about to be made both sections of the party in New York should, if possible, be satisfied; and especially that no nominations should be made which should be positively objectionable to Senator Morgan, who was considered to represent more especially the city of New York and its great commercial interests. To this Mr. Chase at first interposed no objection; and it was upon full and friendly consultation and conference between him and Senator Morgan that the appointment was offered successively to Mr. Denning Duer and to Mr. John A. Stewart, both of them gentlemen of the highest standing. But both declined the office tendered them; upon which Mr. Chase suddenly resolved to appoint Mr. Maunsell B. Field, who was at that time an assistant secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Field was a gentleman of excellent social position, of fine literary culture, to whom the Secretary was sincerely attached, but who was entirely destitute of such standing in either the political or the financial circles of New York as was required by so important a place. Senator Morgan at once protested vigorously against such an appointment, which only served to confirm the Secretary in his insistence upon it. Besides his objections to Mr. Field, whom he thought in no way competent to hold such a place, Mr. Morgan urged that the political result of his appointment would be extremely unfavorable to the Union party in New York. He became thoroughly alarmed, and begged the Secretary and the President successively to make their

choice among three of the most eminent citizens of New York whose names he presented; but the Secretary's mind was made up. Without further consultation with the President, he sent him the nomination for Mr. Field on the 27th of June. The next day the President replied:

I cannot, without much embarrassment, make this appointment; principally, because of Senator Morgan's very firm opposition to it. Senator Harris has not yet spoken to me on the subject, though I understand he is not averse to the appointment of Mr. Field, nor yet to any one of the three named by Senator Morgan. . . . Governor Morgan tells me he has mentioned three names to you, to wit: R. M. Blatchford, Dudley S. Gregory, and Thomas Hillhouse. It will really oblige me if you will make choice among those three, or any other man that Senators Morgan and Harris will be satisfied with, and send me a nomination for him.<sup>1</sup>

There have been few ministers who would have refused so reasonable and considerate a request as this, but it did not for a moment shake Mr. Chase's determination to have his own way in the matter. He sent a note to the President asking for an interview, and telegraphed to Mr. Cisco,<sup>2</sup> begging him most earnestly to withdraw his resignation and give the country the benefit of his services at least one quarter longer. He was determined, in one way or another, that neither the President nor the senators of New York should have anything to say in regard to this appointment; and conscious of his own blamelessness in all the controversy, he went home and wrote in his diary: "Oh, for more faith and clearer sight! How stable is the city of God! How disordered is the city of man!" Later in the day the President wrote him:

When I received your note this forenoon suggesting a conversation—a verbal conversation—in relation to the appointment of a successor to Mr. Cisco, I hesitated, because the difference does not, in the main part, lie within the range of a conversation between you and me. As the proverb goes, no man knows so well where the shoe pinches as he who wears it. I do not think Mr. Field a very proper man for the place, but I would trust your judgment and forego this were the greater difficulty out of the way. Much as I personally like Mr. Barney, it has been a great burden to me to retain him in his place when nearly all our friends in New York were directly or indirectly urging his removal. Then the appointment of Hogeboom to be general appraiser brought me to, and has ever since kept me at, the verge of open revolt. Now the appointment of Mr. Field would precipitate it, unless Senator Morgan, and those feeling as he does, could be brought to concur in it. Strained as I

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Chase, June 28, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 611.

<sup>2</sup> Schuckers, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 506.

already am at this point, I do not think that I can make this appointment in the direction of still greater strain.<sup>1</sup>

In the evening the extremely tense situation was relieved by a telegram from Mr. Cisco complying with the request of the Secretary to remain another quarter. But it was not in the nature of Mr. Chase to accept this simple dénouement. He felt that the President had acted badly, and must be subjected to some discipline; and he naturally resorted to those measures which had hitherto proved so effective. He wrote to him:

The withdrawal of Mr. Cisco's resignation, which I inclose, relieves the present difficulty; but I cannot help feeling that my position here is not altogether agreeable to you, and it is certainly too full of embarrassment and difficulty and painful responsibility to allow in me the least desire to retain it. I think it my duty, therefore, to inclose to you my resignation. I shall regard it as a real relief if you think proper to accept it, and will most cheerfully render to my successor any aid he may find useful in entering upon his duties.<sup>2</sup>

In this letter Mr. Chase inclosed his formal resignation. The President received this note while very much occupied with other affairs. The first paper which met his eye was the telegram from Mr. Cisco withdrawing his resignation. Glad that the affair was so happily terminated, he laid the packet aside for some hours, without looking at the other papers contained in it. The next morning, wishing to write a congratulatory note to Mr. Chase upon this welcome termination of the crisis, he found, to his bitter chagrin and disappointment, that the Secretary had once more tendered his resignation. He took it to mean precisely what the Secretary had intended—that if he were to retain Mr. Chase as Secretary of the Treasury, it should not be hereafter as a subordinate; to refuse this resignation, to go once more to the Secretary and urge him to remain, would amount to an abdication of his constitutional powers. He therefore, without hesitation, sent him this letter:

Your resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury, sent me yesterday, is accepted. Of all I have said in commendation of your ability and fidelity I have nothing to unsay, and yet you and I have reached a point of mutual embarrassment in our official relations which it seems cannot be overcome or longer sustained consistently with the public service.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time he sent to the Senate the nomination of David Tod of Ohio as Secretary of the Treasury. Most people have chosen to consider this a singular selection. Yet

David Tod was by no means an unknown man. He had gained an honorable position at the bar; had been the Democratic candidate for governor in 1843; had served with credit as minister to Brazil; was first vice-president of the Charleston convention and became its president at Baltimore on the secession of Caleb Cushing; was one of the most prominent men in Ohio in railroad and mining enterprises; had been the most eminent and efficient of the war Democrats of the State; and as governor had shown executive capacity of high order.<sup>4</sup> There were some superficial points of resemblance between Mr. Chase and Governor Tod that doubtless caught the attention of the President in choosing a successor to the former in such haste. Tod was a citizen of the same State with Chase, of which both had been governor; he had come into the Union party from the Democrats; he was a man of unusually dignified and impressive presence; but it is safe to say that no one had ever thought of him for the place now vacant. The nomination was presented to the Senate at its opening and was received with amazement. Not the least surprised of the statesmen in the Capitol was Mr. Chase himself, who was busy at the moment in one of the committee rooms of the Senate arranging some legislation which he needed for his department. There are many indications which go to show that his resignation of the evening before was intended, like those which had preceded it, as a means of discipline for the President. After sending it he wrote to Mr. Cisco expressing his thanks for the withdrawal of his resignation, and saying:

It relieves me from a very painful embarrassment. . . . I could not remain here and see your office made parcel of the machinery of party, or even feel serious apprehension that it might be.

Even on the morning of the 30th of June, Mr. Chase wrote to the President recommending a considerable increase of taxation, saying that there would be a deficit by existing laws of about eighty millions.

On the other hand, there is nothing to show, up to the instant that he was informed of the nomination of Tod, that he expected his official career to end on that day. The news for that moment created something like consternation in political circles at the capital. Mr. Washburne hurried to the White House, saying the change was disastrous; that at this time of military unsuccess, financial weakness, congressional hesitation on questions of conscription, and imminent famine in the West, it was

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Chase, June 28, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 613.

<sup>2</sup> Chase to Lincoln, June 29, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Chase, June 30, 1864. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 614.

<sup>4</sup> Reid, "Ohio in the War."

ruinous. The Senate Committee on Finance, to which the nomination of Tod had been referred, came down in a body to talk with the President about it. The President gave this account of the interview: "Fessenden was frightened, Conness was angry, Sherman thought we could not have gotten on together much longer anyhow, Cowan and Van Winkle were indifferent."<sup>1</sup> They not only objected to any change, but specially protested against the nomination of Tod as too little known and too inexperienced for the place. The President replied that he had little personal acquaintance with Tod, that he had nominated him on account of the high opinion he had formed of him as governor of Ohio; but that the Senate had the duty and responsibility of passing upon the question of fitness, in which it must be entirely untrammelled; he could not, in justice to himself or to Tod, withdraw the nomination. The impression of the undesirability of the change rather deepened during the day. Mr. Hooper of Massachusetts, an intimate friend of both the President and Mr. Chase, and the man upon whom both principally relied for the conduct of financial legislation in the House, spoke of the crisis in deep depression. He said he had been for some time of the opinion that Mr. Chase did not see his way entirely clear to raising the funds which were necessary; that his supplementary demand for money sent in at the close of the session after everything had been granted which he asked, looked like an intention to throw an anchor to windward in case he was refused. Mr. Hooper said he had waked this morning feeling a little vexed that Chase had done this, that he thought it was an attempt to throw an unfair responsibility upon Congress; but now this resignation came to relieve him of all responsibility; his successor would have an enormous work to do; the future was troubled; there remained the great practical problem, regularly recurring, to raise one hundred millions a month.

I do not clearly see [he said] how it is to be done; the talent of finance in its national aspect is something entirely different from banking. Most bankers criticize Mr. Chase, but he has a faculty of using the knowledge and experience of others to the best advantage; that has sufficed him hitherto; a point has been reached where he does not clearly see what comes next, and at this point the President allows him to step from under his load.<sup>1</sup>

This view of the case has a color of confirmation in a passage of the diary of Mr. Chase of the 30th of June, which goes to show at least a mixed motive in his resignation. After his resignation had been accepted, Mr. Hooper

<sup>1</sup> J. H., Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Chase, Diary. Warden, "Life of S. P. Chase," p. 618.

had called upon him and, evidently hoping that some reconciliation was still possible, told him that, several days before, the President had spoken to him in terms of high esteem, indicating his purpose of making him Chief Justice in the event of a vacancy, a post which Mr. Chase had long before told the President was the one he most desired. Mr. Chase answered that had such expression of good-will reached him in time it might have prevented the present misunderstanding, but that now he could not change his position. "Besides," he adds, "I did not see how I could carry on the department without more means than Congress was likely to supply, and amid the embarrassment created by factious hostility within, and both factious and party hostility without the department."<sup>2</sup>

At night the President received a dispatch from Mr. Tod declining the appointment on the ground of ill-health. The President's secretary went immediately to the Capitol to communicate this information to the senators, so that no vote might be taken on the nomination. Early the next morning the President sent to the Senate the nomination of William Pitt Fessenden, senator from Maine. When he gave the nomination to his secretary, the latter informed him that Mr. Fessenden was then in the ante-room waiting to see him. He answered, "Start at once for the Senate, and then let Fessenden come in." The senator, who was chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, began immediately to discuss the question of the vacant place in the Treasury, suggesting the name of Mr. McCulloch. The President listened to him for a moment with a smile of amusement, and then told him that he had already sent *his* nomination to the Senate. Fessenden leaped to his feet, exclaiming, "You must withdraw it. I cannot accept." "If you decline," said the President, "you must do it in open day, for I shall not recall the nomination." "We talked about it for some time," said the President, "and he went away less decided in his refusal."

The nomination was instantly confirmed, the executive session lasting no more than a minute. It gave immediate and widespread satisfaction. There seemed to be no difference of opinion in regard to Mr. Fessenden; the only fear was that he would not accept. His first impulse was to decline; but being besieged all day by the flattering solicitations of his friends, it was impossible for him to persist in refusing. The President was equally surprised and gratified at the enthusiastic and general approval the nomination had met with. He said:<sup>1</sup>

It is very singular, considering that this appointment is so popular when made, that no one ever



WILLIAM PITT FESSENDEN.  
(AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.)

mentioned his name to me for that place. Thinking over the matter, two or three points occurred to me: first, his thorough acquaintance with the business; as chairman of the Senate Committee of Finance he knows as much of this special subject as Mr. Chase; he possesses a national reputation and the confidence of the country; he is a radical without the petulant and vicious fretfulness of many radicals. There are reasons why this appointment ought to be very agreeable to him. For some time past he has been running in rather a pocket of bad luck; the failure to renominate Mr. Hamlin makes possible a contest between him and the Vice-President, the most popular man in Maine, for the election which is now imminent. A little while ago in the Senate you know Trumbull told him his ill-temper had left him no friends, but this sudden and most gratifying manifestation of good feeling over his appointment, his instantaneous confirmation, the earnest entreaties of everybody that he should accept, cannot but be very grateful to his feelings.

Mr. Chase left a full record in his diaries and letters of the sense of injury and wrong done him by the President. He especially resented the President's reference to the "embarrassment in our official relations." "I had found a good deal of embarrassment from him," he said; "but what he had found from me I could not imagine, unless it has been caused by my unwillingness to have offices distributed as spoils or benefits. . . . He has never given me the active and earnest support I was entitled to." After Mr. Fessenden was appointed, the ex-Secretary entered in his diary his approval of the selection:

He has the confidence of the country, and many who have become inimical to me will give their

confidence to him and their support. Perhaps they will do more than they otherwise would to sustain him, in order to show how much better a Secretary he is than I was.

Before Mr. Fessenden accepted his appointment he called on Mr. Chase and conversed fully with him on the subject. Mr. Chase frankly and cordially advised him to accept, telling him that all the great work of the Department was now fairly blocked out and in progress, that the organization was all planned and in many ways complete, and all in a state which admitted of completion. His most difficult task would be to provide money. "But he would have advantages," said Mr. Chase, "which I had not. Those to whom I had given offense would have no cause of ill-will against my successor, and would very probably come to his support with zeal increased by their ill-will to me; so that my damage would be to his advantage, especially with a certain class of capitalists and bankers."

The entries in Mr. Chase's diary continue for several days in the same strain. He congratulates himself on his own integrity; he speaks with severity of the machinations of imaginary enemies. On the 2d of July he remarks the passage of the bill giving the Secretary of the Treasury control over trade in the rebel States and authority to lease abandoned property and to care for the freedmen, and adds: "How much good I expected to accomplish under this bill! Will my successor do this work? I fear not. He had not the same heart for this measure that I had." On the Fourth of July the ringing of bells, the firing of cannon, and the snapping of crackers awoke him to the reflection that "if the Government had been willing to do justice, and had used its vast powers with equal energy and wisdom, the struggle might have been happily terminated long ago." Later in the same day Mr. Fessenden came to see him, and informed him that he had been discussing with the President the subject of appointments in the Treasury Department, and that Mr. Lincoln had requested him not to remove any friends of Governor Chase unless there should be a real necessity for it. Mr. Chase persuaded himself that if the President had spoken to him in that tone he would have withdrawn his resignation.

Why did he not? [he mused.] I can see but one reason—that I am too earnest, too antislavery, and say too radical, to make him willing to have me connected with the Administration: just as my opinion that he is not earnest enough, not antislavery enough, not radical enough, but goes naturally with those hostile to me, rather than with me, makes me willing and glad to be disconnected from it.

How far his animosity against the President had misled this able, honest, pure, and otherwise sagacious man may be seen in one single phrase. Referring to the President's refusal to sign the reconstruction bill, he put down his deliberate opinion that neither the President nor his chief advisers had abandoned the idea of possible reconstruction with slavery; and this in spite of the President's categorical statement, "While I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation or by any of the acts of Congress," and of his declaration that such action

would be "a cruel and an astounding breach of faith." But after all these expressions of that petulant injustice which was only a foible in a noble character, the greatest financial Secretary which the country had known since Hamilton had a perfect right, in laying down the high office he had borne with such integrity and such signal success, to indulge in the meditation which we find in his diary of June 30:

So my official life closes. I have laid broad foundations. Nothing but wise legislation and especially bold yet judicious provision of taxes, with fair economy in administration, and energetic yet prudent military action, . . . seems necessary to insure complete success.

## THE WATER-SEEKER.

WHO makes a road through regions rough and lone,  
Who plants and rears a tree where shade is none,  
Who scores the furrow in a soil untamed,  
Is fit in song heroic to be named.

Nor scanter praise be his whose patient force  
Gives to an arid land a water-course,  
Gradual, but grateful as the jet that broke  
From forth the ledge that felt the prophet's stroke.

Behold a toiler in far Idaho,  
'Mid foothills where, in summer's steady glow,  
The slender-shafted cottonwood looks dim,  
The swarthy dust-cloud veils the horizon's rim.

As day by day his toil the stream extends,  
Sometimes the grasses harsh a footfall bends—  
His wife and child, the genii of the stream,  
Before him rise as in a lovely dream!

*Edith M. Thomas.*

## THE IRRIGATING DITCH.

### PICTURES OF THE FAR WEST.—VII.



THE word "desert" is used, in the West, to describe alike lands in which the principle of life, if it ever existed, is totally extinct, and those other lands which are merely "thirsty."

West of the Missouri there are immense, sad provinces devoted to drought. They lie beneath skies that are pitilessly clear. The great snow-fields, the treasury of waters, are far away, and the streams which should convey the treasure are often many days' journeys apart. These wild water-courses are

Nature's commissaries sent from the mountains to the relief of the plains; but they scamper like pickpockets. They make away with the stores they were charged to distribute. They hurry along, making the only sound to be heard for miles in those vacant lands which they have defrauded. Year by year, or century by century, they plow out their barren channels: gradually they sink, beyond any possibility of fulfilling their mission. Now and then one will dig for itself a grave in the desert, bury its mouth in the sand, and be known as a "lost" river.

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## LINCOLN RENOMINATED—THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO— HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### LINCOLN RENOMINATED.



**I**N other chapters we have mentioned the unavailing efforts made by a few politicians to defeat the will of the people which everywhere demanded the renomination of Mr. Lincoln. These efforts were worth studying as manifestations of eccentric human nature, but they never had the least effect upon the great currents of public opinion. Death alone could have prevented the choice of Mr. Lincoln by the Union convention. So absolute and universal was this tendency that most of the politicians made no effort to direct or guide it; they simply exerted themselves to keep in the van and not be overwhelmed. The convention was to meet on the 7th of June, but the irregular nominations of the President began at the feast of the Epiphany. The first convention of the year was held in New Hampshire on the 6th of January—for the nomination of State officers. It had properly no concern with the National nominations. The convention consisted in great part of the friends of Mr. Chase, and those employees of the Treasury Department whose homes were in New Hampshire had come together determined to smother any mistimed demonstration for the President; but the first mention of his name set the assembly on fire, and before the chairman knew what he was doing the convention had declared in favor of the renomination of Lincoln. The same day a far more important demonstration came to the surface in Pennsylvania. The State legislature met on the 5th of January, and the following day a paper, prepared in advance, addressed to the President, requesting him to accept a second term of the Presidency, began to be circulated among the Union members. Not one to whom it was presented declined to sign it. Within a day or two it received the signature of every Union member of the Senate and the House of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Simon Cameron, transmitting it to the President on the 14th of January, could say:

You are now fairly launched on your second voyage, and of its success I am as confident as ever

I was of anything in my life. Providence has decreed your reelection, and no combination of the wicked can prevent it.<sup>2</sup>

This remarkable address began by congratulating the President upon the successes of the recent election, which were generously ascribed to the policy of his Administration. Referring to the Republican victory in their own State, the members of the legislature said:

If the voice of Pennsylvania became thus potential in indorsing the policy of your Administration, we consider that, as the representatives of those who have so completely indorsed your official course, we are only responding to their demands when we thus publicly announce our unshaken preference for your reelection to the Presidency in 1864.

This preference is justified by them purely on public grounds.

To make a change in the Administration until its authority has been fully reestablished in the revolted States would be to give the enemies of the Government abroad a pretext for asserting that the Government had failed at home. To change the policy in operation to crush rebellion and restore the land to peace would be to afford the traitors in arms time to gather new strength—if not for immediate victory, at least for ultimate success in their efforts permanently to dissolve the Union. . . . We do not make this communication at this time to elicit from you any expression of opinion on this subject. Having confidence in your patriotism, we believe that you will abide the decision of the friends of the Union, and yield consent to any honorable use which they may deem proper to make of your name in order to secure the greatest good to the country and the speediest success to our arms. . . . Expressing what we feel to be the language not only of our own constituents, but also of the people of all the loyal States, we claim to indulge the expectation that you will yield to the preference which has already made you the people's candidate for the Presidency in 1864.

In every gathering of the supporters of the Union the same irrepressible sentiment broke forth. The "New York Times" on the 15th of January clearly expressed the general feeling:

The same wise policy which would forbid a man of business in troublous times to change his agent of proved efficiency, impels the loyal people of our

<sup>2</sup> Cameron to Lincoln, Jan. 14, 1864. MS.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by J. G. Nicolay and John Hay, 1886. All rights reserved.



country to continue President Lincoln in his responsible position; and against the confirmed will of the people politicians are powerless.

The sentiment was so potent in its pressure upon the politicians that they everywhere gave way and broke into premature indorsement of the nomination. The Union Central Committee of New York held a special meeting and unanimously recommended the renomination of the President. Senator Morgan, sending this news to Mr. Lincoln, added:

It is going to be difficult to restrain the boys, and there is not much use in trying to do so.<sup>1</sup>

At a local election some of the ward tickets were headed, with an irrelevancy which showed the spirit of the hour, "For President of the United States in 1864, Abraham Lincoln." From one end to the other of the country these spontaneous nominations joyously echoed one another. Towards the close of January the radical legislature of Kansas, with but one dissenting voice, passed through both its Houses a resolution renominating Lincoln. All through the next month these demonstrations continued. The Union members of the New Jersey legislature united in an address to the President, saying:

Without any disparagement of the true men who surround you, and whose counsels you have shared, believing that you are the choice of the people, whose servants we are, and firmly satisfied that they desire and intend to give you four years for a policy of peace, we present your name as the candidate for President of the American people in 1864.<sup>2</sup>

Connecticut instructed her delegates by resolutions on the 17th of February; Maryland, Minnesota, and Colorado expressed in the same way the sentiment of their people. Wisconsin and Indiana made haste to range themselves with the other Northern States; and Ohio seized the opportunity to put a stop to the restless ambition of her favorite son by a resolution of the Republican members of the legislature declaring that "the people of Ohio, and her soldiers in the army, demand the renomination of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency" — the members rising to their feet and cheering with uncontrollable clamor when the resolution passed. The State of Maine, on the extreme eastern border, spoke next: early in March, the President received this dispatch, signed by a name afterwards illustrious in our political annals:

Both branches of the Maine legislature have this day adopted resolutions cordially recommending your renomination. Every Union member voted in favor of them. Maine is a unit for you.

JAMES G. BLAINE.

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 4, 1864. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 18, 1864.

Nowhere except in the State of Missouri was the name of Mr. Lincoln mentioned without overwhelming adhesion, and even in the Missouri Assembly the resolution in favor of his renomination was laid upon the table by a majority of only eight. There had been some anxiety on the part of Mr. Lincoln's friends lest the powerful secret organization called the Union League, which represented the most ardent and vehement Republican sentiment of the country, should fall into the hands of his opponents; but it was speedily seen that out of Missouri these apprehensions were groundless. The Union Leagues of New York, Illinois, and even Vicksburg, where the victory of Grant had allowed the development of a robust Union sentiment, were among the first to declare for the President. The organization in Philadelphia, powerful in wealth, intelligence, and personal influence, so early as the 11th of January had resolved that to the "prudence, sagacity, comprehension, and perseverance of Mr. Lincoln, under the guidance of a benign Providence, the nation is more indebted for the grand results of the war, which Southern rebels have wickedly waged against liberty and the Union, than to any other single instrumentality, and that he is justly entitled to whatever reward it is in the power of the nation to bestow." They declared also:

That as Mr. Lincoln has had to endure the largest share of the labor required to suppress the rebellion, now rapidly verging to its close, he should also enjoy the largest share of the honors which await those who have contended for the right. They therefore recognize with pleasure the unmistakable indications of the popular will in all the loyal States, and heartily join with their fellow-citizens, without any distinction of party, here and elsewhere, in presenting him as the people's candidate for the Presidency.

The current swept on irresistibly throughout the months of spring. A few opponents of Mr. Lincoln, seeing that he was already nominated the moment the convention should meet, made one last effort to postpone the meeting of the convention until September, knowing that their only reliance was in some possible accident of the summer. So earnest and important a Republican as William Cullen Bryant united with a self-constituted committee of others equally earnest, but not so important, to induce the National Committee to postpone the convention. In their opinion "the country was not now in a position to enter into a Presidential contest; it was clear to them that no nomination could be made with any unanimity so early as June. They thought it best to see what the result of the summer campaign would be, as the wish of the people to continue their present leaders in power would depend very much upon this." The committee, of

course, took no notice of this appeal, though it was favored by so strong a Republican authority as the "New York Tribune."<sup>1</sup> The National Committee wisely thought that they might with as much reason take into consideration the request of a committee of prominent citizens to check an impending thunderstorm. All the movements in opposition to Mr. Lincoln were marked with the same naïveté and futility. The secret circular of Senator Pomeroy, the farcical Cleveland convention, the attempt of Mr. Bryant's committee to postpone the convention, were all equally feeble and nugatory in their effect.

Mr. Lincoln took no measures whatever to promote his candidacy. It is true he did not, like other candidates, assume airs of reluctance or bashfulness. While he discouraged on the part of strangers any suggestions as to his reelection, among his friends he made no secret of his readiness to continue the work he was engaged in, if such should seem to be the general wish. In a private letter to Mr. E. B. Washburne he said: "A second term would be a great honor and a great labor, which together perhaps I would not decline if tendered."<sup>2</sup> To another congressman he is reported to have said: "I do not desire a renomination except for the reason that such action on the part of the Republican party would be the most emphatic indorsement which could be given to the policy of my Administration." We have already mentioned the equanimity with which he treated the efforts of a leading member of his Cabinet to supplant him, and he received in the same manner the frequent suggestions of apprehensive friends that he would do well to beware of Grant. His usual reply was, "If he takes Richmond, let him have it." In reality General Grant was never at any time a competitor for the nomination. Of course, after the battle of Missionary Ridge there was no lack of such suggestions on the part of those who surrounded the victorious general; but he positively refused to put himself in the lists or to give any sanction to the use of his name. The President constantly discouraged on the part of officeholders of the Government, civil or military, any especial eagerness in his behalf. General Schurz wrote, late in February, asking permission to take an active part in the Presidential canvass, to which Mr. Lincoln replied:

<sup>1</sup> April 26, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 26, 1863. MS.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Schurz, March 13, 1864. MS.

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln to Schurz, March 23, 1864. Autograph MS.

<sup>5</sup> General John A. Logan, in a letter addressed to General W. T. Sherman and published after General Logan's death, said that when he left the army to make speeches in Illinois he did this at the request of the President. We have been unable to find any communication in this sense among Mr. Lincoln's papers.

Allow me to suggest that if you wish to remain in the military service, it is very dangerous for you to get temporarily out of it; because, with a major-general once out, it is next to impossible for even the President to get him in again. With my appreciation of your ability and correct principle, of course I would be very glad to have your service for the country in the approaching political canvass; but I fear we cannot properly have it without separating you from the military.<sup>3</sup>

And in a subsequent letter addressed to the same general he said:<sup>4</sup>

I perceive no objection to your making a political speech when you are where one is to be made; but quite surely speaking in the North and fighting in the South at the same time are not possible; nor could I be justified to detail any officer to the political campaign during its continuance and then return him to the army.<sup>5</sup>

The experience of a hundred years of our politics has shown what perils environ a Presidential candidate who makes speeches. The temptation to flatter the immediate audience, without regard to the ultimate effect of the words spoken, has often proved too strong for the wariest politician to resist. Especially is a candidate in danger when confronting an audience belonging to a special race or class. Mr. Lincoln made no mistake either in 1860 or in 1864. Even when exposed to the strongest possible temptation, the reception of an address from a deputation of a workingmen's association, he preserved his mental balance undisturbed. To such a committee, who approached him on the 21st of March, 1864, he replied by repeating to them the passage from his message of December, 1861, in which the relations of labor and capital are set down with mathematical and logical precision, illuminated by the light of a broad humanity; and he only added to the views thus expressed the following words, than which nothing wiser or more humane has ever been said by social economists:

None are so deeply interested to resist the present rebellion as the working people. Let them beware of prejudices working division and hostility among themselves. The most notable feature of a disturbance in your city last summer was the hanging of some working people by other working people. It should never be so. The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and

We applied to General Logan's family for the evidence on which the assertion was founded, but received no answer. There is no question that General Logan's statement was made in good faith, and that he believed that in taking a leave and assisting in the political canvass he was acting in accordance with the President's wishes. But Mr. Lincoln's action in other cases was so consistently opposed to this hypothesis, that we can only conclude that General Logan got his impression of what the President desired from some other person than the President himself.

tongues and kindreds. Nor should this lead to a war upon property or the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor, property is desirable, is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and, hence, is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example asserting that his own shall be safe from violence when built.

The politicians who opposed Mr. Lincoln, whether from pure motives or from motives not so pure, met with one common fate: they were almost universally beaten in their own districts by men who, whatever their other incentives, were sufficiently adroit to perceive the sign in which they should conquer. It gave a man all this year a quite unfair advantage in his district to be known as a friend of the President, when his opponent was not equally outspoken; and many of the most radical politicians, seeing in which direction their advantage lay, suddenly turned upon their opponents and vanquished them in the President's name. General Lane, for example, who had been engaged in a bitter controversy with Pomeroy in regard to local interests in Kansas, saw his opportunity in the anti-Lincoln circular of his colleague; and although before this it would have been hard to say which of the two had been most free in his criticisms of the President, General Lane instantly trimmed his sails to catch the favoring breeze and elected himself and a full list of delegates to the Baltimore convention, whom he called, in his characteristic language, "all vindictive friends of the President." Other members of Congress, equally radical and more sincere and honest, made haste to range themselves on the side of the President against those with whom they had been more intimately associated. William D. Kelley of Philadelphia publicly proclaimed him "the wisest radical of us all"; Mr. Ashley of Ohio, to whom one of his abolitionist constituents had objected that he wanted no more of a President who had not crushed a rebellion in four years, replied that this was unreasonable, as the Lord had not crushed the devil in a much longer time.

As the day for the meeting at Baltimore drew near, and its unanimous verdict became more and more evident, the President was besieged from every quarter of the Union with solicitations to make known his wishes in regard to the work of the convention. To all such inquiries he returned an energetic refusal to give any word of counsel or to express any personal desire. During a few days preceding the convention a great many delegates took the road to Washington, either to get some intimation of the President's wishes or

to impress their own faces and names on his expectant mind. They were all welcomed with genial and cordial courtesy, but received not the slightest intimation of what would be agreeable to him. The most powerful politicians from New York and Pennsylvania were listened to with no more confidential consideration than the shy and awkward representatives of the rebellious States, who had elected themselves in sutlers' tents and in the shadow of department headquarters. "What is that crowd of people in the hall?" he said one day to his secretary. "It is a delegation from South Carolina. They are a swindle." "Let them in," said Lincoln; "they will not swindle me."

When at last the convention came together, on the 7th of June, 1864, it had less to do than any other convention in our political history. The delegates were bound by a peremptory mandate. Mr. Forney, in an article printed the day before the meeting,<sup>1</sup> put forth with unusual candor the attitude of the convention towards its constituents. The permanent policy of the Republican party of the nation was already absolutely established by the acts of the President and accepted and ratified by Congress and the people.

For this reason [said Mr. Forney] it is less important as a political body, as it cannot originate but will simply republish a policy. Yet for this reason it is transcendently the more imposing in its expression of the national will. Nor has the convention a candidate to choose. Choice is forbidden it by the previous action of the people. It is a body which almost beyond parallel is directly responsible to the people, and little more than the instrument of their will. Mr. Lincoln is already renominated, and the convention will but formally announce the decision of the people. If this absence of independence lessens the mere political interest of the convention in one respect, the fact that it will thoroughly and unquestionably obey national instructions gives it higher importance.

These words represented the well-nigh universal sentiment among Republicans. There were, of course, those to whom such a sentiment was not agreeable. Horace Greeley found it hard to accept an opinion which ran counter to his personal views. In an article of the same date as that last quoted, although he admitted the predestined action of the convention, he still protested vehemently against the impolicy of such action. He quoted the message sent by Mr. Lincoln to Governor Seymour in the dark winter of 1862-63, "that if he wants to be President of the United States, he must take care that there shall be a United States."

We could wish [said Greeley] the Presidency utterly forgotten or ignored for the next two months,

<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia "Press," June 6.

while every impulse, every effort of the loyal millions should be directed towards the overthrow of the armed hosts of the rebellion. That effected, or its speedy accomplishment proved impossible, we should be ready to enter clear-sightedly on the Presidential canvass. Now we are not. We feel that the expected nomination, if made at this time, exposes the Union party to a dangerous "flank movement" — possibly a successful one.

Among the Democratic newspapers a still more blind and obstinate disinclination to accept the existing facts is seen up to the hour of the meeting of the convention. They still insisted that the nomination of Lincoln was in the highest degree doubtful; some pretended that the delegates were equally divided between Lincoln and Grant; others insisted that the nomination of Frémont at Cleveland had electrified the country and would probably carry the convention by storm.

The convention was opened by a brief speech from Senator Morgan of New York, who was chairman of the executive committee. It contained one significant sentence. He said the party of which they were the delegates and honored representatives would fall short of accomplishing its great mission unless among its other resolves it should declare for such amendment of the Constitution as would positively prohibit African slavery in the United States. The sentence was greeted with prolonged applause, which burst at last into three cheers, in the midst of which Governor Morgan announced the choice by the National Committee of Robert J. Breckinridge of Kentucky as temporary chairman of the convention. The venerable Kentuckian on taking the chair made a speech which, though entirely extemporaneous, was delivered with great ease and dignity, and profoundly impressed his auditors.

Disregarding the etiquette which assumes that a convention is a deliberative assembly and that its choice cannot be foretold until it is made, he calmly took it for granted at the very beginning of his remarks that the Union candidate for the Presidency was already nominated, and as soon as the tumultuous cheers which greeted his mention of the name of Abraham Lincoln had died away he turned at once to the discussion of what he considered the real business of the day — the declaration of principles. Coming from a section of the country where the Constitution had been especially revered in words and vehemently assailed in action, he declared that with all the outcry about our violations of the Constitution this present living generation and this present Union party are more thoroughly devoted to that Constitution than any generation that ever lived under it; but he contended also that

sacred as was the Constitution the nation was not its slave.

We ought to have it distinctly understood by friends and enemies that while we love that instrument, while we will maintain it, and will with undoubted certainty put to death friend or foe who undertakes to trample it under foot; yet, beyond a doubt, we will reserve the right to alter it to suit ourselves from time to time and from generation to generation.

This speech was full of brief and powerful apothegms, some of which were startling as coming from an aged theologian of an aspect equally strong and benignant.

The only enduring, the only imperishable cement of all free institutions [he said], has been the blood of traitors. . . . It is a fearful truth, but we had as well avow it at once; and every blow you strike, and every rebel you kill, every battle you win, dreadful as it is to do it, you are adding, it may be a year, it may be ten years, it may be a century, it may be ten centuries, to the life of the Government and the freedom of your children.<sup>1</sup>

Though presiding over a political convention, he declared himself absolutely detached from politics. "As an Abolition party, as a Republican party, as a Whig party, as a Democratic party, as an American party, I will not follow you one foot. As a Union party I will follow you to the ends of the earth, and to the gates of death." He echoed the brief speech in which Governor Morgan had struck the keynote. He said:

I unite myself with those who believe that slavery is contrary to the brightest interests of all men and of all governments, contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion, and incompatible with the natural rights of man. I join myself with those who say, Away with it forever; and I fervently pray God that the day may come when throughout the whole land every man may be as free as you are, and as capable of enjoying regulated liberty. . . . I know very well that the sentiments which I am uttering will cause me great odium in the State in which I was born, which I love, where the bones of two generations of my ancestors and some of my children are, and where very soon I shall lay my own. . . . But we have put our faces towards the way in which we intend to go, and we will go in it to the end.

In the evening the permanent organization of the convention was effected, William Dennison of Ohio being made chairman. He, also, in a brief and eloquent speech took for granted the unanimous nomination for the Presidency of the United States "of the wise and good man whose unselfish devotion to the country, in the administration of the Government, has secured to him not only the admiration but the warmest affection of every friend of constitutional liberty"; and

<sup>1</sup> McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 404.

also, in the tone of both the speakers who had preceded him, said that the loyal people of the country expected the convention

to declare the cause and the support of the rebellion to be slavery, which, as well for its treasonable offenses against the Government as for its incompatibility with the rights of humanity and the permanent peace of the country, must, with the termination of the war, and as much speedier as possible, be made to cease forever in every State and Territory of the Union.

There were in fact but three tasks before the convention. The first was to settle the status of contesting delegations from the States and Territories; the second, to agree upon the usual platform; and the third, to nominate a candidate for the Vice-Presidency. All of these questions were handled skillfully, and with a spirit of moderation which led to the most successful result in the canvass.

There were no questions of consequence in regard to the delegations of any of the Northern States, nor did any questions arise in regard to those from Kentucky and West Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. There were two delegations from Missouri, both making special claims of loyalty and of regularity of election. The committee on credentials decided that those styling themselves the "Radical Union" delegates should be awarded the seats. As this was the only delegation which had presented itself opposed to the nomination of Lincoln, and as a large majority, not only of the convention, but of the committee on credentials, were of the contrary opinion, their action in admitting the recalcitrant Missourians was sagacious. It quieted at once the beginnings of what might have been a dangerous schism. The question as to admitting the delegates from Tennessee also raised some discussion, but was decided in their favor by more than a two-thirds vote. The delegates from Louisiana and Arkansas were also admitted by a vote nearly as large. The delegates from Nevada, Colorado, and Nebraska were admitted with the right to vote; those from the States of Virginia and Florida, and the remaining Territories, were admitted to the privileges of the floor without the right to vote; and those from South Carolina were rejected altogether.

The same wise spirit of compromise was shown in the platform, reported by Henry J. Raymond of New York. The first resolution declared it the highest duty of every citizen to maintain the integrity of the Union and to quell the rebellion by force of arms; the second approved the determination of the Government to enter into no compromise with the rebels; the third, while approving all the acts hitherto done against slavery, declared in favor of an

amendment to the Constitution terminating and forever prohibiting the existence of slavery in the United States. This resolution was received with an outburst of spontaneous and thunderous applause. The fourth resolution gave thanks to the soldiers and sailors; the fifth applauded the practical wisdom, unselfish patriotism, and unswerving fidelity with which Abraham Lincoln had discharged, under circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, the great duties and responsibilities of the Presidential office, and it enumerated and approved the acts of his Administration. The sixth resolution was of sufficient significance to be given entire:

*Resolved*, That we deem it essential to the general welfare that harmony should prevail in the national councils, and we regard as worthy of public confidence and official trust those only who cordially indorse the principles proclaimed in these resolutions and which should characterize the administration of the Government.

This resolution, like the admission of the Missouri radicals, was intended in general to win the support and heal the dissatisfaction of the so-called radicals throughout the Union. Its specific meaning, however, was not entirely clear. There were not many of the delegates who voted for it who would have agreed upon all the details of a scheme for reorganizing the Cabinet. If measures for ostracizing all the objectionable members of the Government had been set on foot in the hall of the convention, it is probable that the name of every member of the Cabinet would have been found on some of the shells. It is altogether likely, however, that the name of the Postmaster-General would have occurred more frequently than that of any other minister. The controversy between his brother and the radicals of Missouri, in which he had, in accordance with his habit and temperament, taken an energetic part, had embittered against him the feelings of the radical Republicans, not only in the West but throughout the North, and his habit of candid and trenchant criticism had raised for him enemies in all political circles.

The seventh resolution claimed for the colored troops the full protection of the laws of war. The eighth declared that foreign emigration should be fostered and encouraged. The ninth spoke in favor of the speedy construction of a railroad to the Pacific coast. The tenth declared that the national faith pledged for the redemption of the public debt must be kept inviolate; and the eleventh declared against the efforts of any European power to establish monarchical governments sustained by foreign military forces in near proximity to the United States.

This last resolution showed the result of an adroit and sagacious compromise. The radicals in the convention desired to make it a censure upon the action of the President and the Secretary of State; but the friends of the Administration, while accepting to its utmost results the declaration in favor of the Monroe doctrine, assumed that the President and his Cabinet were of the same mind, and therefore headed the resolution with the declaration:

That we approve the decision taken by the Government that the people of the United States can never regard with indifference the attempt of any European power to overthrow by force or to supplant by fraud the institutions of any republican government on the Western continent.

There was nothing more before the convention but the nominations, and one of those was in fact already made. The only delay in registering the will of the convention occurred as a consequence of the impatience of members to do it by irregular and summary methods. Mr. Delano of Ohio made the customary motion to proceed to the nomination; Simon Cameron moved as a substitute the renomination of Lincoln and Hamlin by acclamation. A long wrangle ensued on the motion to lay this substitute on the table, which was brought to a close by a brief speech from Henry J. Raymond, representing the cooler heads, who were determined that whatever opposition there might be should have the fullest opportunity of expression; and by a motion, which was adopted, to nominate in the usual way, by the call of States. The interminable nominating speeches of recent years had not come into fashion: Mr. Cook, the chairman of the Illinois delegation, merely said, "The State of Illinois again presents to the loyal people of this nation, for President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln—God bless him!" and those who seconded the nomination were equally brief. Every State gave its undivided voice for Lincoln, with the exception of Missouri, which cast its vote, as the chairman stated, under positive instructions, for Grant. But before the result was announced Mr. Hume of Missouri moved that the nomination of Lincoln be declared unanimous. This could not be done until the result of the balloting was made known—484 for Lincoln, 22 for Grant. Missouri then changed its vote, and the secretary read the grand total of 506 for Lincoln. This announcement was greeted with a storm of cheering, which during many minutes as often as it died away burst out anew.

The principal names mentioned for the Vice-Presidency were, besides Mr. Hamlin, the actual incumbent, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, and Daniel S. Dickinson of New York; besides these General Rousseau had the vote

of his own State, Kentucky. The radicals of Missouri favored General B. F. Butler, who had a few scattered votes also from New England. But among the three principal candidates the voters were equally enough divided to make the contest exceedingly spirited and interesting. For several days before the convention the President had been besieged by inquiries as to his personal wishes in regard to his associate on the ticket. He had persistently refused to give the slightest intimation of such wish. His private secretary, Mr. Nicolay, was at Baltimore in attendance at the convention; and although he was acquainted with this attitude of the President, at last, overcome by the solicitations of the chairman of the Illinois delegation, who had been perplexed at the advocacy of Joseph Holt by Mr. Swett, one of the President's most intimate friends, Mr. Nicolay wrote a letter to Mr. Hay, who had been left in charge of the Executive office in his absence, containing among other matters this passage:

Cook wants to know confidentially whether Swett is all right; whether in urging Holt for Vice-President he reflects the President's wishes; whether the President has any preference, either personal or on the score of policy; or whether he wishes not even to interfere by a confidential intimation. . . . Please get this information for me if possible.

The letter was shown to the President, who indorsed upon it this memorandum:

Swett is unquestionably all right. Mr. Holt is a good man, but I had not heard or thought of him for V. P. Wish not to interfere about V. P. Cannot interfere about platform. Convention must judge for itself.

This positive and final instruction was sent at once to Mr. Nicolay, and by him communicated to the President's most intimate friends in the convention. It was therefore with minds absolutely untrammelled by even any knowledge of the President's wishes that the convention went about its work of selecting his associate on the ticket.

It is altogether probable that the ticket of 1864 would have been nominated without a contest had it not been for the general impression, in and out of the convention, that it would be advisable to select as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency a war Democrat. Mr. Dickinson, while not putting himself forward as a candidate, had sanctioned the use of his name by his friends on the especial ground that his candidacy might attract to the support of the Union party many Democrats who would have been unwilling to support a ticket avowedly Republican; but these considerations weighed with still greater force in favor of Mr. Johnson, who was not only a Democrat, but

also a citizen of a border slaveholding State, and had rendered distinguished services to the Union cause. At the first show of hands it was at once evident that the Tennessean was stronger than the New Yorker, receiving four more votes than Mr. Dickinson even in the New York delegation. When the votes on the first ballot were counted it was found that Mr. Johnson had received 200, Mr. Hamlin 150, Mr. Dickinson 108; but before the result was announced almost the whole convention turned their votes to Johnson, and on motion of Mr. Tremain of New York his nomination was declared unanimous. The work was quickly done. Mr. Lincoln, walking over to the War Department in the afternoon as usual for military news, received the dispatch announcing the nomination of Andrew Johnson before he was informed of his own. The telegram containing the news of his own nomination had gone to the White House a few minutes before.

In the evening the National Grand Council of the Union League came together. A large proportion of the members had participated in the National Convention, and their action was therefore a foregone conclusion. They adopted a platform similar to that of the convention, with the exception that they declared, as the Cleveland people had done, in favor of the confiscation of the property of rebels. They heartily approved and indorsed the nominations already made, and passed a resolution to the effect that as Lincoln and Johnson were the only candidates who could hope to be elected as loyal men, they regarded it as the imperative duty of the Union League to do all that lay in its power to secure their election. They also earnestly approved and indorsed the platform and principles adopted by the convention, and pledged themselves, as individuals and as members of the League, to do all in their power to elect the candidates. The seal of secrecy was removed from this action and a copy of the resolution transmitted to the President by W. R. Erwin, the Grand Recording Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

A committee, headed by Governor Dennison, came on the next day<sup>2</sup> to notify the President of his nomination.

I need not say to you, sir [said Mr. Dennison], that the convention, in thus unanimously nominating you for reelection, but gives utterance to the almost universal voice of the loyal people of the country. To doubt of your triumphant election would be little short of abandoning the hope of the final suppression of the rebellion and the restoration of the authority of the Government over the insurgent States.

The President answered :

I will neither conceal my gratification nor restrain the expression of my gratitude that the Union people,  
Vol. XXXVIII.—54.

through their convention, in the continued effort to save and advance the nation, have deemed me not unworthy to remain in my present position. I know no reason to doubt that I shall accept the nomination tendered; and yet perhaps I should not declare definitely before reading and considering what is called the platform. I will say now, however, I approve the declaration in favor of so amending the Constitution as to prohibit slavery throughout the nation. When the people in revolt, with a hundred days of explicit notice that they could within those days resume their allegiance without the overthrow of their institutions and that they could not so resume it afterwards, elected to stand out, such amendment to the Constitution as is now proposed became a fitting and necessary conclusion to the final success of the Union cause. Such alone can meet and cover all cavils. Now the unconditional Union men, North and South, perceive its importance and embrace it. In the joint names of Liberty and Union, let us labor to give it legal form and practical effect.

On the same day a committee of the Union League presented themselves to inform him of the action taken the night before. The President answered them more informally, saying that he did not allow himself to suppose that either the convention or the League had concluded that he was either the greatest or the best man in America, but rather that they had decided that it was not best "to swap horses while swimming the stream." All day the throngs of shouting and congratulating delegates filled all the approaches to the Executive Mansion. In a brief speech at night, in answer to a serenade from citizens of Ohio, the President said :

What we want, more than Baltimore conventions or Presidential elections, is success under General Grant. I propose that you constantly bear in mind that the support you owe to the brave officers and soldiers in the field is of the very first importance, and we should therefore bend all our energies to that point.

He then proposed three cheers for General Grant and the officers and soldiers with him, and, swinging his own hat, led off in the cheering.

The more formal notification of the convention was made in a letter written by George William Curtis of New York, in which he paraphrased the platform and expressed the sentiment of the convention and of the people of the country with his usual elegance and force.

They have watched your official course, therefore, with unflinching attention; and amid the bitter taunts of eager friends and the fierce denunciation of enemies, now moving too fast for some, now too slowly for others, they have seen you throughout this tremendous contest patient, sagacious, faithful, just; leaning upon the heart of the great mass of the people, and satisfied to be moved by

1 MS.    2 Thursday, June 9.

its mighty pulsations. It is for this reason that, long before the convention met, the popular instinct had plainly indicated you as its candidate, and the convention therefore merely recorded the popular will. Your character and career prove your unswerving fidelity to the cardinal principles of American liberty and of the American Constitution. In the name of that liberty and Constitution, sir, we earnestly request your acceptance of this nomination, reverently commending our beloved country and you, its Chief Magistrate, with all its brave sons who, on sea and land, are faithfully defending the good old American cause of equal rights, to the blessing of Almighty God.

In accepting the nomination the President observed the same wise rule of brevity which he had followed four years before. He made but one specific reference to any subject of discussion. While he accepted the resolution in regard to the supplanting of republican government upon the Western continent, he gave the convention and the country distinctly to understand that he stood by the action already adopted by himself and the Secretary of State.

There might be misunderstanding [he said] were I not to say that the position of the Government in relation to the action of France in Mexico, as assumed through the State Department and indorsed by the convention among the measures and acts of the Executive, will be faithfully maintained so long as the state of facts shall leave that position pertinent and applicable.

#### THE WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO.

IN his message to Congress of the 8th of December, 1863, Mr. Lincoln gave expression to his ideas on the subject of reconstruction more fully and clearly than ever before. He appended to that message a proclamation of the same date guaranteeing a full pardon to all who had been implicated in the rebellion, with certain specified exceptions, on the condition of taking and maintaining an oath to support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder; to abide by and support all acts of Congress and proclamations of the President made during the rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress or by decision of the Supreme Court. The exceptions to this general amnesty were of those who, having held places of honor and trust under the Government of the United States, had betrayed this trust and entered the service of the Confederacy, and of those who had been guilty of treatment of colored troops not justified by the laws of war. The proclamation further promised that when in any of the States in rebellion a number of citizens equal to one-tenth of the voters in the year 1860 should



HENRY WINTER DAVIS.  
(AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY POLLOCK.)

reestablish a State government republican in form, and not contravening the oath above mentioned, that such should be recognized as the true government of the State, and should receive the benefits of the constitutional provision that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and, on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence." The President also engaged by this proclamation not to object to any provision which might be adopted by such State governments in relation to the freed people of the States which should recognize and declare their permanent freedom and provide for their education, "and which may yet be consistent, as a temporary arrangement, with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class." He suggested that in reconstructing the loyal State governments, the names, the boundaries, the subdivisions, the constitutions, and the general codes of laws of the States should be preserved. He stated distinctly that his proclamation had no reference to States where the loyal State governments had all the while been maintained; he took care to make it clear that the respective Houses, and not the Executive, had the constitutional power to decide whether members sent to Congress from any State should be admitted to seats; and he concluded by saying:

This proclamation is intended to present the people of the States wherein the national authority has been suspended, and loyal State governments have been subverted, a mode in and by which the national authority and loyal State governments may be reestablished within said States, or in any of them. And while the mode presented is the



best the Executive can suggest, with his present impressions, it must not be understood that no other possible mode would be acceptable.<sup>1</sup>

The message contained an unusually forcible and luminous expression of the principles embraced in the proclamation. The President referred to the dark and doubtful days which followed the announcement of the policy of emancipation and of the employment of black soldiers; the gradual justification of those acts by the successes which the national arms had since achieved; of the change of the public spirit of the border States in favor of emancipation; the enlistment of black soldiers, and their efficient and creditable behavior in arms; the absence of any tendency to servile insurrection or to violence and cruelty among the negroes; the sensible improvement in the public opinion of Europe and of America. He then explained the purpose and spirit of his proclamation. Nothing had been attempted beyond what was amply justified by the Constitution; the form of an oath had been given, but no man was coerced to take it; the Constitution authorized the Executive to grant or withhold a pardon at his own absolute discretion, and this includes the power to grant on terms, as is fully established by judicial authority. He therefore referred to the provision of the Constitution guaranteeing to the States a republican form of government as providing precisely for the case now under treatment; where the element within a State favorable to republican government in the Union might "be too feeble for an opposite and hostile element external to or even within the State."

An attempt [said the President] to guaranty and protect a revived State government, constructed in whole or in preponderating part from the very element against whose hostility and violence it is to be protected, is simply absurd. There must be a test by which to separate the opposing elements, so as to build only from the sound; and that test is a sufficiently liberal one which accepts as sound whoever will make a sworn recantation of his former unsoundness.

In justification of his requiring in the oath of amnesty a submission to and support of the antislavery laws and proclamations, he said:

Those laws and proclamations were enacted and put forth for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of the rebellion. To give them their fullest effects, there had to be a pledge for their mainte-

nance. In my judgment they have aided and will further aid the cause for which they were intended. To now abandon them would be not only to relinquish a lever of power, but would also be a cruel and an astounding breach of faith. I may add, at this point, that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress.

The President called attention to the fact that this part of the oath is subject to the modifying and abrogating power of legislation and supreme judicial decision; that the whole purpose and spirit of the proclamation is permissive and not mandatory.

The proposed acquiescence [he said] of the National Executive in any reasonable temporary State arrangement for the freed people is made with the view of possibly modifying the confusion and destitution which must at best attend all classes by a total revolution of labor throughout whole States. It is hoped that the already deeply afflicted people in those States may be somewhat more ready to give up the cause of their affliction if, to this extent, this vital matter be left to themselves, while no power of the National Executive to prevent an abuse is abridged by the proposition.

He had taken the utmost pains to avoid the danger of committal on points which could be more safely left to further developments. "Saying that on certain terms certain classes will be pardoned with rights restored, it is not said that other classes or other terms will never be included; saying that reconstruction will be accepted if presented in a specified way, it is not said it will never be accepted in any other way." The President expressed his profound congratulation at the movement towards emancipation by the several States, and urged once more upon Congress the importance of aiding these steps to the great consummation.

It is rare that so important a state paper has been received with such unanimous tokens of enthusiastic adhesion. However the leading Republicans in Congress may have been led later in the session to differ with the President, there was apparently no voice of discord raised on the day the message was read to both Houses. For a moment all factions in Congress seemed to be of one mind. One who spent the morning on the floor of Congress wrote on the same day: "Men acted as though the millennium had come. Chandler

<sup>1</sup> In some instances this proclamation was misunderstood by generals and commanders of departments, so that prisoners of war were allowed on their voluntary application to take the amnesty oath. This was not the President's intention, and would have led to serious embarrassment in the matter of the exchange of prisoners.

He therefore, on the 26th of March, 1864, issued a supplementary proclamation declaring that the pro-

clamation applied only to those persons who, being yet at large and free from any arrest, confinement, or duress, should voluntarily come forward and take the said oath with the purpose of restoring peace and establishing the national authority; and that persons excluded from the amnesty offered in the proclamation might apply to the President for clemency, like all other offenders, and that their application would receive due consideration.

was delighted, Sumner was joyous, apparently forgetting for the moment his doctrine of State suicide,<sup>1</sup> while at the other political pole Dixon and Reverdy Johnson said the message was highly satisfactory."<sup>2</sup> Henry Wilson said to the President's secretary: "He has struck another great blow. Tell him for me, God bless him." The effect was similar in the House of Representatives. Mr. Boutwell, who represented the extreme antislavery element of New England, said: "It is a very able and shrewd paper. It has great points of popularity, and it is right." Lovejoy, the leading abolitionist of the West, seemed to see on the mountain the feet of one bringing good tidings. "I shall live," he said, "to see slavery ended in America." Garfield gave his unreserved approval; Kellogg of Michigan went shouting about the lobby: "The President is the only man. There is none like him in the world. He sees more widely and more clearly than any of us." Mr. Henry T. Blow, the radical member from St. Louis (who six months later was denouncing Mr. Lincoln as a traitor to freedom), said: "God bless old Abe! I am one of the radicals who have always believed in him." Mr. Greeley, who was on the floor of the House, went so far as to say the message was "devilish good." The Executive Mansion was filled all day by a rush of congressmen, congratulating the President and assuring him of their support in his wise and humane policy. The conservatives and radicals vied with each other in claiming that the message represented their own views of the crisis. Mr. Judd of Illinois said to the President: "The opinion of people who read your message to-day is, that on that platform two of your ministers must walk the plank—Blair and Bates." To which the President answered: "Both of these men acquiesced in it without objection; the only member of the Cabinet who objected was Mr. Chase." For a moment the most prejudiced Democrats found little to say against the message; they called it "very ingenious and cunning, admirably calculated to deceive." This reception of the message was extremely pleasing to the President. A solution of the most important problem of the time which conservatives like Dixon and Reverdy Johnson thoroughly approved, and to which Mr. Sumner made no objection, was of course a source of profound gratification. He took it as a proof of what he had often said, that there was no essential contest between loyal men on this subject if they would consider it reasonably. He said in conversation on the 10th of December: "The only



BENJAMIN F. WADE.  
(FROM A DAGUERRETYPE.)

question is, Who constitute the State? When that is decided, the solution of subsequent questions is easy."<sup>3</sup> He wrote in his original draft of the message that he considered "the discussion as to whether a State had been at any time out of the Union as vain and profitless. We know they were, we trust they shall be, in the Union. It does not greatly matter whether in the meantime they shall be considered to have been in or out." But afterwards, considering that the Constitution empowered him to grant protection to States "in the Union," he saw that it would not answer to admit that the States had at any time been out of it; he erased that sentence as possibly suggestive of evil. He preferred, he said, "to stand firmly based on the Constitution rather than to work in the air." He was specially gratified by reports which came to him of the adhesion of the Missourians in Congress to his view.

I know [he said] these radical men have in them the stuff which must save the state and on which we must mainly rely. They are absolutely incorrosive by the virus of secession. It cannot touch or taint them; while the conservatives, in casting about for votes to carry through their plans, are attempting to affiliate with those whose record is not clear. If one side must be crushed out and the other cherished, there cannot be any doubt which side we must choose as fuller of hope for the future; but just there [he continued] is where their wrong begins. They insist that I shall hold and treat Governor Gamble and his supporters, men appointed by the loyal people of Missouri as representatives of Missouri loyalty, and who have done their whole duty in the war faithfully and promptly, who when they have disagreed with me have been silent and

<sup>1</sup> See resolutions introduced in Senate Feb. 11, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> J. H., Diary.

<sup>3</sup> J. H., Diary.

kept about the good work — that I shall treat these men as copperheads and enemies of the Government. This is simply monstrous.

For the first few days there was no hint of any hostile feeling in Congress. There was, in fact, no just reason why the legislative body should regard its prerogative as invaded. The President had not only kept clearly within his constitutional powers, but his action had been expressly authorized by Congress. The act of July 17, 1862, had provided that the President might thereafter at any time, by proclamation, extend pardon and amnesty to persons participating in the rebellion, "with such exceptions and on such conditions as he might deem expedient for the public welfare." Of course a general amnesty required general conditions; and the most important of these was one which should provide for the protection of the freedmen who had been liberated by the war.

It soon enough appeared, however, that the millennium had not arrived; that in a Congress composed of men of such positive convictions and vehement character there were many who would not submit permanently to the leadership of any man, least of all to that of one so gentle, so reasonable, so devoid of malice as the President. Mr. Henry Winter Davis at once moved that that part of the message relating to reconstruction should be referred to a special committee, of which he was made chairman, and on the 15th of February he reported "a bill to guarantee to certain States whose governments have been usurped or overthrown a republican form of government." Mr. Davis was a man of too much integrity and elevation of character to allow the imputation that his action on public matters was dictated entirely by personal feeling or prejudice; but at the same time it cannot be denied that he maintained towards the President from beginning to end of his administration an attitude of consistent hostility. This was a source of chagrin and disappointment to Mr. Lincoln. He came to Washington with a high opinion of the ability and the character of Mr. Davis, and expected to maintain with him relations of intimate friendship. He was cousin to one of the President's closest friends in Illinois, Judge David Davis, and his attitude in the Congress which preceded the rebellion was such as to arouse in the mind of Mr. Lincoln the highest admiration and regard. But the selection of Mr. Blair of Maryland as a member of the Cabinet estranged the sympathies of Mr. Davis and his friends, and the breach thus made between him and the Administration was never healed, though the President did all in his power to heal it. In the spring of 1863 Mr. Davis, assuming that the President might be inclined to favor unduly the conservative candidate in the election for

the next Congress, sought an interview with him, the result of which the President placed in writing in a letter dated March 18:

There will be in the new House of Representatives, as there were in the old, some members openly opposing the war, some supporting it unconditionally, and some supporting it with "buts" and "ifs" and "ands." They will divide on the organization of the House — on the election of a speaker. As you ask my opinion, I give it, that the supporters of the war should send no man to Congress who will not pledge himself to go into caucus with the unconditional supporters of the war, and to abide the action of such caucus and vote for the person therein nominated for speaker. Let the friends of the Government first save the Government, and then administer it to their own liking.

Mr. Davis answered:

Your favor of the 18th is all that could be desired, and will greatly aid us in bringing our friends to a conclusion such as the interests of the country require.

In spite of all the efforts which the President made to be on friendly terms with Mr. Davis, the difference between them constantly widened. Mr. Davis grew continually more confirmed in his attitude of hostility to every proposition of the President. He became one of the most severe and least generous critics of the Administration in Congress. He came at last to consider the President as unworthy of even respectful treatment; and Mr. Seward, in the midst of his energetic and aggressive campaign against European unfriendliness, was continually attacked by him as a truckler to foreign powers and little less than a traitor to his country. The President, however, was a man so persistently and incorrigibly just, that even in the face of this provocation he never lost his high opinion of Mr. Davis's ability nor his confidence in his inherent good intentions. He refused, in spite of the solicitations of most of his personal friends in Maryland, to discriminate against the faction headed by Mr. Davis in making appointments to office in that State; and when, during an important campaign, a deputation of prominent supporters of the Administration in Maryland came to Washington to denounce Mr. Davis for his outspoken hostility to the President, saying that such a course, if it continued unchecked, would lose Mr. Lincoln the electoral vote of the State, he replied:

I understood that Mr. Davis is doing all in his power to secure the success of the emancipation ticket in Maryland. If he does this, I care nothing about the electoral vote.

In the preamble to his bill Mr. Davis expressed, with his habitual boldness and lucidity, his fundamental thesis that the rebellious States were out of the Union.

*Whereas* [he said], the so-called Confederate States are a public enemy, waging an unjust war, whose injustice is so glaring that they have no right to claim the mitigation of the extreme rights of war which are accorded by modern usage to an enemy who has the right to consider the war a just one; and,

*Whereas*, none of the States which, by a regularly recorded majority of its citizens, have joined the so-called Southern Confederacy can be considered and treated as entitled to be represented in Congress or to take any part in the political government of the Union.

This seemed to Congress too trenchant a solution of a constitutional knot which was puzzling the best minds of the commonwealth, and the preamble was rejected; but the spirit of it breathed in every section of the bill. Mr. Davis's design was to put a stop to the work which the President had already begun in Tennessee and Louisiana, and to prevent the extension of that policy to other Southern States. The bill authorized the appointment of a provisional governor in each of the States in rebellion, and provided that, after the military resistance to the United States should have been suppressed and the people sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and laws, the white male citizens of the State should be enrolled, and when a majority of them should have taken the oath of allegiance the loyal people of the State should be entitled to elect delegates to a convention to reestablish a State government. The convention was required to insert in the constitution three provisions: First, to prevent prominent civil or military officers of the Confederates to vote for or to be members of the legislature or governor; second, that involuntary servitude is forever prohibited, and the freedom of all persons guaranteed in said States; third, no debt, State or Confederate, created by or under the sanction of the usurping power shall be recognized or paid by the State. Upon the adoption of the constitution by the convention, and its ratification by the electors of the State, the provisional government shall so certify to the President, who, after obtaining the assent of Congress, shall by proclamation recognize the government so established, and none other, as the constitutional government of the State; and from the date of such recognition, and not before, congressmen and Presidential electors may be elected in such State. Pending the reorganization, the provisional governor shall enforce the laws of the Union and of the State before rebellion. Another section of the bill emancipated all slaves in those States, with their posterity, and made it the duty of the United States courts to discharge them on habeas corpus if restrained of their liberty on pretense of any claim to service or

labor as slaves, and to inflict a penalty of fine or imprisonment upon the persons claiming them. Another section declared any person hereafter holding any important office, civil or military, in the rebel service not to be a citizen of the United States.

This bill was supported by Mr. Davis in a speech of extraordinary energy. Without hesitation he declared it a test and standard of antislavery orthodoxy; he asserted boldly that Congress, and Congress alone, had the power to revive the reign of law in all that territory which through rebellion had put itself outside of the law. "Until," he said, "Congress recognizes a State government organized under its auspices, there is no government in the rebel States except the authority of Congress." The duty is imposed on Congress to administer civil government until the people shall, under its guidance, submit to the Constitution of the United States, and, under the laws which it shall impose and on the conditions Congress may require, reorganize a republican government for themselves and Congress shall recognize that government. He declared there was no indication which came from the South, from the darkness of that bottomless pit, that there was a willingness to accept any terms that even the Democrats were willing to offer; he believed that no beginning of legal and orderly government could be made till military opposition was absolutely annihilated; that there were only three ways of bringing about a reorganization of civil governments. One was to remove the cause of the war by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting slavery everywhere within its limits: that, he said, "goes to the root of the matter, and should consecrate the nation's triumph"; but this measure he thought involved infinite difficulty and delay. Though it met his hearty approval, it was not a remedy for the evils to be dealt with. The next plan he considered was that of the President's amnesty proclamation. This he denounced as utterly lacking in all the guarantees required:

If, in any manner [he said], by the toleration of martial law, lately proclaimed the fundamental law, under the dictation of any military authority, or under the prescriptions of a provost-marshal, something in the form of a government shall be presented, represented to rest on the votes of one-tenth of the population, the President will recognize that, provided it does not contravene the proclamation of freedom and the laws of Congress.

Having dismissed both of these plans with brief censure, he then made a powerful plea for the bill he had reported. He called upon Congress to take the responsibility of saying:

In the face of those who clamor for speedy recognition of governments tolerating slavery, that the

safety of the people of the United States is the supreme law; that their will is the supreme rule of law, and that we are authorized to pronounce their will on this subject; take the responsibility to say that we will revise the judgments of our ancestors; that we have experience written in blood which they had not; that we find now, what they darkly doubted, that slavery is really, radically inconsistent with the permanence of republican governments, and that being charged by the supreme law of the land on our conscience and judgment to guarantee, that is, to continue, maintain, and enforce, if it exists, to institute and restore when overthrown, republican governments throughout the broad limits of the Republic, we will weed out every element of their policy which we think incompatible with its permanence and endurance.

The bill was extensively debated. It was not opposed to any extent by the Republicans of the House; the Democrats were left to make a purely partisan opposition to it. The President declined to exercise any influence on the debate, and the bill was passed by a vote of seventy-four to sixty-six. It was called up in the Senate by Mr. Wade of Ohio, who, in supporting it, followed very much the same line of argument as that adopted by Mr. Davis in the House. Mr. B. Gratz Brown of Missouri, believing that as the session was drawing near its close there was no time to discuss a measure of such transcendent importance, offered an amendment simply forbidding the States in insurrection to cast any vote for electors of President or Vice-President of the United States, or to elect members of Congress until the insurrection in such State was suppressed or abandoned, and its inhabitants had returned to their obedience to the Government of the United States; such returning to obedience being declared by proclamation of the President, issued by virtue of an act of Congress hereafter to be passed authorizing the same. The amendment of Mr. Brown was adopted by a bare majority, seventeen voting in favor of it and sixteen against it. Mr. Sumner tried to have the Proclamation of Emancipation adopted and enacted as a statute of the United States, but this proposition was lost by a considerable majority. The House declined to concur in the amendment of the Senate and asked for a committee of conference, in which the Senate receded from its amendment and the bill went to the President for his approval in the closing moments of the session.

Congress was to adjourn at noon on the Fourth of July; the President was in his room at the Capitol signing bills, which were laid before him as they were brought from the two Houses. When this important bill was placed before him he laid it aside and went on with the other work of the moment. Several prominent members entered in a state of intense anxiety over the fate of the bill. Mr. Sumner and Mr. Bout-

well, while their nervousness was evident, refrained from any comment. Mr. Chandler, who was unabashed in any mortal presence, roundly asked the President if he intended to sign the bill.<sup>1</sup> The President replied: "This bill has been placed before me a few moments before Congress adjourns. It is a matter of too much importance to be swallowed in that way." "If it is vetoed," cried Mr. Chandler, "it will damage us fearfully in the North-west. The important point is that one prohibiting slavery in the reconstructed States." Mr. Lincoln said: "That is the point on which I doubt the authority of Congress to act." "It is no more than you have done yourself," said the senator. The President answered: "I conceive that I may in an emergency do things on military grounds which cannot be done constitutionally by Congress." Mr. Chandler, expressing his deep chagrin, went out, and the President, addressing the members of the Cabinet who were seated with him, said: "I do not see how any of us now can deny and contradict what we have always said, that Congress has no constitutional power over slavery in the States." Mr. Fessenden expressed his entire agreement with this view.

I have even had my doubts [he said] as to the constitutional efficacy of your own decree of emancipation, in such cases where it has not been carried into effect by the actual advance of the army.

The President said:

This bill and the position of these gentlemen seem to me, in asserting that the insurrectionary States are no longer in the Union, to make the fatal admission that States, whenever they please, may of their own motion dissolve their connection with the Union. Now we cannot survive that admission, I am convinced. If that be true, I am not President; these gentlemen are not Congress. I have laboriously endeavored to avoid that question ever since it first began to be mooted, and thus to avoid confusion and disturbance in our own councils. It was to obviate this question that I earnestly favored the movement for an amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery, which passed the Senate and failed in the House. I thought it much better, if it were possible, to restore the Union without the necessity of a violent quarrel among its friends as to whether certain States have been in or out of the Union during the war—a merely metaphysical question, and one unnecessary to be forced into discussion.

Although every member of the Cabinet agreed with the President, when, a few minutes later, he entered his carriage to go home, he foresaw the importance of the step he had resolved to take and its possibly disastrous consequences to himself. When some one said to him that the threats made by the extreme radicals had no foundation, and that people

<sup>1</sup> J. H., Diary.

would not bolt their ticket on a question of metaphysics, he answered: "If they choose to make a point upon this, I do not doubt that they can do harm. They have never been friendly to me. At all events, I must keep some consciousness of being somewhere near right. I must keep some standard or principle fixed within myself."

After the fullest deliberation the President remained by his first impression that the bill was too rigid and too restrictive in its provisions to accomplish the work desired. He had all his life hated formulas in government, and he believed that the will of an intelligent people, acting freely under democratic institutions, could best give shape to the special machinery under which it was to be governed; and, in the wide variety of circumstances and conditions prevailing throughout the South, he held it unwise for either Congress or himself to prescribe any fixed and formal method by which the several States should resume their practical legal relations with the Union. Thinking in this way, and feeling himself unable to accept the bill of Congress as the last word of reconstruction, and yet unwilling to reject whatever of practical good might be accomplished by it, he resolved, a few days after Congress had adjourned, to remit the matter to the people themselves and to allow them their choice of all the methods proposed of returning to their allegiance. He issued, on the 8th of July, a proclamation giving a copy of the bill of Congress, reciting the circumstances under which it was passed, and going on to say:

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known that while I am—as I was in December last, when by proclamation I propounded a plan of restoration—unprepared by a formal approval of this bill to be inflexibly committed to any single plan of restoration, and while I am also unprepared to declare that the free State constitutions and governments, already adopted and installed in Arkansas and Louisiana, shall be set aside and held for naught, thereby repelling and discouraging the loyal citizens who have set up the same as to further effort, or to declare a constitutional competency in Congress to abolish slavery in the States, but am at the same time sincerely hoping and expecting that a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery throughout the nation may be adopted, nevertheless, I am fully satisfied with the system for restoration contained in the bill as one very proper for the loyal people of any State choosing to adopt it; and that I am, and at all times shall be, prepared to give the executive aid and assistance to any such people, so soon as military resistance to the United States shall have been suppressed in any such State, and the people thereof shall have sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, in which cases military governors will be appointed, with directions to proceed according to the bill.

The refusal of the President to sign the reconstruction bill caused a great effervescence at the adjournment of Congress. Mr. Chase, who had resigned from the Cabinet, made this entry in his diary:

The President pocketed the great bill providing for the reorganization of the rebel States as loyal States. He did not venture to veto, and so put it in his pocket. It was a condemnation of his amnesty proclamation and of his general policy of reconstruction, rejecting the idea of possible reconstruction with slavery, which neither the President nor his chief advisers have, in my opinion, abandoned.

This entry, made by Mr. Chase in the bitterness of his anger, places the basest construction upon the President's action; but this sentiment was shared by not a few of those who claimed the title of extreme radicals in Congress. Mr. Sumner reported a feeling of intense indignation against the President. Two days later the ex-Secretary gleefully reported, on the authority of Senator Pomeroy, that there was great dissatisfaction with Mr. Lincoln, which had been much exasperated by the pocketing of the reconstruction bill.

When Mr. Lincoln, disregarding precedents, and acting on his lifelong rule of taking the people into his confidence, issued his proclamation of the 8th of July, it was received by each division of the loyal people of the country as might have been expected. The great mass of Republican voters, who cared little for the metaphysics of the case, accepted his proclamation, as they had accepted that issued six months before, as the wisest and most practicable method of handling the question; but among those already hostile to the President, and those whose devotion to the cause of freedom was so ardent as to make them look upon him as lukewarm, the exasperation which was already excited increased. The indignation of Mr. Davis and Mr. Wade at seeing their work of the last session thus brought to nothing could not be restrained. Mr. Davis prepared, and both of them signed and published on the 5th of August, a manifesto, the most vigorous in attack that was ever directed against the President from his own party during his term. The grim beginning of this document, which is addressed "To the Supporters of the Government," is in these terms:

We have read without surprise, but not without indignation, the proclamation of the President of the 8th of July, 1864. The supporters of the Administration are responsible to the country for its conduct; and it is their right and duty to check the encroachments of the Executive on the authority of Congress, and to require it to confine itself to its proper sphere.

The paper went on to narrate the history of the reconstruction bill, and to claim that its treatment indicated a persistent though un-

avowed purpose of the President to defeat the will of the people by the Executive perversion of the Constitution. They insinuated that only the lowest personal motives could have dictated this action:

The President [they said], by preventing this bill from becoming a law, holds the electoral votes of the rebel States at the dictation of his personal ambition. . . . If electors for President be allowed to be chosen in either of those States, a sinister light will be cast on the motives which induced the President to "hold for naught" the will of Congress rather than his governments in Louisiana and Arkansas.

They ridiculed the President's earnestly expressed hope that the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery might be adopted:

We curiously inquire on what his expectation rests, after the vote of the House of Representatives at the recent session and in the face of the political complexion of more than enough of the States to prevent the possibility of its adoption within any reasonable time; and why he did not indulge his sincere hopes with so large an installment of the blessing as his approval of the bill would have secured?

When we consider that only a few months elapsed before this beneficent amendment was adopted, we can form some idea of the comparative political sagacity of Mr. Lincoln and his critics. The fact that the President gave the bill of Congress his approval as a very proper plan for the loyal people of any States choosing to adopt it seemed to infuriate the authors of the bill: they say, "A more studied outrage on the legislative authority of the people has never been perpetrated." At the close of a long review of the President's proclamation, in which every sentence came in for its share of censure or of ridicule, this manifesto concluded:

Such are the fruits of this rash and fatal act of the President—a blow at the friends of his Administration, at the rights of humanity, and at the principles of republican government. The President has greatly presumed on the forbearance which the supporters of his Administration have so long practiced, in view of the arduous conflict in which we are engaged, and the reckless ferocity of our political opponents. But he must understand that our support is of a cause and not of a man; that the authority of Congress is paramount and must be respected; that the whole body of the Union men of Congress will not submit to be impeached by him of rash and unconstitutional legislation; and if he wishes our support he must confine himself to his executive duties—to obey and to execute, not make the laws—to suppress by arms armed rebellion, and leave political reorganization to Congress. If the supporters of the Government fail to insist on this they become responsible for the usurpations which they fail to rebuke, and are justly liable to the indignation of the people whose rights and

security, committed to their keeping, they sacrifice. Let them consider the remedy of these usurpations, and, having found it, fearlessly execute it.

#### HORACE GREELEY'S PEACE MISSION.

Not least among the troubles and the vexations of the summer of 1864 was the constant criticism of sincere Republicans who were impatient at what they considered the slow progress of the war, and irritated at the deliberation with which Mr. Lincoln weighed every important act before decision. Besides this, a feeling of discouragement had taken possession of some of the more excitable spirits, which induced them to give ready hospitality to any suggestions of peace. Foremost among these was Horace Greeley, who in personal interviews, in private letters, and in the columns of the "Tribune" repeatedly placed before the President, with that vigor of expression in which he was unrivaled, the complaints and the discontents of a considerable body of devoted, if not altogether reasonable, Union men. The attitude of benevolent criticism which he was known to sustain towards the Administration naturally drew around him a certain number of adventurers and busybodies, who fluttered between the two great parties, and were glad to occupy the attention of prominent men on either side with schemes whose only real object was some slight gain or questionable notoriety for themselves. A person who called himself "William Cornell Jewett of Colorado" had gained some sort of intimacy with Mr. Greeley by alleging relations with eminent Northern and Southern statesmen. He was one of those newspaper laughing-stocks who come gradually to be known and talked about. He wrote interminable letters of advice to Mr. Lincoln and to Jefferson Davis, which were never read nor answered, but which, printed with humorous comment in the "New York Herald," were taken seriously by the undiscriminating, and even quoted and discussed in the London papers. He wrote to Mr. Greeley in the early part of July from Niagara Falls, and appears to have convinced the latter that he was an authorized intermediary from the Confederate authorities to make propositions for peace. He wrote that he had just left George N. Sanders of Kentucky on the Canada side.

I am authorized to state to you [he continued], for our use only, not the public, that two ambassadors of Davis & Co. are now in Canada with full and complete powers for a peace, and Mr. Sanders requests that you come on immediately to me at Cataract House to have a private interview; or, if you will send the President's protection for him and two friends, they will come and meet you. He says the

whole matter can be consummated by me, you, them, and President Lincoln.

This letter was followed the next day by a telegram saying :

Will you come here? Parties have full power.

Mr. Greeley was greatly impressed by this communication. The inherent improbabilities of it did not seem to strike him, though the antecedents of Sanders were scarcely more reputable than those of Jewett. He sent the letter and the telegram to the President, inclosed in a letter of his own, the perfervid vehemence of which shows the state of excitement he was laboring under. He refers to his correspondent as "our irrepensible friend Colorado Jewett." He admits some doubt as to the "full powers," but insists upon the Confederate desire for peace.

And therefore [he says] I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country also longs for peace; shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood. And a widespread conviction that the Government and its prominent supporters are not anxious for peace, and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm now, and is morally certain, unless removed, to do far greater in the approaching elections.

He then rebukes Mr. Lincoln for not having received the Stephens embassy, disapproves the warlike tone of the Baltimore platform, urges the President to make overtures for peace in time to affect the North Carolina elections, and suggests the following plan of adjustment: 1. The Union is restored and declared perpetual. 2. Slavery is utterly and forever abolished throughout the same. 3. A complete amnesty for all political offenses. 4. Payment of \$400,000,000 to the slave States pro rata for their slaves. 5. The slave States to be represented in proportion to their total population. 6. A National convention to be called at once.

The letter closes with this impassioned appeal:

Mr. President, I fear you do not realize how intently the people desire any peace consistent with the national integrity and honor, and how joyously they would hail its achievement and bless its authors. With United States stocks worth but forty cents in gold per dollar, and drafting about to commence on the third million of Union soldiers, can this be wondered at? I do not say that a just peace is now attainable, though I believe it to be so. But I do say that a frank offer by you to the insurgents of terms which the impartial will say ought to be accepted will, at the worst, prove an immense and sorely needed advantage to the national cause; it may save us from a Northern insurrection.

In a postscript Mr. Greeley again urges the President to invite "those at Niagara to ex-

hibit their credentials and submit their ultimatum."

Mr. Lincoln determined at once to take action upon this letter. He had no faith in Jewett's story. He doubted whether the embassy had any existence except in the imagination of Sanders and Jewett. But he felt the unreasonableness and injustice of Mr. Greeley's letter, while he did not doubt his good faith; and he resolved to convince him at least, and perhaps others of his way of thinking, that there was no foundation for the reproaches they were casting upon the Government for refusing to treat with the rebels. That there might be no opportunity for dispute in relation to the facts of the case, he arranged that the witness of his willingness to listen to any overtures which might come from the South should be Mr. Greeley himself. He answered his letter at once, on the 9th of July, saying:

If you can find any person, anywhere, professing to have any proposition from Jefferson Davis, in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery, whatever else it embraces, say to him he may come to me with you, and that if he really brings such proposition he shall at the least have safe conduct with the paper (and without publicity, if he chooses) to the point where you shall have met with him. The same if there be two or more persons.

Mr. Greeley answered this letter the next day in evident embarrassment. The President had surprised him by his frank and prompt acquiescence in his suggestions. He had accepted the first two points of Mr. Greeley's plan of adjustment—the restoration of the Union, and the abandonment of slavery—as the only preliminary conditions of negotiations upon which he would insist, and requested this vehement advocate of peace to bring forward his ambassadors. Mr. Greeley's reply of the 10th seems somewhat lacking both in temper and in candor. He thought the negotiators would not "open their budget" to him; repeated his reproaches at the "rude repulse" of Stephens; referred again to the importance of doing something in time for the North Carolina elections; and said at least he would try to get a look into the hand of the men at Niagara, though he had "little heart for it." But on the 13th he wrote in a much more positive manner. He said:

I have now information, on which I can rely, that two persons, duly commissioned and empowered to negotiate for peace, are at this moment not far from Niagara Falls in Canada, and are *desirous* of conferring with yourself, or with such persons as you may appoint and empower to treat with them. Their names (only given in confidence) are Hon. Clement C. Clay of Alabama, and Hon. Jacob Thompson of Mississippi.



He added that he knew nothing and had proposed nothing as to terms; that it seemed to him high time an effort should be made to terminate the wholesale slaughter. He hoped to hear that the President had concluded to act in the premises, and to act so promptly as to do some good in the North Carolina elections.

On the receipt of this letter, which was written four days after Mr. Greeley had been fully authorized to bring to Washington any one he could find empowered to treat for peace, and which yet was based on the assumption of the President's unwillingness to do the very thing he had already done, Mr. Lincoln resolved to put an end to a correspondence which promised to be indefinitely prolonged, by sending an aide-de-camp to New York to arrange in a personal interview what it seemed impossible to conclude by mail. On the 15th he sent Mr. Greeley a brief telegram expressing his disappointment, saying, "I was not expecting you to send me a letter, but to bring me a man or men," and announced the departure of a messenger with a letter. The letter was of the briefest. It merely said:

Yours of the 13th is just received, and I am disappointed that you have not already reached here with those commissioners, if they would consent to come, on being shown my letter to you of the 9th inst. Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms stated in former, bring them. I not only intend a sincere effort for peace, but I intend that you shall be a personal witness that it is made.

This curt and peremptory missive was delivered to Mr. Greeley by Major John Hay early on the morning of the 16th. He was still somewhat reluctant to go; he thought some one not so well known would be less embarrassed by public curiosity; but said finally that he would start at once if he could be given a safe conduct for four persons, to be named by him. Major Hay communicated this to the President and received the required order in reply. "If there is or is not anything in the affair," he said, "I wish to know it without unnecessary delay."

The safe conduct was immediately written and given to Mr. Greeley, who started at once for Niagara. It provided that Clement C. Clay, Jacob Thompson, James P. Holcombe, and George N. Sanders should have safe conduct to Washington in company with Horace Greeley, and should be exempt from arrest or annoyance of any kind from any officer of the United States during their journey. Nothing was said by Mr. Greeley or by Major Hay to the effect that this safe conduct modified in any respect the conditions imposed by the President's letter of the 9th. It merely carried into effect the proposition made in that letter. On arriving at Niagara, Mr. Greeley placed

himself at once in the hands of Jewett, who was waiting to receive him, and sent by him a letter addressed to Clay, Thompson, and Holcombe, in which he said:

I am informed that you are duly accredited from Richmond as the bearers of propositions looking to the establishment of peace; that you desire to visit Washington in the fulfillment of your mission; and that you further desire that Mr. George N. Sanders shall accompany you. If my information be thus far substantially correct, I am authorized by the President of the United States to tender you his safe conduct on the journey proposed, and to accompany you at the earliest time that will be agreeable to you.

No clearer proof can be given than is afforded in this letter that Mr. Greeley was absolutely ignorant of all the essential facts appertaining to the negotiation in which he was engaged. As it turned out, he had been misinformed even as to the personnel of the embassy, Jacob Thompson not being, and not having been, in company with the others; none of them had any authority to act in the capacity attributed to them; and, worse than all this, Mr. Greeley kept out of view, in his missive thus shot at a venture, the very conditions which Mr. Lincoln had imposed in his letter of the 9th and repeated in that of the 15th. Yet, with all the advantages thus afforded them, Clay and Holcombe felt themselves too bare and naked of credentials to accept Mr. Greeley's offer, and were therefore compelled to answer that they had not been accredited from Richmond, as assumed in his note. They made haste to say, however, that they were acquainted with the views of their Government, and could easily get credentials, or other agents could be accredited in their place, if they could be sent to Richmond armed with "the circumstances disclosed in this correspondence." It is incomprehensible that a man of Mr. Greeley's experience should not have recognized at once the purport of this proposal. It simply meant that Mr. Lincoln should take the initiative in suing the Richmond authorities for peace, on terms to be proposed by them. The essential impossibility of these terms was not apparent to Mr. Greeley; he merely saw that the situation was somewhat different from what he had expected, and therefore acknowledged the receipt of the letter, promised to report to Washington and solicit fresh instructions, and then telegraphed to Mr. Lincoln the substance of what Clay and Holcombe had written. The President, with unwearied patience, drew up a final paper, which he sent by Major Hay to Niagara, informing Mr. Greeley by telegraph that it was on the way. This information Mr. Greeley at once sent over the border, with many apologies for the delay.

Major Hay arrived at Niagara on the 20th

of July with a paper in the President's own handwriting, expressed in these words:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
WASHINGTON, July 18, 1864.

*To whom it may concern:* Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have safe conduct both ways.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Mr. Greeley had already begun to have some impression of the unfortunate position in which he had placed himself, and the reading of this straightforward document still further nettled and perplexed him. He proposed to bring Jewett into conference; this Major Hay declined. He then refused to cross the river to Clifton unless Major Hay would accompany him, and himself deliver the paper to the Confederate emissaries. They therefore went together and met Mr. Holcombe in a private room of the Clifton House (Mr. Clay being absent for a day), and handed him the President's letter. After a few moments' conversation they separated, Mr. Greeley returning to New York and Major Hay remaining at Niagara to receive any answer that might be given to the letter. Before taking the train Mr. Greeley had an interview with Jewett, unknown to Major Hay, in which he seems to have authorized Jewett to continue to act as his representative. Jewett lost no time in acquainting the emissaries with this fact, informing them of the departure of Mr. Greeley, of "his regret at the sad termination of the initiatory steps taken for peace, in consequence of the change made by the President in his instructions to convey commissioners to Washington for negotiations, unconditionally, and that Mr. Greeley would be pleased to receive their answer" through him (Jewett). They replied to Jewett with mutual compliments, inclosing a long letter to Mr. Greeley, arraigning the President for his alleged breach of faith, which Jewett promptly communicated to the newspapers of the country without notice to Major Hay, informing him afterwards in a note that he did this by way of revenging the slight of the preceding day.

In giving the letter of the rebel emissaries to the press instead of sending it to its proper destination, Jewett accomplished the purpose for which it was written. It formed a not ineffective document in a heated political campaign. It would be difficult to ascertain, at this day, whether Mr. Greeley ever communi-

cated to Jewett or Sanders, and whether they, in their constant flittings to and fro over the Suspension Bridge, ever made known to Clay and Holcombe the conditions of negotiation laid down by Mr. Lincoln in his letters of the 9th and 15th of July. At all events they pretended to be ignorant of any such conditions, and assumed that the President had sent Mr. Greeley to invite them to Washington without credentials and without conditions, to convey to Richmond his overtures of peace. They did not say with any certainty that even in that event his overtures would have been accepted, but expressed the hope that in case the war must continue there might "have been infused into its conduct something more of the spirit which softens and partially redeems its brutalities." They then went on to accuse the President of a "sudden and entire change of views," of a "rude withdrawal of a courteous overture," of "fresh blasts of war to the bitter end"; attributing this supposed change to some "mysteries of his cabinet" or some "caprice of his imperial will." They plainly intimated that while the South desired peace, it would not accept any arrangement which bartered away its self-government; and in conclusion they called upon their fellow-Confederates to strip from their "eyes the last film of delusion" that peace is possible, and "if there were any patriots or Christians" in the North, they implored them "to recall the abused authority and vindicate the outraged civilization of their country."

Even this impudent and uncandid manifesto did not convince Mr. Greeley that he had committed an error. On the contrary, he adopted the point of view of the rebel emissaries, and contended after his return to New York that he regarded the safe conduct given him on the 16th of July as a waiver by the President of all the conditions of his former letters. Being attacked by his colleagues of the press for his action at Niagara, he could only defend himself by implied censure of the President, and the discussion grew so warm that both he and his assailants at last joined in a request to Mr. Lincoln to permit the publication of the correspondence between them. This was an excellent opportunity for Mr. Lincoln to vindicate his own proceeding. But he rarely looked at such matters from the point of view of personal advantage, and he feared that the passionate, almost despairing appeals of the most prominent Republican editor in the North for peace at any cost would deepen the gloom in the public mind and have an injurious effect upon the Union cause. He therefore proposed to Mr. Greeley, in case the correspondence should be published, to omit some of the most vehement

phrases of his letters and those in which he advocated peace negotiations solely for political effect; at the same time he invited him to come to Washington and talk with him freely. Mr. Greeley, writing on the 8th of August, accepted both suggestions in principle, but he querulously declined going to Washington at that time, on the ground that the President was surrounded by his "bitterest personal enemies," and that his going would only result in further mischief, as at Niagara. "I will gladly go," he continued, "whenever I feel a hope that their influence has waned." Then, unable to restrain himself, he broke out in new and severe reproaches against the President for not having received Mr. Stephens, for not having sent a deputation to Richmond to ask for peace after Vicksburg, for not having taken the Democrats in Congress at their word, and sent "three of the biggest of them as commissioners to see what kind of a peace they could get." He referred once more to Niagara, and said magnanimously, "Let the past go"; but added the stern admonition, "Do not let this month pass without an earnest effort for peace." He held out a hope that if the President would turn from the error of his ways he would still help him make peace; but for the time being, "knowing who are nearest you," he gave him up. The only meaning this can have is simply, Dismiss Seward from your Cabinet and do as I tell you, and then perhaps I can save your Administration.

The next day, having received another telegram from the President, who, regardless of his own dignity, was still endeavoring to conciliate and convince him, Mr. Greeley wrote another letter, which we shall give more fully than the rest, to show in what a dangerous frame of mind was the editor of the most important organ of public opinion in the North. He begins by refusing to telegraph, "since I learned by sad experience at Niagara that my dispatches go to the War Department before reaching you."

I fear that my chance for usefulness has passed. I know that nine-tenths of the whole American people, North and South, are anxious for peace — peace on almost any terms — and utterly sick of human slaughter and devastation. I know that, to the general eye, it now seems that the rebels are anxious to negotiate and that we refuse their advances. I know that if this impression be not removed we shall be beaten out of sight next November. I firmly believe that, were the election to take place to-morrow, the Democratic majority in this State and Pennsylvania would amount to 100,000, and that we should lose Connecticut also. Now if the rebellion can be crushed before November it will do to go on; if not, we are rushing to certain ruin.

What, then, can I do in Washington? Your trusted

advisers nearly all think I ought to go to Fort Lafayette for what I have done already. Seward wanted me sent there for my brief conference with M. Mercier. The cry has steadily been, No truce! No armistice! No negotiation! No mediation! Nothing but surrender at discretion! I never heard of such fatuity before. There is nothing like it in history. It *must* result in disaster, or all experience is delusive.

Now I do not know that a tolerable peace could be had, but I believe it might have been last month; and, at all events, I know that an honest, sincere effort for it would have done us immense good. And I think no Government fighting a rebellion should ever close its ears to any proposition the rebels may make.

I beg you, implore you, to inaugurate or invite proposals for peace forthwith. And in case peace cannot now be made consent to an *armistice for one year*, each party to retain unmolested all it now holds, but the rebel ports to be opened. Meantime let a national convention be held, and there will surely be no more war at all events.

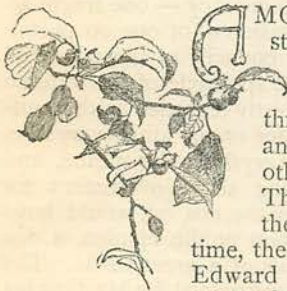
In a letter of the 11th of August, Mr. Greeley closed this extraordinary correspondence by insisting that if his letters were published they should be printed entire. This was accepted by Mr. Lincoln as a veto upon their publication. He could not afford, for the sake of vindicating his own action, to reveal to the country the despondency — one might almost say the desperation — of one so prominent in Republican councils as the editor of the "Tribune." The spectacle of this veteran journalist, who was justly regarded as the leading controversial writer on the antislavery side, ready to sacrifice everything for peace, and frantically denouncing the Government for refusing to surrender the contest, would have been, in its effect upon public opinion, a disaster equal to the loss of a great battle. The President had a sincere regard for Mr. Greeley also, and was unwilling to injure him and his great capacities for usefulness by publishing these ill-considered and discouraging utterances. His magnanimity was hardly appreciated. Mr. Greeley, in this letter of the 11th of August, and afterwards, insisted that the President had in his letter and his dispatch of the 15th of July changed his ground from that held in his letter of the 9th, which ground, he asserted, was again shifted in his paper "To whom it may concern." This was of course wholly without foundation. The letter of the 9th authorized Mr. Greeley to bring to Washington any one "professing to have any proposition from Jefferson Davis, in writing, for peace, embracing the restoration of the Union, and abandonment of slavery"; the letter of the 15th repeats the offer contained in that of the 9th, saying, "Show that and this to them, and if they will come on the terms

stated in former, bring them." The next day Major Hay gave Mr. Greeley a formal safe conduct for himself and party, and neither of them thought of it as nullifying the President's letters. Indeed, Mr. Greeley's sole preposterous justification for his claim that his safe conduct superseded the President's instructions was that Major Hay did not say that it did not.

It was characteristic of Mr. Lincoln that, seeing the temper in which Mr. Greeley regarded the transaction, he dropped the matter and submitted in silence to the misrepresentations to which he was subjected by reason of it. The correspondence preceding the Niagara conference was not published until after the President's death; that subsequent to it sees the light for the first time in these pages. The public, having nothing of the record except the impudent manifesto of Clay and Holcombe, the foolish chatter of Jewett, and such half-statements as Mr. Greeley chose to make in answer to the assaults of his confrères of the press, judged Mr. Lincoln unjustly. Some thought

he erred in giving any hearing to the rebels; some criticized his choice of a commissioner; and the opposition naturally made the most of his conditions of negotiation, and accused him of embarking in a war of extermination in the interest of the negro.<sup>1</sup> So that this well-meant effort of the President to ascertain what were the possibilities of peace through negotiation, or, failing that, to convince the representative of a large body of Republicans of his willingness to do all he could in that direction, resulted only in putting a keener edge upon the criticisms of his supporters, and in arming his adversaries with a weapon which they used, after their manner, among the rebels of the border States and their sympathizers in the North. Nevertheless, surveying the whole transaction after the lapse of twenty-five years, it is not easy to see how any act of his in relation to it was lacking in wisdom, or how it could have been changed for the better. Certainly every step of the proceeding was marked with his usual unselfish sincerity and magnanimity to friend and to foe.

## NILS'S GARDEN.



**A**MONG a thousand students in a university town there will always be two or three in whom science and poetry hold each other at a deadlock. The headquarters for these few was, in my time, the delightful room of Edward Tenniman on the spot where the new Law

School now stands. He himself was the high priest of this double altar, the professor of these incompatible elective studies. The room was in an old colonial house of the humbler description, the ceiling was low with a cross-timber, the walls were wainscoted, and there was a large, open fireplace. The arrangements of the room followed half unconsciously the double bent of the owner's mind. All one side was devoted to serve botanical science: tin boxes, specimens, herbaria, microscopes, and a recess filled with Latin and German botanical works. The middle of the room was, as it were, transitional: there was a desk with an

Æschylus forever open, and a great copy of Liddell and Scott's lexicon, then a novelty. On the other side one passed into high philosophy and dreamland: a portrait of Coleridge, his framed autograph, a picture of his study, and a whole library of mystical philosophy, including, I remember, the folio edition of Jacob Behmen in five volumes, over whose symbolic plates we used to pore. With what delight after a rather stiff lesson in botany—for he took a few of us as private pupils—did we turn to the other side of the room, when Tenniman would unfold for us Behmen's "Aurora, or Day-Spring," and, better yet, the "Signatura Rerum, or the signature of all things, showing the Sign and Signification of the several Forms and Shapes in the Creation; and what the Beginning, Ruin, and Cure of every Thing is, it proceeds out of Eternity into Time, and again out of time into Eternity, and comprehends all Mysteries. Written in High Dutch, 1622, by Jacob Behmen, alias Teutonicus Phylosophus." No doubt this side of the room was very unscientific, in the modern sense, but it was certainly refreshing after an hour or two at the microscope. It

<sup>1</sup> On the morning that the letter of the rebel emissaries was printed Major Hay, returning to Washington, heard this colloquy between two draymen on a Jersey City ferry-boat: "Have you heard the news?" "No; what is it?" "Old Abe and Jeff. Davis have been trying to make peace." "How did they make out?" "Old

Abe, he says, 'Let the niggers go free, and we'll stop fighting.' Jeff., he says, 'I'll let them be free that's free now, and the rest stay as they are.' Old Abe, he says, 'No, they got to be all free'; and so they broke up on that." These draymen were not the only citizens who gave this brief and dramatic form to the negotiations.

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## THE CHICAGO SURRENDER—CONSPIRACIES IN THE NORTH— LINCOLN AND THE CHURCHES.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### THE CHICAGO SURRENDER.



THE Democratic managers had called the National Convention of their party to meet on the Fourth of July, 1864, but after the nomination of Frémont at Cleveland and of Lincoln at Baltimore it was thought prudent to postpone it to a later date, in the hope that something in the chapter of accidents might arise to the advantage of the opposition. It appeared for awhile as if this manœuvre were to be successful. As a vessel shows its finest sailing qualities against a head wind, so the best political work is always done in the face of severe opposition; and as the Republican party had as yet no enemy before it, the canvass, during its first months, seemed stricken with languor and apathy. The military situation was far from satisfactory. The terrible fighting in the Wilderness, succeeded by Grant's flank movement to the left, and the culmination of the campaign in the horrible slaughter at Cold Harbor, had profoundly shocked and depressed the country. The movement upon Petersburg, so far without decisive results, had contributed little of hope or encouragement; the campaign of Sherman in Georgia gave as yet no positive assurance of the brilliant result it afterwards attained; the Confederate raid into Maryland and Pennsylvania, in July, was the cause of great annoyance and exasperation.

This untoward state of things in the field of military operations found its exact counterpart in the political campaign. Several circumstances contributed to divide and discourage the Administration party. The resignation of Mr. Chase, on the last day of June, had seemed, to not a few leading Republicans at the North, as a presage of disintegration in the Government; Mr. Greeley's mission to Niagara Falls, in spite of the wise and resolute attitude taken by the President in relation to peace negotiations, had unsettled and troubled the minds of many. The Democratic party, not having as yet appointed a candidate nor formulated a platform, were free to devote all their leisure

to attacks upon the Administration; and the political fusillade continued with great energy through the summer months. The Republicans were everywhere on the defensive, having no objective point of attack in the opposite lines. The rebel emissaries in Canada, being in thorough concert with the leading peace men of the North, redoubled their efforts to disturb the public tranquillity, and not without success. Mr. Davis says of this period:

Political developments at the North favored the adoption of some action that might influence popular sentiment in the hostile section. The aspect of the peace party was quite encouraging, and it seemed that the real issue to be decided in the Presidential election in that year was the continuance or cessation of the war.<sup>2</sup>

There is a remarkable concurrence between this view of Mr. Davis and that of Mr. Lincoln in a letter to a friend which we have quoted in another place. Referring to the emissaries at Niagara Falls and their interest in the Chicago convention, and also to the expressions used by the Confederate authorities in their conversation with Jaquess, Mr. Lincoln said, "The Presidential contest is between a Union and a Disunion candidate, disunion certainly following the success of the latter!"<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Thompson, in his report of the operations of the rebel commission in Canada, claims that the results of the Niagara Falls conference were the source of such encouragement to the peace party as to lead them to give up their half-formed project of insurrection in the North-west in the hope of defeating Lincoln at the polls. In the midst of these discouraging circumstances the manifesto of Wade and Davis came to add its depressing influence to the general gloom. It seemed for a time as if this action of two of the most prominent Republicans in either house of Congress would result in a serious defection from the Republican party, though in the end the effect of the demonstration proved inconsiderable.

General McClellan had before this time become the acknowledged leader of the Democratic party in the North. It is true he was

<sup>2</sup> Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate States," Vol. II., p. 611.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Wakeman, July 25, 1864. Unpublished MS.

not the favorite candidate of the Democracy in most of the Western States, but in the powerful States of the seaboard, and especially in the large cities, he was the only person indicated by popular consent among the opposition as the antagonist of Lincoln in the Presidential canvass. His attitude was therefore a matter of grave preoccupation, not only to most of the leading Republicans, but even to the President himself. There have been, in the last twenty years, many conflicting stories in regard to the overtures made to him during this summer; but, so far as can be ascertained, they were all the voluntary acts of over-anxious friends of the President, and made without his knowledge or consent. As early as the month of June, 1863, Mr. Thurlow Weed conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the Union cause if General McClellan would take a prominent part in a great war meeting to be held in New York. With the knowledge and approval of the President he approached the general with this purpose; he even suggested to him that the result might be the organization of a movement to make him the Union candidate for the Presidency. We learn from Mr. Weed that General McClellan at first gave a favorable hearing to the proposition, but at the last moment withdrew his consent to preside at the meeting in a letter in which he said: "I am clear in the conviction that the policy governing the conduct of the war should be one looking not only to military success, but also to ultimate reunion, and that it should consequently be such as to preserve the rights of all Union-loving citizens, wherever they may be, as far as compatible with military necessity."<sup>1</sup> The chance of identifying himself with the Union party thus passed away; later in the season he came out in favor of the candidates of the peace faction in Pennsylvania.

An attempt made in July, 1864, by Mr. Francis P. Blair, the elder, to induce McClellan to withdraw from the canvass caused a great deal of gossip at the time, and led to such misstatements and exaggerations that Mr. Blair afterwards published a full and detailed account of his action.<sup>2</sup> This venerable gentleman, sharing in the apprehension entertained by many as to the divisions and consequent weakness of the Union party, went to New York in the latter part of July "to make an effort at conciliation." "I went on this errand," said Mr. Blair, "without consulting the President, without giving him, directly or indirectly, the slightest intimation of my object, and, of course, without his authority. I apprised no one but my son." He first called upon the leading

editors of the city. Mr. Bryant, though discontented with the Administration, considered Mr. Lincoln, with all his abatements, the only man who could be relied upon for the defense of the Union. Mr. Greeley assured Mr. Blair that "his best efforts would not be wanting to secure the peace of the country through the reelection of the President"; Mr. Bennett of the "Herald" gave his ultimatum in a "raucous Scotch accent"—"Tell him to restore McClellan to the army and he will carry the election by default." Through Mr. S. L. M. Barlow, Mr. Blair had a long and intimate conversation with General McClellan. He began by stating distinctly to him that he had not come from Mr. Lincoln; that he had no authority or even consent from him to make representations or overtures of any sort. He then urged him, with the privilege of age and long friendship, to have nothing to do with the Chicago convention, saying that if he accepted their nomination he would be defeated. He pictured to him the dismal fate that awaits defeated candidates; he urged him to make himself the inspiring center and representative of the loyal Democrats of the North by writing a letter to Lincoln asking to be restored to service in the army, declaring at the same time that he did not seek it with a view to recommend himself to the Presidential nomination. "In case the President should refuse this request," said Mr. Blair, "he would then be responsible for the consequences." General McClellan received this well-meant advice in his customary manner. It is altogether probable that he did not believe a word of Mr. Blair's opening statement that this overture was without the approval or privity of the President. It no doubt seemed to him a political trick to induce him to decline the nomination of which he was already certain. He listened with his habitual courtesy and answered with his habitual indecision. He disclaimed any desire for the Presidential candidacy; he thanked Mr. Blair for his friendly suggestions; he said he would give them deep consideration; that he was called to the country to see a sick child and regretted that he could not talk with him again. Mr. Blair came back from his useless mission and repeated to Mr. Lincoln what he had done, adding that he thought it probable that General McClellan would write to him. The President "neither expressed approval nor disapprobation," says Mr. Blair in his letter, "but his manner was as courteous and kind as General McClellan's had been."

The political situation grew darker throughout the summer. At last, towards the end of August, the general gloom and depression

<sup>1</sup> T. W. Barnes, "The Life of Thurlow Weed," Vol. II., p. 429.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of F. P. Blair, dated Oct. 5, 1864, in the "National Intelligencer."

enveloped the President himself. The Democrats had not yet selected their candidate nor opened their campaign. As in the field of theology there is no militant virtue unless there is an active evil to oppose, so in that of politics a party without an organized opposition appears to drop to pieces by its own weight. To use Mr. Lincoln's words: "At this period we had no adversary and seemed to have no friends." For a moment he despaired of the success of the Union party in the coming election. He was not alone in this impression. It was shared by his leading friends and counselors. So experienced and astute a politician as Mr. Thurlow Weed wrote on the 22d of August:

When, ten days since, I told Mr. Lincoln that his reelection was an impossibility, I also told him that the information would soon come to him through other channels. It has doubtless ere this reached him. At any rate nobody here doubts it, nor do I see anybody from other States who authorizes the slightest hope of success. Mr. Raymond, who has just left me, says that unless some prompt and bold step be taken all is lost. The people are wild for peace. They are told that the President will only listen to terms of peace on condition that slavery be abandoned. . . . Mr. Raymond thinks that commissioners should be immediately sent to Richmond offering to treat for peace on the basis of Union. That something should be done and promptly done to give the Administration a chance for its life is certain.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's action in this conjuncture was most original and characteristic. Feeling that the campaign was going against him, he made up his mind deliberately as to the course he should pursue, and unwilling to leave his resolution to the chances of the changed mood which might follow in the natural exasperation of defeat, he resolved to lay down for himself the course of action demanded by his present conviction of duty. He wrote on the 23d of August the following memorandum:

This morning, as for several days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be reelected. Then it will be my duty to so cooperate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration;

<sup>1</sup> Weed to Seward, August 22. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Copied from the MS.

<sup>3</sup> We copy from the MS. diary of one of the President's secretaries under date of November 11, 1864, the following passage relating to this incident: "At the meeting of the Cabinet to-day the President took out a paper from his desk and said: 'Gentlemen, do you remember last summer I asked you all to sign your names to the back of a paper of which I did not show you the inside? This is it. Now, Mr. Hay, see if you can open this without tearing it.' He had pasted it up in so singular a style that it required some cutting to get it open. He then read this memorandum [given in the text above]. The President said: 'You will remember that this was written at the time, six days before the Chicago nominating convention, when as yet we had no adversary and seemed to have no friends. I then solemnly resolved on the course of action indicated in

as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterwards."<sup>2</sup>

He then folded and pasted the sheet in such manner that its contents could not be read, and as the Cabinet came together he handed this paper to each member successively, requesting them to write their names across the back of it. In this peculiar fashion he pledged himself and the Administration to accept loyally the anticipated verdict of the people against him, and to do the utmost to save the Union in the brief remainder of his term of office. He gave no intimation to any member of the Cabinet of the nature of the paper they had signed until after his triumphant reelection.<sup>3</sup>

The Democratic convention was finally called to meet in Chicago on the 29th of August. Much was expected from the strength and the audacity which the peace party in the North-west had recently displayed, and the day of the meeting of the convention was actually chosen by rebel emissaries in Canada and their agents in the Western States for an outbreak which should effect that revolution in the North-west which was the vague and chimerical dream that had been so long cherished and caressed in Richmond and Toronto.

About the time of the adjournment of Congress the Democratic members of that body issued an address to their party, which, when read after twenty-five years, shows how blinded by partisan passion these intelligent and well-meaning gentlemen, neither better nor worse in most respects than the rest of their fellow-citizens, had become. They charged in effect that there were only two classes of people supporting the Government—those who were making money out of the war, and the Radical abolitionists; and they called upon the indefinite abstraction which they named "the country" to throw out of office the administration of a Government under favor of which these two classes of men "nestle in power and gratify their unholy greed and their detestable passions." The party of the Union—that is to say, the majority of the people of the country—is

this paper. I resolved in case of the election of General McClellan, being certain that he would be the candidate, that I would see him and talk matters over with him. I would say, "General, the election has demonstrated that you are stronger, have more influence with the American people, than I. Now let us together, you with your influence and I with all the executive power of the Government, try to save the country. You raise as many troops as you possibly can for this final trial, and I will devote all my energies to assist and finish the war."<sup>4</sup>

"Seward said, 'And the general would have answered you, "Yes, yes"; and the next day when you saw him again and pressed these views upon him he would have said, "Yes, yes," and so on forever, and would have done nothing at all.'

"At least," said Lincoln, 'I should have done my duty and have stood clear before my own conscience.'<sup>5</sup>"

called in this address "a nightmare of corruption and fanaticism which is pressing out its very existence." The most remarkable feature of this singular document is its assumption that the people who were trying to save the Union and to reestablish its authority were influenced only by sentimental doctrines and the wild passions of fury and vengeance. "We do not decry theory," these congressmen gravely said; "but we assert that statesmanship is concerned mainly in the domain of the practical, and that in the present imperfect condition of human affairs it is obliged to modify general ideas and adapt them to existing conditions." They called upon the country to sustain this calm and philosophic view of the functions of statesmanship, "to bring the sound elements of society to the surface," to "purge the body politic of its unhealthy elements," and to substitute in places of public trust "just and broad-minded, pure and liberal men, in the place of radicals and corruptionists." This being done, they promised the millennium.

The Democratic National Convention came together at the time appointed, but it is by no means sure that any real and permanent advantage had been gained by the delay. The scheme of the American Knights to inaugurate on that day their counter-revolution had, by the usual treachery of some of its members, been discovered and guarded against by a strong show of force in the city of Chicago, and its execution was postponed until the day of the November election. No great approach to harmony, on the subject of peace or war, had been made in the two months of observation and skirmishing which the managers had allowed themselves. The only manner in which the peace men and the war Democrats could arrive at an agreement was by mutual deception. The war Democrats, led by the delegation from New York, were working for a military candidate; and the peace Democrats, under the redoubtable leadership of Mr. Vallandigham, who had returned from Canada and was allowed to remain at large by the half-contemptuous and half-calculated lenity of the Government he defied, bent all their energies to a clear statement of their principles in the platform.

Mr. August Belmont, a German by birth and the representative of the Rothschilds' banking-house, called the delegates to order, informing them that the future of the Republic rested in their hands. "Four years of misrule," he said, "by a sectional, fanatical, and corrupt party have brought our country to the very verge of ruin." He gravely stated, expecting it to be believed, and apparently believing it himself, that the "results of such a calamity as the reflection of Mr. Lincoln must be the

utter disintegration of our whole political and social system amidst bloodshed and anarchy." This German banker promised the convention that the American people would rush to the support of their candidate and platform, "provided you will offer to their suffrage a tried patriot." This vague reference to McClellan was greeted with applause from the Eastern delegates. Mr. Belmont said: "We are here, not as war Democrats nor as peace Democrats, but as citizens of the great Republic"; and he named as temporary chairman Mr. William Bigler, formerly governor of Pennsylvania. Mr. Bigler made a brief speech charging upon the Republicans all the woes of the country, and saying that "the men now in authority, because of the feud which they have so long maintained with violent and unwise men of the South, and because of a blind fanaticism about an institution of some of the States in relation to which they have no duties to perform and no responsibilities to bear, are rendered incapable of adopting the proper means to rescue our country from its present lamentable condition."

The usual committees were appointed, and Mr. Vallandigham was presented by his State delegation as a member of the committee on platform. Several resolutions were offered in open convention—one by Washington Hunt of New York suggesting a convention of the States; one by Mr. Price of Missouri for a demonstration in favor of the freedom and purity of the elective franchise; and one by Mr. Long of Ohio, a furious advocate of peace, who had attained the honor of censure by the Congress of the United States, suggested that a committee proceed forthwith to Washington to demand of Mr. Lincoln the suspension of the draft until after the election.

Governor Seymour of New York was chosen permanent chairman of the convention. He made a long and eloquent speech full of abstract devotion to the Union and of denunciation of all the measures that had hitherto been taken to save it. "This Administration," he said, "cannot save this Union if it would. It has, by its proclamations, by vindictive legislation, by displays of hate and passion, placed obstacles in its own pathway which it cannot overcome, and has hampered its own freedom of action by unconstitutional acts." But Mr. Seymour did not mourn as one without hope. He continued: "If the Administration cannot save this Union, we can. Mr. Lincoln values many things above the Union; we put it first of all. He thinks a proclamation worth more than peace; we think the blood of our people more precious than the edicts of the President. . . . We demand no conditions for the restoration of our Union. We are shackled



with no hates, no prejudices, no passions." And so,— as he imagined,— without prejudices, without hatred, and without passion, he went on denouncing his Government and the majority of his fellow-citizens with eloquent fury to the end of his speech. His address was greeted at its close with loud applause, not unmingled with calls on the part of the peace men for Vallandigham. He did not respond at that moment, but the most weighty utterance of the convention was his, nevertheless—the second resolution of the platform, reported by the chairman, Mr. Guthrie of Kentucky. There had been on the organization of the committee a contest between Guthrie and Vallandigham for the chairmanship. "Through the artifices of Cassidy, Tilden, and other New York politicians,"<sup>1</sup> Mr. Guthrie of Kentucky received twelve votes to eight for Vallandigham; but whatever managers may accomplish, the strongest man with the strongest force behind him generally has his way, and when the committee got to work Vallandigham carried too many guns for Guthrie. He wrote, to use his own words,

the material resolution of the Chicago platform, and carried it through the sub-committee and the general committee in spite of the most desperate and persistent opposition on the part of Cassidy and his friends, Mr. Cassidy himself in an adjoining room laboring to defeat it.

This Vallandigham resolution is the only one in the platform worth quoting. All the rest was a string of mere commonplaces declaring devotion to the Union, denouncing interference of the military in elections, enumerating the illegal and arbitrary acts of the Government, expressing the sympathy of the convention with soldiers and sailors and prisoners of war. But the resolution written by Mr. Vallandigham and by him forced upon his party—

*Resolved*, That this convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretense of a military necessity, or war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and public liberty and private right alike trodden down and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired, justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate convention of the States, or other peaceable means, to the end that at the earliest practicable moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States.

It is altogether probable that this distinct proposition of surrender to the Confederates

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Vallandigham to the New York "News," Oct. 22, 1864.

might have been modified or defeated in full convention if the war Democrats had had the courage of their convictions; but they were so intent upon the nomination of McClellan that they considered the question of platform as of secondary importance, and these fatal resolutions were therefore adopted without debate, and the convention passed to the nomination of candidates. General McClellan was nominated by Mr. Stockton of New Jersey, followed by S. S. Cox of Ohio; Mr. Saulsbury of Delaware nominated Mr. Powell of Kentucky, who with compliments declined; Mr. Stuart, in behalf of the peace faction from Ohio, nominated Mr. Seymour of Connecticut; and Mr. Wickliffe of Kentucky raised the specter of the old-fashioned Democracy in the convention by nominating ex-President Pierce in a speech more amusing than effective. McClellan received 174 votes, but before the result was declared the vote was raised upon revision to 202; Seymour received a little more than one-tenth of that number. Mr. Vallandigham, who had taken possession of the convention through his platform, now adopted the candidate also, and put the seal of his sinister approval upon General McClellan by moving that his nomination be made unanimous, which was done with great cheering. Mr. Wickliffe, the comic old man of the convention, then offered a resolution that General McClellan, immediately after his inauguration in March next, should "open Abraham Lincoln's prison doors and let the captives free." Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Pendleton were the principal names mentioned in the first ballot for Vice-President, but on the second New York changed from Guthrie to Pendleton, and, all the other candidates being withdrawn, he was nominated, unanimously. Pendleton came to the stand and briefly addressed the convention, accepting the nomination and promising to continue "faithful to those principles which lay at the very bottom of the organization of the Democratic party." The convention did not adjourn as usual *sine die*. On the motion of Mr. Wickliffe, who said that "the delegates from the West were of the opinion that circumstances might occur between now and the 4th of March next which would make it proper for the Democracy of the country to meet in convention again," the convention resolved to "remain as organized, subject to be called at any time and place that the Executive National Committee shall designate." The motives of this action were not avowed. It was taken as a significant warning that the leaders of the Democratic party held themselves ready for any extraordinary measures which the exigencies of the time might provoke or invite.

The New Yorkers had, however, the last

word. Mr. Seymour, as Chairman of the Convention, was chairman of the committee to inform McClellan of his nomination, and before he wrote the letter Atlanta had fallen, the tide had turned, and the winds of popular opinion, which had seemed stagnant throughout the midsummer, now began to blow favorably to the national cause. The committee, in their letter dated a week after the convention adjourned, said :

Be assured that those for whom we speak were animated with the most earnest, devoted, prayerful desire for the salvation of the American Union, and preservation of the Constitution of the United States, and that the accomplishment of these objects was the guiding and impelling motive in every mind ; and we may be permitted to add that their purpose to maintain the Union is manifested in their selection, as their candidate, of one whose life has been devoted to its cause, while it is their earnest hope and confident belief that your election will restore to our country Union, Peace, and Constitutional Liberty.

The general answered on the same date.<sup>1</sup> He also felt with the New York politicians that the poison of death was in the platform of the convention ; that if he accepted it pure and simple the campaign was hopeless ; his only possible chance for success was in his war record ; his position as a candidate on a platform of dishonorable peace was no less desperate than ridiculous. He, therefore, in his letter of acceptance renewed his assurances of devotion to the Union, the Constitution, the laws, and the flag of his country.

The reëstablishment of the Union [he said] in all its integrity is, and must continue to be, the indispensable condition in any settlement. So soon as it is clear, or even probable, that our present adversaries are ready for peace, upon the basis of the Union, we should exhaust all the resources of statesmanship practiced by civilized nations and taught by the traditions of the American people, consistent with the honor and interests of the country, to secure such peace, reëstablish the Union, and guarantee for the future the constitutional rights of every State. The Union is the one condition of peace. We ask no more. Let me add, what I doubt not was, although unexpressed, the sentiment of the convention, as it is of the people they represent, that when any one State is willing to return to the Union it should be received at once, with a full guarantee of all its constitutional rights. . . . But the Union must be preserved at all hazards. I could not look in the face of my gallant comrades of the army and navy, who have survived so many bloody battles, and tell them that their labors and the sacrifice of so many of our slain and wounded brethren had been in vain, that we had abandoned that Union for which we have so often periled our lives. A vast majority of our people, whether in the army and navy or at home, would, as I would, hail with un-

bounded joy the permanent restoration of peace, on the basis of the Union under the Constitution without the effusion of another drop of blood. But no peace can be permanent without union.

Having thus absolutely repudiated the platform upon which he was nominated, he coolly concluded, "Believing that the views here expressed are those of the convention and the people you represent, I accept the nomination."

Upon this contradictory body of doctrine McClellan began his campaign. The platform of the convention was the law, his letter was the gospel, and the orators of the party might reconcile the two according to their sympathies or their ingenuity. The Ohio wing had no hesitation in taking its stand. "The Chicago platform," said Mr. Vallandigham, speaking from the same platform with Mr. Pendleton on the 17th of September, "enunciated its policy and principles by authority and was binding upon every Democrat, and by them the Democratic Administration must and should be governed. It was the only authorized exposition of the Democratic creed, and he repudiated all others." And a week afterwards<sup>2</sup> he went still further and specifically contradicted General McClellan.

The two principal points in his letter of acceptance to which I object were brought before the committee. The one containing the threat of future war was unanimously rejected. The other, to the effect that until the States and people of the South had returned to the Union we would not exhaust these arts of statesmanship, as they are called, received but three votes in that committee, though presented almost in the very words of the letter itself.

#### CONSPIRACIES IN THE NORTH.

OPPOSITION to the Government by constitutional means was not enough to gratify the vehement and resentful feelings of those Democrats in the North whose zeal for slavery seemed completely to have destroyed in their hearts every impulse of patriotism. They were ready to do the work of the Southern Confederacy in the North, and were alone prevented by their fear of the law. To evade the restraints of justice and the sharp measures of the military administration, they formed throughout the country secret associations for the purpose of resisting the laws, of embarrassing in every way the action of the Government, of communicating information to the rebels in arms, and in many cases of inflicting serious damage on the lives and property of the Unionists. They adopted various names in different parts of the country, but the designation adopted by the society having the largest number of lodges in the different States was the "Knights of the Golden Circle." As fast as one name was discovered and pub-

<sup>1</sup> Sept. 8, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> At Sidney, Ohio, Sept. 24.

lished it was cast aside and another adopted, and the same organization with the same membership appeared successively under the name we have mentioned and that of "The Order of American Knights," "The Order of the Star," and the "Sons of Liberty." These secret organizations possessed a singular charm to uneducated men, independent of their political sympathies; and this attraction, combined with the fact that they could not in plain daylight inflict any injury upon the Government, drove many thousands of the lower class of Democrats into these furtive lodges. It is impossible to ascertain, with any degree of exactness, the numbers of those who became affiliated with the orders. The numbers claimed by the adepts vary widely. A million was not infrequently the membership of which they boasted. Mr. Vallandigham asserted, in a public speech, that the organized body numbered half a million. Judge Holt, in his official report, accepted this aggregate as being something near the truth. The heaviest force was in Illinois and in Indiana; in Ohio they were also very numerous, and in the border States of Kentucky and Missouri. Their organization was entirely military; the State lodges were commanded by major-generals, the congressional districts by brigadiers, the counties by colonels, and the townships by captains. They drilled as much as was possible under the limitations of secrecy; they made large purchases of arms. General Carrington estimated that 30,000 guns and revolvers were brought into Indiana alone, and the adherents of the order in the State of Illinois were also fully armed. In the month of March, 1864, it was estimated that the entire armed force of the order capable of being mobilized for active service was 340,000 men.<sup>1</sup> It is altogether probable that this estimate was greatly exaggerated; and even if so large a number had been initiated into the order, their lack of drill, discipline, and moral character rendered them incapable at any time of acting as an army. The order was large enough at least to offer the fullest hospitality to detectives and to Union men who volunteered to join with the purpose of reporting what they could to the authorities; so that the Government was speedily put in possession of the entire scheme of organization, with the names of the prominent officers of the order and written copies of their constitutions, oaths, and books of ritual. The constitutions of secret societies are generally valuable only as illustrations of human stupidity, and these were no exception to the rule. Their declaration of principles begins with this lucid proposition: "All men are endowed by the Creator with certain rights; equal

as far as there is equality in the capacity for the appreciation, enjoyment, and exercise of those rights." The institution of slavery receives the approval of this band of midnight traitors in the following muddled and brutal sentences:

In the divine economy no individual of the human race must be permitted to encumber the earth, to mar its aspects of transcendent beauty, nor to impede the progress of the physical or intellectual man, neither in himself nor in the race to which he belongs. Hence a people . . . whom neither the divinity within them nor the inspirations of divine and beautiful nature around them can impel to virtuous action and progress onward and upward, should be subjected to a just and humane servitude and tutelage to the superior race until they shall be able to appreciate the benefits and advantages of civilization.

They also declare in favor of something they imagine to be the theory of State rights, and also the duty of the people to expel their rulers from the Government by force of arms when they see good reason. "This is not revolution," they say, "but solely the assertion of State rights." Had they been content to meet in their lodges at stated times and bewilder themselves by such rhetoric as this there would have been no harm done; but there is plenty of evidence that the measures they adopted to bring what they called their principles into action were of positive injury to the national welfare. One of their chief objects was the exciting of discontent in the army and the encouraging of desertion; members of the order enlisted with the express purpose of inciting soldiers to desert with them; money and citizens' clothing were furnished them for this purpose; lawyers were hired to advise soldiers on leave not to go back and to promise them the requisite defense in the courts if they got into trouble by desertion. The adjutant-general of Indiana, in his report for 1863, says that the number of deserters and absentees returned to the army through the post of Indianapolis alone, during the last month of 1862, was about 2600. The squads of soldiers sent to arrest deserters were frequently attacked in rural districts by these organized bodies; the most violent resistance was made to the enrollment and the draft. Several enrolling officers were shot in Indiana and in Illinois; about sixty persons were tried and convicted in Indiana for conspiracy to resist the draft.<sup>2</sup> A constant system of communication with the rebels in arms was kept up across the border; arms, ammunition, and, in some instances, recruits, were sent to aid the Confederates; secret murders and assassinations were not unknown; the plan of establishing a North-western Confederacy in hostility to the East and in alliance with the Southern Confederacy was the favor-

<sup>1</sup> Report of Judge-Advocate General Holt.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

ite dream of the malignant and narrow minds controlling the order. The Government wisely took little notice of the proceedings of this organization. It was constantly informed of its general plans and purposes; the Grand Secretary of the order in Missouri made a full confession of his connection with it. In August a large number of copies of the ritual of the order of American Knights were seized in the office of D. W. Voorhees, a prominent Democratic member of Congress at Terre Haute.<sup>1</sup> A private soldier in the Union army, named Stidger, had himself initiated into the order, and with infinite skill and success rose to a high position in it, becoming Grand Secretary for the State of Kentucky. Thus thoroughly informed of the composition and the purposes of the society, the Government was constantly able to guard against any serious disturbances of the public peace; and whenever the arrest of any of the ringleaders was determined upon, the evidence for their conviction was always overwhelming.

The fullest light was thrown upon the organization and plans of these treasonable orders by the trials of certain conspirators in Indiana in the autumn of 1864. We will make no reference to the testimony of Government detectives who joined the conspiracy with the purpose of revealing its secrets. It is sufficient to quote the unwilling and unquestionably truthful statements of members of the order, brought into court by subpoena. William Clayton,<sup>2</sup> a farmer of Warren County, Illinois, testified that he was initiated a member of the order of American Knights "at a congregation formed in the timber"; he took a long and bombastic oath, the only significant part of which was the pledge to take up arms if required, in the cause of the oppressed against usurpers waging war against a people endeavoring to establish a government for themselves in accordance with the eternal principles of truth; this, he testified, bound him to assist the South in its struggle for independence. He said he understood the purpose of the order was primarily to beat the Republicans at the polls, and that force of arms was to be resorted to in case of necessity; that they contemplated a rebel invasion in support of these objects; that the understanding was that in case the rebels came into Illinois, they and the brethren of this organization were to shake hands and be friends; that they were to give aid and assistance to the invaders; that death was the penalty for divulging the secrets of the order. Other members testified that they took an oath providing that in case of treachery

they were to be drawn and quartered, their mangled remains to be cast out at the four gates. When these dwellers in prairie villages were asked what they meant by "the four gates," they said they did not know. Clayton further said their objects were "to resist the conscription or anything else that pushed them too hard."<sup>3</sup> Another farmer said he joined "because he had been a Democrat all his life"; another, that he "went in out of curiosity"—and this was doubtless a motive with many. In communities where there is little to interest an idle mind these secret mummeries possess a singular attraction. The grips, the passwords, the emblems, formed a great part of whatever temptation the order offered to the rural conspirators. Their favorite cognizance was the oak; not on account of any civic association, but because the word was formed of the initials of the name, "Order of American Knights." Their grand hailing cry of distress was "Oak-houn," the last syllable taken from the name of the South Carolina statesman whose principles they imagined they were putting in operation.

By far the most important witness for the Government was Horace Heffren, a lawyer of Salem, Indiana, a man high in the councils of the order. He was indicted for treasonable practices, and concluded to make a clean breast of it.<sup>4</sup> He gave an apparently truthful account; detailed the scheme for forming a North-western Confederacy, or, if that failed, for joining the Southern army; the State Government of Indiana was to be seized, Governor Morton was to be held for a hostage or killed. He confirmed the story of the general uprising which was to have taken place on the 16th of August in conjunction with a rebel raid from Cumberland Gap, the great feature of which was the liberation of the Confederate prisoners in Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana. But when the time came the rebels did not, and the conspirators lacked heart for the fight. Vallandigham, the supreme head of the order, was too far away for intelligent and efficient direction. The whole conspiracy was shabby and puerile, although it included many editors and politicians of local standing. They were not all cravens; some of them stood up stoutly before the military commission and defended the cause of the South. "I assert," said one, "that the South has been fighting for their rights as defined in the Dred Scott decision."<sup>5</sup> But there was very little display of heroism when the time of trial arrived. There was much that was ignoble and sordid; a scramble for the salaried places, a rush to handle the money provided for arms; one man intriguing for a place on the staff "because he had a sore leg"; a cloud of small politicians, who hardly knew whether

<sup>1</sup> Report of Judge-Advocate General.

<sup>2</sup> Treason trials at Indianapolis, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

they were members or not; "they had heard a ritual read, but paid little attention to it"; they were anxious to be members if the scheme succeeded, and to avoid the law if it failed.

The President's attitude in regard to this organization was one of good-humored contempt rather than anything else. Most of the officers commanding departments, however, regarded the machinations of these dark-lantern knights as a matter of the deepest import. Governor Morton was greatly disquieted by their work in his State, and sent a telegram to the President in January, 1863,<sup>1</sup> expressing his fear that the legislature, when it met, would pass a joint resolution to acknowledge the Southern Confederacy and urge the North-west to dissolve all constitutional relation with the New England States. But when the legislature came together, although it evinced a hearty good-will in giving the governor all the worry and annoyance possible, it took no such overt step of treason as he feared.

Their action was, indeed, sufficiently violent and contumacious. The House of Representatives insolently returned his message to him and passed a resolution accepting in its stead that of the Democratic governor of New York. Measures were introduced to take the military power of the State away from the governor and to confer it upon the Democratic State officers. To defeat these unconstitutional proceedings the Republicans adopted the equally irregular course of abandoning the legislature and leaving it without a quorum; in consequence of which no appropriation bills were passed, and the governor had to appeal to the people of the State for means to carry on the government. These were furnished in part by the voluntary offerings of banks, private corporations, and individuals; but needing a quarter of a million dollars for an emergency, he came to Washington and obtained it from the General Government, by virtue of a statute of July 31, 1861, which set aside two millions for the purchase of munitions of war to be used in States in rebellion or "in which rebellion is or may be threatened." In view of the revolutionary attitude of the legislature, and the known treasonable organization and purposes of the Sons of Liberty, the Secretary of War decided that Indiana was so "threatened," and made Governor Morton a disbursing officer to the amount of 250,000 dollars. It is related that Morton remarked, as he took the warrant, "If the cause failed, they would be called heavily to account for this"; to which Stanton replied, "If the cause fails, I do not wish to live."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Morton to Stanton, Jan. 3, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Wilson. Article E. M. Stanton, "Atlantic Monthly," February, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Rosecrans to Lincoln, June 22, 1864. MS.

General Rosecrans, commanding in Missouri, was thrown into something like panic by the doings of the Knights, and Governor Yates of Illinois shared fully in his trepidation. In June, 1864, the governor and the general joined in an earnest demand that the President should order Colonel Sanderson, of Rosecrans's staff, to Washington for a personal interview upon matters of overwhelming importance. The President was unwilling that either Rosecrans or his subordinate should come to Washington upon this errand, under the temptation to magnify his office by alarming reports. He therefore concluded to send one of his own private secretaries to St. Louis to see precisely what were the facts which had thrown the general commanding into such a state of consternation. Rosecrans then repeated the entire story of the organization of the order of American Knights and the Golden Circle, facts which were already well known to the President and the Secretary of War; but the immediate cause of his excitement was the expected return of Vallandigham, which, he said, was in accordance with the resolution adopted by the order at the convocation held in Windsor, Canada. General Rosecrans thought that his return would be the signal for the rising of the Knights throughout the North-west, and for serious public disorders.

The President, on receiving his secretary's report, declined to order Sanderson to Washington; and in reference to Rosecrans's strict injunctions of secrecy he said that a secret confided on the one side to half a million Democrats, and on the other to five governors and their staffs, was hardly worth keeping. He said the Northern section of the conspiracy merited no special attention, being about an equal mixture of puerility and malice.

General Rosecrans, after he was convinced that the President would not overrule the Secretary of War by ordering Colonel Sanderson to Washington, concluded at last to send his voluminous report in manuscript, accompanying it with the following letter, which we copy as giving in few words the results of his researches:<sup>3</sup>

Since Major Hay's departure, bearing my letter about the secret conspiracy we have been tracing out, we have added much information of its Southern connexions, operations, uses, and intentions.

We have also found a new element in its workings under the name of McClellan minute men.

The evident extent and anti-national purposes of this great conspiracy compel me to urge the consideration of what ought to be done to anticipate its workings and prevent the mischief it is capable of producing again upon your attention.

Therefore, I have sent the report of Colonel Sanderson with the details of evidence covering a thousand pages of foolscap, by himself, to be carried or forwarded to you by safe hands.

That report and its accompanying papers show,

1. That there exists an oath-bound secret society, under various names but forming one brotherhood both in the rebel and loyal States, the objects of which are the overthrow of the existing national Government and the dismemberment of this nation.

2. That the secret oaths bind these conspirators to revolution and all its consequences of murder, arson, pillage, and an untold train of crimes, including assassination and perjury, under the penalty of death to the disobedient or recusant.

3. That they intend to operate in conjunction with rebel movements this summer to revolutionize the loyal States, if they can.

4. That Vallandigham is the Supreme Commander of the Northern wing of this society, and General Price, of the rebel army, the Supreme Commander of the Southern wing of the organization. And that Vallandigham's return was a part of the programme well understood both North and South, by which the revolution they propose was to be inaugurated.

5. That this association is now and has been the principal agency by which spying and supplying rebels with means of war are carried on, between the loyal and rebel States, and that even some of our officers are engaged in it.

6. That they claim to have 25,000 members in Missouri, 140,000 in Illinois, 100,000 in Indiana, 80,000 in Ohio, 70,000 in Kentucky, and that they are extending through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

Besides which prominent and general facts, the names of members, mode of operating, and other details appear fully, showing what a formidable power and what agencies for mischief we have to deal with.

With this synopsis of the report it is respectfully submitted with the single remark—that whatever orders you may deem best to give, it must be obvious to your Excellency that leading conspirators like Chas. L. Hunt and Dr. Shore of St. Louis, arrested for being implicated in the association, cannot be released without serious hazard to the public welfare and safety.

From first to last these organizations were singularly lacking in energy and initiative. The only substantial harm they did was in encouraging desertions and embarrassing and resisting the officers concerned in the enrollment and the draft. The toleration with which the President regarded them, and the immunity which he allowed them in their passive treason, arose from the fact that he never could be made to believe that there was as much crime as folly in their acts and purposes. Senator McDonald reports that the President once said to him when he was asking the pardon of some of these conspirators condemned by military commission, "Nothing can make me believe that one hundred thousand Indiana Democrats are disloyal." They were sufficiently disloyal to take all manner of oaths against the Government; to be ready in their secret councils to declare they were ready to shed the last drop

of their blood to abolish it; to express their ardent sympathy with its enemies and their detestation of its officers and supporters. But this was the limit of their criminal courage. Shedding the last drop of one's blood is a comparatively easy sacrifice—it is shedding the first drop that costs; and these rural Catalines were never quite ready to risk their skins for their so-called principles. All the attempts against the public peace in the free States and on the Northern border proceeded not from the resident conspirators, but from desperate Southern emissaries and their aiders and abettors in the British provinces, and even these rarely rose above the level of ordinary arson and highway robbery.

The case of the *Chesapeake* was one of the most noteworthy of these incidents. Two Canadians named Braine and Parr resolved, in the latter part of 1863, to start on a privateering enterprise on their own account. Parr, though born in Canada, had lived for several years in Tennessee; and Braine, who had been arrested and confined in Fort Warren, had been released from that prison on his claim, presented by the British minister, that he was a British subject. Their sole pretension to Confederate nationality was the possession of commissions in the Confederate navy prepared *ad hoc*. They enlisted a dozen men, all British subjects, and purchased in New York the arms and equipment they required for their enterprise, and took passage on board the United States merchant steamer *Chesapeake*, which left New York on the 5th of December, bound for Portland, Maine. On the morning of the 8th they assaulted the officers and crew of the *Chesapeake*, capturing her after a struggle of only a few minutes' duration, killing one and wounding two of her officers.<sup>1</sup> They took the *Chesapeake* into the Bay of Fundy and there delivered her into the hands of a man calling himself Captain Parker of the Confederate navy, who afterwards turned out to be an Englishman whose name was Vernon Locke, and who had come out in a pilot boat to meet her. Feeling now secure in the possession of her new nationality, she went to Sambro Harbor, Nova Scotia, to receive the fuel and supplies necessary to enable her to prosecute her voyage to the Confederate States. While she lay there, the United States gun-boat *Ella and Annie* entered the harbor; and, says Mr. Benjamin, whose righteous indignation was evidently aroused by the proceedings, "with that habitual contempt of the territorial sovereignty of Great Britain and of her neutral rights which characterizes our enemies," recaptured the prize and left the British port with the

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin to Holcombe, Feb. 15, 1864. MS. Confederate Archives.

purpose of taking the *Chesapeake* to the United States; but meeting on the way a superior officer of the United States navy, the captain of the *Ella and Annie* was ordered by him to return to Halifax to restore the *Chesapeake* to the jurisdiction of Great Britain. This was done, and the few pirates who had been captured in the *Chesapeake* were delivered up. The case was taken at once into the courts and was promptly and properly decided, so far as the vessel was concerned, by her delivery to her rightful owners; but before this decision was made known at Richmond, the Confederate Government, seeing in the case a possibility of profit to their cause, dispatched to Halifax Professor J. P. Holcombe, said to be the most accomplished international lawyer in the Confederacy, to take charge of the case. During the professor's transit, however, by way of Wilmington and Bermuda, the case had come to its natural close, and on arriving at Halifax he found his occupation gone. He was compelled to report to the department that every man concerned in the capture of the *Chesapeake*, with the single exception of the Canadian-Tennessean just mentioned, was a British subject.<sup>1</sup> He also found that the captors had been guilty of stealing and peddling the cargo and pocketing the proceeds, and that the antecedents of the so-called Confederate officers involved were most disreputable. He seemed greatly disappointed to find that this gang of murderers and thieves were not high-minded and honorable gentlemen, and therefore concluded to make no demand upon the British authorities for the restitution of the stolen ship. He remained for some time in Halifax enjoying the hospitality of the colonial sympathizers with the South, and then proceeded to join the other secession emissaries in Canada who were engaged in equally congenial enterprises.

The principal agent of the Confederates in Canada was Jacob Thompson, late Secretary of the Interior in the administration of Buchanan, whose dishonorable administration of that important office has already been mentioned. He had sunk into appropriate insignificance, even among his own associates, after the war began; had been captured by General Grant on the Mississippi River in a ridiculous attempt at playing the spy under a flag of truce,<sup>2</sup> and, after being released with contemptuous forbearance, had gone to Canada, under instructions from the rebel Government, to do what damage he could in connection with the refugees and escaped prisoners who fringed the Northern frontier during the last two years of the war. He immediately placed himself in communication with the disloyal Democrats of the Northern States, and through them and a band of refugees who at once gathered about

him in Canada for employment began a series of operations which, for their folly no less than their malignity, would be incredible if they were not recorded in the report which Thompson himself, with amazing moral obtuseness, wrote of his mission on the 3d of December, 1864.<sup>3</sup> He states that immediately on his arrival in Canada he put himself in communication with the leading spirits of the Sons of Liberty. He was received among them with cordiality, and the greatest confidence was extended to him. They became convinced, during the summer of 1864, that their efforts to defeat the election of Mr. Lincoln were hopeless. "Lincoln had the power," he said, "and would certainly reëlect himself," and there was no hope but in force. The belief was entertained and freely expressed that by a bold, vigorous, and concerted movement the three great North-western States of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio could be seized and held. This would naturally involve the accession of Missouri and Kentucky to the Confederacy, and this, in sixty days, would end the war. It was resolved to hold a series of peace meetings in Illinois for the purpose of preparing the public mind for such a revolt. The first of these meetings was to be held at Peoria, and "to make it a success," says Thompson, "I agreed that so much money as was necessary would be furnished by me." It was held, and was decidedly successful. But he pretends that the Niagara Falls conference and Lincoln's letter, "To whom it may concern," shook the country to such an extent that the leading politicians conceived the idea that Lincoln might be beaten at the ballot box on such an issue. "The nerves of the leaders," he says, "thereupon began to relax." The seizure of arms at Indianapolis, the arrests of leading supporters at Louisville, the unsympathetic attitude of Mr. McDonald, the Democratic candidate for governor of Indiana, all tended to discourage the ringleaders; and the day fixed for the revolt, which was to have been the 16th of August, passed by with no demonstration. "The necessity of pandering to the military feeling which resulted in the nomination of McClellan totally demoralized," says Thompson, "the Sons of Liberty."

Convinced that there was nothing to be expected from the coöperation of Northern Democrats, Thompson fell back once more upon his gang of escaped prisoners and other loose fish in Canada. The next scheme adopted by him was ingenious and audacious and not without possibilities of success. He determined to cap-

<sup>1</sup> Holcombe to Benjamin, April 1, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant," I., p. 462.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson to Benjamin, Dec. 3, 1864. MS. Confederate Archives.

ture the war steamer *Michigan*, plying on Lake Erie, and with her to liberate the rebel prisoners on Johnson's Island; the prisoners were then to march upon Cleveland, attacking that town by land and by water, and thence march through Ohio to gain Virginia. A man named Cole, formerly one of Forrest's troopers, was sent round the lakes as a deck passenger to inform himself thoroughly of the approaches to the harbors, the depositories of coal, the stations and habits of the *Michigan*. He performed his duty with energy and efficiency and with great satisfaction and amusement to himself. He invented an oil corporation of which he was president and board of directors, opened an office in Buffalo, and used a good deal of Thompson's money in making the acquaintance of the officers of the *Michigan*. The 19th of September was the day fixed for the attempt upon the *Michigan*, Cole having contrived to have himself invited to dine with the officers of the vessel on that day. A Virginian named John Yates Beall was assigned the more difficult and dangerous part of the enterprise. He, with twenty-five Confederates, took passage from Sandwich, in Canada, on board the *Philo Parsons*, an unarmed merchant vessel plying between Detroit and Sandusky; they were all armed with revolvers, and had no trouble in taking possession of the steamer and robbing the clerk of what money he had. They soon afterwards fell in with another unarmed steamer, the *Island Queen*, scuttled her, and then steered for Sandusky Bay to join Cole and the boats he had prepared in an attack upon the *Michigan*. But the plan miscarried. The military, aware of Cole's intentions, had captured him; and Beall, missing the signals which had been agreed upon, did not dare to proceed in the enterprise alone. He therefore returned to Sandwich, and his crew scattered through Canada. Beall was not content with the failure of this enterprise, and later in the season, in the middle of December, he was caught in the State of New York near the Suspension Bridge in an attempt to throw a passenger train from the West off the railroad track for the purpose of robbing the express company.<sup>1</sup> This was the third attempt which he had made to accomplish this purpose. He was in citizen's dress, engaged in an act of simple murder and robbery, yet he imagined that the fact that he had a Confederate commission in his pocket would secure him against punishment in case of capture. He was tried by court martial and sentenced to death. Mr. Jefferson Davis took the same view of the talismanic character of the Confederate commission upon which Beall had relied, and issued a manifesto assuming

the responsibility of the act and declaring that it was done by his authority. There was great clamor in regard to the case, and many people of all parties pleaded with Mr. Lincoln to commute the sentence of Beall. A petition in this cause was signed by most of the Democratic members of the House of Representatives and by many Republicans. But the Judge-Advocate General reported that "Beall, convicted upon indubitable proof as a spy, guerrillero, outlaw, and would-be murderer of hundreds of innocent persons traveling in supposed security upon one of our great thoroughfares, fully deserved to die a felon's death, and the summary enforcement of that penalty was a duty which government owed to society."

Loath as Mr. Lincoln was at all times to approve a capital sentence, he felt that in this case he could not permit himself to yield to the promptings of his kindly heart. He sent a private message to General Dix, saying he would be glad if he would allow Beall a respite of a few days to prepare himself for death, but positively declined to interfere with the sentence, and Beall was hung in the latter part of February. The Virginia Senate made his case their own, and recommended, by resolutions of the 3d of March, the adoption of such steps as might be necessary in retaliation for the offense committed by the authorities of the United States.

Under Thompson's orders the large prison camps in the North had been thoroughly examined with a view of effecting the release of the Confederate prisoners confined in them. But the attempts at different places were given up for one reason or another, and it was resolved to concentrate all the efforts of the conspirators upon Camp Douglas at Chicago. A large number of rebels and their sympathizers were gathered together in that city, and the plan for taking the prison camp with its ten thousand Confederate prisoners was matured, and was to have been put into execution on the night of election day, taking advantage of the excitement and the crowds of people in the streets to surprise the camp, release and arm the prisoners of war, cut the telegraph wires, burn the railway stations, and seize the banks and stores containing arms and ammunition. It was hoped that this would excite a simultaneous rising of the Sons of Liberty throughout the State, and result in the release of the Confederate prisoners in other camps. But the plot, as usual, was betrayed by repentant rebels who were in the most secret councils of the conspirators. Shortly after midnight on the 7th of November, Colonel Sweet, commanding Camp Douglas, trapped in their various hiding-places and took prisoners all the leaders of the contemplated attack, among them Morgan's ad-

<sup>1</sup> General Orders No. 17, Feb. 21, 1865. Case of J. Y. Beall.



jutant-general, St. Leger Grenfell, Colonel Marmaduke, a brother of the rebel general, the commanding officer of the Sons of Liberty in the State, and several other officers of the rebel army who were escaped prisoners. In one house they found two cartloads of revolvers loaded and capped, two hundred stands of muskets loaded, and a large amount of ammunition.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Thompson hesitated at nothing which he thought might injure the people of the United States. Any villain who approached him with a project of murder and arson was sure of a kindly reception. "Soon after I reached Canada," he says, "a Mr. Minor Major visited me and represented himself as an accredited agent from the Confederate States to destroy steamboats on the Mississippi River, and that his operations were suspended for want of means. I advanced to him \$2000 in Federal currency, and soon afterwards several boats were burned at St. Louis, involving an immense loss of property to the enemy. . . . Money has been advanced to a Mr. Churchill of Cincinnati to organize a corps for the purpose of incendiarism in that city. I consider him a true man; and although as yet he has effected but little, I am in constant expectation of hearing of effective work in that quarter." Another miscreant of the same type, named Colonel Martin, who brought an unsigned letter from Jefferson Davis to Thompson, expressed a wish to organize a corps to burn New York City. "He was allowed to do so," says Mr. Thompson, "and a most daring attempt has been made to fire that city, but their reliance on the Greek fire has proved a misfortune. It cannot be depended on as an agent in such work. I have no faith whatever in it, and no attempt shall hereafter be made under my general directions with any such material." A party of eight persons, mostly escaped prisoners, were sent to New York to destroy that city by fire. One of them named Kennedy was captured, tried, and hung. Before his execution he confessed that he had set fire to four places: Barnum's Museum, Lovejoy's Hotel, Tammany Hotel, and the New England House; "the others," he said, with a certain sense of wrong, "only started fires where each was lodging, and then ran off. Had they all done as I did, we would have had thirty-two fires and played a huge joke on the fire department." This stupid tool of baser men escaped to Canada; but relying, as Beall did, on his commission as a captain in the Confederate army, he started once more for the Confederacy by way of Detroit, and was arrested by detectives in the railway station. He had taken on a new name and a new

character; and in his trial, among the evidence he brought forward which he thought would insure his immunity, was a pledge given to the transportation agent in Canada to return with all due diligence to the Confederacy. Even after his sentence he had no realization of the crime he had committed. He wrote to the President arguing, as a matter of law, that death was too severe a penalty for arson, and suggesting that there was no need of punishing him as an example, since the execution of Beall had already served that purpose.

If Mr. Thompson is to be believed it would appear that his adherents in Canada were not altogether under discipline, and that they sometimes took the opportunity to indulge in occasional burglaries and murders on their own account. He said in his official report that he knew nothing of the St. Albans affair until after it was over. This was a crime of unusual atrocity, and bade fair, for the moment, to involve the most serious consequences. A party of Confederate thieves, some twenty or thirty strong, came over the border from Canada on the 19th of October, and entering the village of St. Albans in Vermont, they robbed the banks of some fifty thousand dollars, accompanying this crime with entirely uncalled for cruelty, firing upon the unarmed citizens, killing one man and wounding three; they also burned one of the hotels in the place. The *razzia* was over in less than an hour, and the band, who had stolen horses enough in the vicinity to mount them all, immediately returned to Canada. It seemed at first as if the Canadian authorities intended to arrest the criminals and hold them for punishment, and Mr. Seward, two days afterwards, expressed his gratification to the British legation at Washington for this prompt and apparently satisfactory proceeding. As it turned out, however, he spoke too quickly, for Judge Coursol discharged the criminals from custody and restored to them the money they had stolen. As soon as this intelligence reached New York, General Dix, outraged beyond endurance by the iniquity of the act, without consultation with the Government issued an order directing all military commanders on the frontier in case of further acts of depredation and murder to shoot down the murderers, or the persons acting under commissions from the rebel authorities at Richmond; and further instructing them that if it should be necessary, with a view to their capture, to cross the border between the United States and Canada, to pursue them wherever they might take refuge, and on no account to surrender them to the local authorities, but to send them to the headquarters of the Department of the East for trial and punishment by martial law. The

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Sweet's report to General Cook, Nov. 7, 1864.

President, who felt no less keenly than General Dix the wrong and outrage committed by these rebel murderers and the Canadian authorities who seemed to be protecting them, nevertheless declined to allow any subordinate to embroil the country with a foreign nation in this way;<sup>1</sup> and in spite of General Dix's vehement defense of what he called "the right of hot pursuit," the President required him to revoke the instructions quoted. The British Government directed Lord Monck, the Governor-General of Canada, to be guided by the decision of the proper legal authorities in the provinces whether persons in custody ought or ought not to be delivered up under the treaty of extradition, saying that in case the decision should have been that they ought to be delivered, the Government would approve Lord Monck's acting on this decision; and in case of the contrary decision, the Government suggested that they should be put upon trial on the charge of misprision and violation of the royal prerogative by levying war from her Majesty's dominions against a friendly power. The criminals whom Judge Coursol had released were again captured; the Canadian Parliament reproved the action of Coursol and suspended him from office. The prisoners having been again arrested, the matter was heard before Mr. Justice Smith of Montreal, who again discharged them, on the ground that Young, the ringleader of the party, bore a commission in the Confederate army;<sup>2</sup> that Mr. Clement C. Clay, an associate of Thompson's as Confederate commissioner, was aware of Young's purpose and gave him a check for four hundred dollars for his expenses. "The attack on St. Albans," he said, "must therefore be regarded as a hostile expedition, undertaken and carried out under the authority of the so-called Confederate States by one of the officers of their army." The prisoners, he held, had not acquired any domicile in Canada nor lost their national character by their residence there. The Government of Canada was not satisfied with this pettifogging plea and again arrested the prisoners; but the war having now come to an end, the case was languidly prosecuted and the criminals received no punishment. The Canadian authorities, however, desiring to maintain amicable relations with the United States and to do substantial justice in the case in spite of the courts, refunded the fifty thousand dollars stolen by the raiders, and an attempt

was made in the provincial legislature to pass a law which should prevent the setting on foot of such unlawful expeditions from Canadian soil in the future.

#### LINCOLN AND THE CHURCHES.

In a conflict which was founded upon the quickened moral sense of the people it was not strange that the Government received the most earnest support from the churches. From one end of the loyal States to the other all the religious organizations, with few exceptions, moved by the double forces of patriotism and religion, ranged themselves upon the side of the Government against the rebellion. A large number of pulpits in the North had already taken their places as tribunes for the defense of popular freedom, and it was from them that, at the menace of war, the first cry of danger and of defiance rang out. Those ministers who had for years been denouncing the encroachments of slavery did not wait for any organized action on the part of their colleagues, but proclaimed at once in a thousand varying tones that peace was "a blessing worth fighting for." The more conservative churches were but little in the rear of the more advanced. Those who had counseled moderation and patience with the South on account of the divided responsibility for slavery which rested on both halves of the nation speedily felt the sense of release from the obligations of brotherhood when the South had repudiated and renounced them, and rallied to the support of the insulted flag with an earnestness not less ardent, and more steadily trustworthy, than that of the original antislavery clergy. As the war went on, and as every stage of it gave a clearer presage of the coming destruction of slavery, the deliverances of the churches became every day more and more decided in favor of the national cause and the downfall of human bondage. To detail the thousand ways in which the churches testified their support of the national cause, to give even an abstract of the countless expressions of loyalty which came from the different religious bodies of the country, would occupy many volumes; we can only refer briefly to a few of the more important utterances of some of the great religious societies.

In all the church conventions which met after the President's preliminary proclamation of the 22d of September, 1862, that act of liber-

1 This order of General Dix gave great satisfaction at Richmond. An official of the Confederate War Department entered in his diary December 19: "General Dix orders his military subordinates to pursue any rebel raiders even into Canada and bring them over. So light may come from that quarter. A war with England would be our peace."

<sup>2</sup> There is an entry in "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary,"

December 15, which would indicate that Young's commission was spurious or prepared after the fact: "A letter from G. N. Sanders . . . asks copies of orders, to be certified by Secretary of War, commanding the raid into Vermont, the burning, pillaging, etc., to save Lieutenant Young's life. I doubt if such written orders are in existence—but no matter."

ation was greeted with the heartiest expressions of approval and support. The Baptist Convention of New York declared that "While we see with the profoundest sorrow thousands of husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons falling on the battlefield, considering the interests to be preserved and transmitted to future generations we cannot regard the sacrifice of treasure and of life too much for the object to be secured." They denounced "human slavery as the procuring cause of the rebellion now raging among us"; they declared that "the spirit of the age, the safety of the country, and the laws of God require its entire removal." The American Baptist Missionary Union had, in the spring of 1862, adopted with unanimity resolutions characterizing "the war now waged by the National Government to put down the unprovoked and wicked rebellion that has risen against us, and to establish anew the reign of order and of law, as a most righteous and holy one, sanctioned alike by God and all right-thinking men"; expressing their opinion that "the principal cause and origin of this attempt to destroy the Government has been the institution of slavery," and that a safe, solid, and lasting peace could not be expected short of its complete overthrow. The next year they declared that the developments of the past year had only tended to deepen their conviction of these truths, which they solemnly reiterated and affirmed. They referred to the "fatal and suicidal blows" inflicted upon slavery by the slaveholders' rebellion, and said that "for thus overruling what appeared at first to be a terrible national calamity, to the production of results so unexpected and glorious, their gratitude and adoration are due to that wonderful God who still maketh the wrath of men to praise him, while the remainder of wrath he restrains." They approved the President's proclamation and the acts of Congress abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territories, and hailed the dawn of that glorious day when "liberty shall be proclaimed throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." In severe and dignified language they expressed their gratitude for whatever measure of sympathy they had received from abroad, but at the same time declared that the United States asked no assistance from other nations, and would brook no intervention or interference. In October, 1864, at a meeting of the American Board of Foreign Missions, in Worcester, Massachusetts, the venerable Albert Barnes was granted leave to introduce, without reference to a committee, a series of resolutions expressing the hearty sympathy of the Board in the efforts to suppress the rebellion; hoping for the deliverance of the world from the oppression of slavery; and

gratefully acknowledging "the divine interposition in the success which has attended the arms of the nation as an indication that we shall again be one people, united under one glorious Constitution, united in our efforts to spread the Gospel around the world." These resolutions were adopted unanimously with great enthusiasm, the audience rising to their feet and singing the national anthem.

The State conferences of the Congregational churches passed similar resolutions from time to time. As a specimen of all we give an abstract of the resolutions of the Conference of Massachusetts in 1864. "The chief hope of rebellion is in the sympathy and distraction of a divided North, and the surest and shortest way to peace is not to recall our armies and to relax our grasp upon the enemy, but to present a united and loyal front and an unconquerable determination to prosecute the war till the power of the Government meets no longer armed resistance." They disclaim any feeling of despondency or of impatience, "believing that God is on our side," and interpret hopefully the divine delays which have "led to more and more radical and precious resolutions and deliverances," and assert roundly and with undaunted courage that "there can be no effectual reëstablishment of the national authority by any negotiation which confesses the inability of the Government to subdue rebellion by force of arms and proposes terms of peace to rebels still flying the flag of defiance."

It was not only in New England that the Congregational churches maintained this stern and patriotic attitude. The General Association of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania came boldly forward in the autumn of 1864, and, discarding all pretenses of non-partisanship or neutrality, declared for the reëlection of Mr. Lincoln in these unqualified words:

As the momentous issues of this long and deadly contest are approaching their solution in a combined struggle in the field and at the polls, we will sustain with our votes the brave and noble men who are defending our liberties with their lives, and will animate our fellow-citizens by every consideration of religious hope and duty, of devotion to country and to liberty, to make the decision of the people on the 8th of November final and fatal to the hopes of traitors in arms and conspirators in political councils. Our hopes for the preservation of our liberties as a nation, and for the complete emancipation of the African race in the South, depend, under God, upon sustaining the Government in upholding the integrity of the Union throughout all the trials and doubts of the war, and in that policy which looks to the abandonment of slavery as the condition of permanent union and peace.

The German Reformed Synod passed ear-

nest resolutions urging upon their clergy and laity to continue to labor and pray for the success of the Government in its efforts to suppress the rebellion, and to restore peace and union. These resolutions were reiterated from year to year in every State where this church had an organization in existence. The Lutheran General Synod which met at York in 1864 passed resolutions denouncing slavery, setting forth "the necessity of its forcible suppression, the righteousness of the war which is waged by the Government of the United States for the maintenance of the national life, and the duty of every Christian to support it by the whole weight of his influence, his prayers, and his efforts." The Moravian Synod also denounced slavery and considered an earnest support of the Constitution and the laws a religious duty, and expressed its willingness "to render all the aid in its power to subdue unrighteous rebellion, and extend the rightful authority of the Government over every portion of our country."

One of the most weighty utterances of any religious organization during the war was that of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, which met at Columbus, Ohio, in the spring of 1862. Important as was this deliverance from the sanction which it carried, as the utterance of one of the most considerable religious organizations in the country, it was no less significant as the work of the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge of Kentucky, who held a position second to none in the border States in character, in political influence, and in social connections. This remarkable paper began with the praise of peace, but, in striking contrast to the many craven pleas based upon this theme during the war, it threw the blame of the violation of peace upon the disloyal and traitorous attempt to overthrow the National Government by military force.

This whole treason [the report continues], rebellion, anarchy, fraud, and violence, is utterly contrary to the dictates of natural religion and morality, and is plainly condemned by the revealed will of God. It is the clear and solemn duty of the National Government to preserve, at whatever cost, the National Union and Constitution, to maintain the laws in their supremacy, to crush force by force, and to restore the reign of public order and peace to the entire nation by whatever lawful means are necessary thereunto. And it is the bounden duty of the people who compose this great nation, each one in his several place and degree, to uphold the Federal Government and every State Government and all persons in authority, whether civil or military, in all their lawful and proper acts, unto the end hereinbefore set forth.

The report denounces treason, rebellion, and anarchy as sinful, and gravely deprecates the

conduct of the Southern synods in encouraging them. The concluding section says:

We record our gratitude to God for the prevailing unity of sentiment and general internal peace which have characterized the Church in the States that have not revolted, embracing a great majority of ministers, congregations, and people under our care. It may still be called with emphasis a loyal, orthodox, and pious church, and all its acts and works indicate its right to a title so noble. Let a spirit of quietness, of mutual forbearance, and of ready obedience to authority, both civil and ecclesiastical, illustrate the loyalty, the orthodoxy, and the piety of the Church. . . . In the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus we earnestly exhort all who love God or fear his wrath to turn a deaf ear to all counsels and suggestions that lead toward a reaction favorable to disloyalty, schism, or disturbance, either in the Church or in the country. In all these respects we must give account to God in that great day, and it is in view of our own dread responsibility to the Judge of quick and dead that we now make this deliverance.

This austere and unqualified declaration of loyalty, this denunciation of a treason which was at that hour lifting a defiant and almost triumphant head through a great part of the Union, was adopted by a majority which, under the circumstances, is surprising. Two hundred and six ministers and ruling elders voted for it; only twenty voted against it; less than one in ten failed to rise to that height of moral and political duty. The keynote thus early set governed this powerful Church throughout the war. Its General Assembly, meeting at Newark, New Jersey, in 1864, adopted a long and most energetic report, declaring that

the time has at length come, in the providence of God, when it is his will that every vestige of human slavery among us should be effaced, and that every Christian man should address himself with industry and earnestness to his appropriate part in the performance of this great duty. . . . Under the influence of the most incomprehensible infatuation of wickedness, those who are most deeply interested in the perpetuation of slavery have taken away every motive for its further toleration.

An attempt was made at the meeting of the Synod of New York to censure this action of the General Assembly of the Church, but it was voted down by a majority of six to one. The General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church passed equally strong and uncompromising resolutions:

Believing it to be a duty especially incumbent on the Church to let her light shine, we trust that all the preachers of the Gospel, of every denomination, will hear and obey God's voice, now calling upon them louder than ever before to open their mouth in behalf of the dumb.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church, commonly called the "Scotch Covenanters," ad-

dressed the President by committee in 1862, beginning with the proud boast that "this Church, true to its high lineage and ancient spirit, does not hold within its pale a single secessionist or sympathizer with rebellion in these United States." They congratulated him upon the antislavery measures of the Government and urged him,

by every consideration drawn from the Word of God and the present condition of our bleeding country, not to be moved from the path of duty on which he has so auspiciously entered, either by the threats or blandishments of the enemies of human progress, nor the fears of timid friends.

Two years later they met and declared that—

It is the duty of the Church of Christ to encourage and sustain the Government of the country in all that they do for the honor of God, the freedom of the enslaved, the mitigation of the inevitable evils of war, and the preservation, at all hazards, of the national life, integrity, and power.

The New School Presbyterians also lifted their voice with equal energy and clearness against the rebellion and in favor of the Government. At their General Assembly each year during the war they adopted resolutions of the most uncompromising loyalty, and on several occasions addressed the President personally with messages full of ardent devotion and high encouragement. They said:

Since the day of your inauguration, the thousands of our membership have followed you with unceasing prayer, besieging the throne of grace in your behalf. . . . When we look at the history of your administration hitherto, and at the wonderful way in which the people have been led under your guidance, we glorify God in you.<sup>1</sup>

A year later<sup>2</sup> they embodied their sentiments of loyalty to the Union and opposition to slavery in a forcible series of resolutions, which were brought to Washington and presented to the President by a committee of which Mr. John A. Foote, a brother of the admiral, was chairman. The President replied:

It has been my happiness to receive testimonies of a similar nature from, I believe, all denominations of Christians. . . . This to me is most gratifying, because from the beginning I saw that the issues of our great struggle depended on the divine interposition and favor. . . . As a pilot, I have used my best exertions to keep afloat our Ship of

State, and shall be glad to resign my trust at the appointed time to another pilot more skillful and successful than I may prove. In every case and at all hazards, the Government must be perpetuated. Relying as I do upon the Almighty Power, and encouraged as I am by these resolutions which you have just read, with the support which I receive from Christian men, I shall not hesitate to use all the means at my control to secure the termination of this rebellion, and will hope for success.

Of the firm and loyal attitude of the Protestant Episcopal Church this resolution of the Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania may serve as an example:

We hereby declare our unfaltering allegiance to the Government of the United States, and we pledge it our willing devotion and service; and as a body of Christians we will pray that, in God's own time and way, this rebellion may be put down; that oppression and slavery in all its forms may be done away; that freedom of body and mind, political and religious, may everywhere prevail; that the emancipated negroes, whom God in his providence is committing to our care, may be the objects of our liberal and Christian regard and instruction; that war may soon cease throughout all our borders, and that our now lacerated country may again be so united that from the lakes on the North to the gulf on the South, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, there shall be one Union, one Government, one flag, one Constitution, the whole culminating in that higher glory which shall make this nation Emmanuel's land—a mountain of holiness and a dwelling-place of righteousness.

No church was more ready or powerful in its support of the Government than the widespread Methodist Episcopal Church. From the beginning it took ground firmly and unanimously for the national cause; the Western armies especially were filled with the young and vigorous fighting men of that connection. To a committee of the General Conference of 1864, the President said:

Nobly sustained as the Government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet, without this, it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than the best, is, by its greatest numbers, the most important of all. It is no fault in others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any other. God bless the Methodist Church. Bless all the churches, and blessed be God, who in this our great trial giveth us the churches.<sup>3</sup>

eloquently for the union of the country. Ames, as patriotic as wise, has not hesitated to lend his aid to our unfortunate prisoners in Richmond and to give his sons to the army. Janes has found no narrow field for his philanthropic heart in the labors of the Christian Commission. All our church papers and periodicals have given an uncompromising, zealous, persistent support to the Government, and have thrown the whole weight of their influence, intelligent as it was potent, on the side of the Union.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cincinnati, May 22, 1862. McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 469.

<sup>2</sup> Philadelphia, May 27, 1863.

<sup>3</sup> In an address delivered by Dr. J. P. Newman in New Orleans, March 23, 1864, he makes this well-founded claim: "The Methodist Church has been unanimous and zealous in the defense of the Union. Her bishops, her ministers, and her laity have nobly responded to the call of their country in this hour of her peril. The voice of Simpson has been heard pleading

These energetic expressions of loyalty were not confined to the Protestant churches alone. Archbishop Hughes in New York gave his great personal and ecclesiastical influence to the support of the Government, and Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati took occasion, in recommending the observance of Thanksgiving Day, 1864, to his people, to urge upon them the cause of the country.

We confess [he says] that it has greatly pained us to hear that certain rash, irreverent, and thoughtless men of our communion have denounced and abused the Government, the Administration, and their abettors. Now God commands us to bless, and curse not. And when bad men cursed the supporters of the Government, did they not reflect that they cursed the more than hundreds of thousands of Catholic voters and Catholic soldiers of our army who defend that Government in the field? Did they not reflect that its downfall would be hailed with acclamation by our own hereditary oppressors across the ocean? Did they reflect that if political salvation is ever to reach a far-distant and beloved island, it must come to it from these United States which they would sever?

"The Administration did not commence this war," the archbishop said, and went on in his address to contrast the conduct of the National Government with that of the rebellion.

It is time [he said, in conclusion] that all should rally around the powers which the Apostle commanded us to obey, and thus, presenting an undivided front to the enemy, reestablish the Union, without which there can be no panacea, present or prospective, for the ills we suffer.

The Society of Friends occupied a peculiar relation to the war. By the two leading tenets of their religion they were drawn in different ways; they were intensely opposed both to slavery and to war. While, therefore, they were ready to favor every act of Mr. Lincoln's administration which promised to abridge the power and shorten the duration of slavery, they were placed in a cruel dilemma when called upon to take part in the only measures by which the country could be preserved, and the predominance of a government based upon slavery prevented. The result was as might readily be imagined. Human nature asserted itself in the midst of that serious and tranquil communion as everywhere else, and the Friends acted each according to his individual bent. In the words of the address of the Yearly Meeting of 1864:

Many of our young men, overcome by the spirit of war, rushed into the conflict where some of them found an early death, some purchased their release from the draft by the payment of money; others remained steadfast to their faith in the hour of trial, thereby subjecting themselves to the penalty for desertion.

Those who entered the army illustrated in their plain speech and quiet courage the virtues of their lineage no less than those who, refusing to bear arms, bore uncomplainingly all that the law could inflict upon them by way of punishment for their contumacy. But the Society, as a body, remained outwardly true to both articles of its creed and protested constantly against both slavery and the war which it caused. The Yearly Meeting of 1862 greeted with hearty approval the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, while praying that the effusion of blood might be stayed; and that of 1864, while "appreciating the difficulties that surround those upon whom rests the responsibility of guiding the nation through the awful perils of civil war," and declining to "enter into judgment with those who differed" from them, still persisted in their dignified petition to the President and to Congress that they might not be compelled to offend their own consciences by complying with the law requiring military service.

Mr. Lincoln's attitude in relation to this question was especially delicate. Himself of Quaker ancestry, he felt a peculiar sympathy with their scruples, and yet he could not legally relieve them from their liabilities, and he clearly perceived the impolicy of recommending to Congress any specific measure of relief. He heard and answered their addresses with the greatest patience and respect, and intervened with his prerogative on occasions of peculiar hardship. We owe to these complications two or three letters, which strikingly exhibit his quick sympathies, his keen sense of justice, and his profound religious feeling. To the Quakers of Iowa, who had sent him an address through Senator Harlan, he wrote:

It is most cheering and encouraging for me to know that in the efforts which I have made, and am making, for the restoration of a righteous peace to our country, I am upheld and sustained by the good wishes and prayers of God's people. No one is more deeply than myself aware that without his favor our highest wisdom is but as foolishness, and that our most strenuous efforts would avail nothing in the shadow of his displeasure. It seems to me that if there be one subject upon which all good men may entirely agree, it is in imploring the gracious favor of the God of nations upon the struggle our people are making for the preservation of their precious birthright of civil and religious liberty.<sup>1</sup>

To the Quakers of Rhode Island, in answer to a letter, he said:

Engaged as I am, in a great war, I fear it will be difficult for the world to understand how fully I appreciate the principles of peace inculcated in this letter and everywhere by the Society of Friends.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Iowa Quakers, Jan. 5, 1862. Unpub. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. S. B. Toby, March 19, 1862. Lincoln, Unpublished MS.

But one of the most significant of the President's letters, in which he expresses with less than his usual reserve his idea of the moral and religious bearings of the great conflict, was written to Mrs. Gurney, the wife of the eminent English preacher of the Society of Friends, in the autumn of 1864. It shows in a singularly touching and instructive way how the ancestral faith of the Quaker survived in this son of a pioneer, commander-in-chief of a million of men engaged in one of the most destructive wars of modern times :

MY ESTEEMED FRIEND: I have not forgotten—probably never shall forget—the very impressive occasion when yourself and friends visited me on a Sabbath forenoon, two years ago; nor has your kind letter, written nearly a year later, ever been forgotten. In all, it has been your purpose to strengthen my reliance on God. I am much indebted to the good Christian people of this country for their constant prayers and consolations, and to no one of them more than to yourself. The purposes of the Almighty are perfect, and must prevail, though we erring mortals may fail to accurately perceive them in advance. We hoped for a happy termination of this terrible war long before this; but God knows best, and has ruled otherwise. We shall yet acknowledge his wisdom, and our own error therein. Meanwhile we must work earnestly in the best lights he gives us, trusting that so working still conduces to the great ends he ordains. Surely he intends some great good to follow this mighty convulsion, which no mortal could make, and no mortal could stay. Your people, the Friends, have had, and are having, a very great trial. On principle and faith, opposed to both war and oppression, they can only practically oppose oppression by war. In this hard dilemma, some have chosen one horn, and some the other. For those appealing to me on conscientious grounds, I have done, and shall do, the best I could and can, in my own conscience, under my oath to the law. That you believe this I doubt not, and believing it I shall still receive for our country and myself your earnest prayers to our Father in heaven. Your sincere friend,

A. LINCOLN.

The most important agencies through which the mingled patriotism and religion of the country lent their assistance to the armies of the Union were the Sanitary Commissions and the Christian Commission. The former collected and disbursed not less than \$5,000,000 in cash and \$9,000,000 in supplies for the benefit of the armies in the field and the sick and wounded in the hospitals, while the Christian Commission raised some \$4,500,000, not only for this purpose, but also to extend to the soldiers the benefits and consolations of religion in cases where the overworked army chaplains found the complete fulfillment of these offices beyond their powers. The Sanitary Fairs throughout the country were remarkable exhibitions of the patriotism and philanthropy of the people. They were carried on to a great

extent by the women of the country, and the quickening of the national spirit by these concerted efforts was of more importance to the Union cause than even the vast sums of money which were produced; though these were unprecedented in the annals of charity. The fair at New York realized \$1,300,000, nearly all of which was clear profit. On every great battlefield of the war, even before the thunder of the artillery was silenced, the trains of these great organizations were upon the field and their members were engaged caring for the wounded, bearing away the sick, praying with the dying, and receiving their last messages; while in every village of the North gentle and patriotic women were constantly employed making ready the stores of luxuries and delicacies dispensed by charitable agents at the front.

In the work of these beneficent agencies the President took a profound interest. He frequently consulted with Dr. Bellows and Mr. Stuart as to the best means of carrying on their work. Being requested to preside at a meeting of the Christian Commission held in Washington on the 22d of February, 1863, he wrote:

While for reasons that I deem sufficient I must decline to preside, I cannot withhold my approval of the meeting and its worthy objects. Whatever shall be, sincerely and in God's name, devised for the good of the soldiers and seamen in their hard spheres of duty can hardly fail to be blessed. And whatever shall tend to turn our thoughts from the unreasoning and uncharitable passions, prejudices, and jealousies incident to a great national trouble such as ours, and to fix them on the vast and long-enduring consequences, for weal or for woe, which are to result from the struggle, and especially to strengthen our reliance on the Supreme Being for the final triumph of the right, cannot but be well for us all. The birthday of Washington and the Christian Sabbath coinciding this year, and suggesting together the highest interests of this life and of that to come, is most propitious for the meeting proposed.

The cause of the rebellion was adopted and carried on by the churches in the South, if not with more zeal and determination, at least with greater vehemence at the beginning than was shown by the religious organizations of the North. Even before the war began the State Convention of Baptists in Alabama<sup>1</sup> made haste to rush into secession, saying that "the Union had failed in important particulars to answer the purpose for which it was created," and that they held themselves "subject to the call of proper authority in defense of the sovereignty of Alabama, and of her right as a sovereignty to withdraw from the Union." Several of the Presbyterian Synods of the South went headlong into the rebellion before the close of the

<sup>1</sup> November, 1860.

year 1860, and others followed their example in the autumn meeting of 1861. They formed their General Assembly of the Southern Confederacy on the 4th of December of that year. Even before the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln the Protestant Episcopal Convention of several States formally withdrew from the Union, and that fiery soldier-priest Leonidas Polk, Bishop of Louisiana, commanded the clergy to shift their public prayers from the President of the United States to that of the Confederate States, and announced in a pastoral letter that "Our separation from our brethren of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States has been effected because we must follow our nationality. . . . Our relations to each other hereafter will be the relations we now both hold to the men of our mother church in England." Unable to restrain his ardor within the limits of the church militant, he exchanged his crozier for a sword and died by a cannon shot on the Georgia hills.

At the session of the first General Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Augusta an address was adopted congratulating the Church in the Confederate States upon the unity which existed in its councils, upon its promise of growth and expansion, and upon the fact that the leading minds of the new republic were of their own communion; they called upon the Church to make strenuous efforts in behalf of the slaves of the South, and gently advocated such an arrangement of their peculiar institution as not to violate the right of marriage among the blacks. "Hitherto," they say, "we have been hindered by the pressure of Abolitionists; now that we have thrown off from us that hateful and infidel pestilence, we should prove to the world that we are faithful to our trust, and the Church should lead the hosts of the Lord in this work of justice and mercy." Feeble efforts in this direction were made by churches in other communions in the South, but strong opposition was at once developed. In the Transylvania Presbytery it was argued that "Though the matter presented was one of undoubted grievance, involving a sin which ought to be purged away, yet, to prevent agitation in the Church at such a time of intense political strife, there must be no intermeddling," and a resolution in favor of the solemnization of matrimony among slaves was

laid upon the table, nearly every member of the Presbytery voting against it.<sup>1</sup>

The Methodist Church in the South had separated from their brethren in the North fifteen years before the war on the question of slavery, and a portion of their clergy and laity when the war broke out naturally engaged in it with their accustomed zeal; but they were by no means unanimous, even within the seceding States, and the organization was virtually wrecked by the war.<sup>2</sup>

As the national authority began to be reëstablished throughout the States in rebellion, not the least embarrassing of the questions which generals in command were called upon to decide was that of the treatment of churches whose pastors were openly or covertly disloyal to the Union. There was no general plan adopted by the Government for such cases; in fact, it was impossible to formulate a policy which should meet so vast a variety of circumstances as presented themselves in the different regions of the South. The Board of Missions of the Methodist Church sent down some of their ablest ministers, with general authority to take charge of abandoned churches, and to establish in them their interrupted worship. The mission boards of other denominations took similar action, and the Secretary of War<sup>3</sup> gave general orders to the officers commanding the different departments to permit ministers of the gospel bearing the commission of these mission boards to exercise the functions of their office and to give them all the aid, countenance, and support which might be practicable. But before and after these orders there was much clashing between the military and the ecclesiastical authorities, which had its rise generally in the individual temperaments of the respective generals and priests. There was an instance in one place where a young officer rose in his pew and requested an Episcopal minister to read the prayer for the President of the United States, which he had omitted. Upon the minister's refusal the soldier advanced to the pulpit and led the preacher, loudly protesting, to the door, and then quietly returning to the altar himself read the prayer—not much, it is to be feared, to the edification of the congregation. General Butler arrested a clergyman in Norfolk, and placed him at hard labor on the public works for disloyalty

<sup>1</sup> McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 548.

<sup>2</sup> At a convention of loyal ministers and laymen of the Methodist Episcopal Church held at Knoxville, August, 1864, it was resolved that the loyal members of the conference have a just claim to all the church property; that they really constitute the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, within the bounds of the Holston Conference; that they propose, at the earliest day practicable, to transfer the same to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States; and

that the ministers be instructed to propose to their congregations to unite *en masse* with that church. Their report states "that there are in the bounds of the Holston Conference 120 preachers known to be loyal, and 40 others supposed to be true to the Union; and it is thought, therefore, that the work of reconstruction will be easily accomplished." [McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 546.]

<sup>3</sup> March 10, 1864. McPherson, "History of the Rebellion," p. 522.



in belief and action; but the President reversed this sentence and changed it to one of exclusion from the Union lines.<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Bishop of Natchez having refused to read the prescribed form of prayer for the President, and having protested in an able and temperate paper against the orders of the commanding general in this regard, the latter ordered him to be expelled from the Union lines, although the order was almost immediately rescinded. General Rosecrans issued an order<sup>2</sup> in Missouri requiring the members of religious convocations to give satisfactory evidence of their loyalty to the Government of the United States as a condition precedent to their assemblage and protection. In answer to the protestations which naturally resulted from this mandate he replied that it was given at the request of many loyal church members, both lay and clerical; that if he should permit all bodies claiming to be religious to meet without question, a convocation of Price's army, under the garb of religion, might assemble with impunity and plot treason. He claimed that there was no hardship in compelling the members of such assemblages to establish their loyalty by oath and certificate, and insisted that his order, while providing against public danger, really protected the purity and the freedom of religion.

In the course of these controversies between secessionist ministers and commanding generals an incident occurred which deserves a moment's notice, as it led to a clear and vigorous statement from Mr. Lincoln of his attitude in regard to these matters. During the year 1862 a somewhat bitter discussion arose between the Rev. Dr. McPheeters of the Vine Street Church in St. Louis and some of his congregation in regard to his supposed sympathies with the rebellion. Looking back upon the controversy from this distance of time it seems that rather hard measure was dealt to the parson; for although, from all the circumstances of the case, there appears little doubt that his feelings were strongly enlisted in the cause of the rebellion, he behaved with so much discretion that the principal offenses charged against him by his zealous parishioners were that he once baptized a small rebel by the name of Sterling Price, and that he would not declare himself in favor of the Union. The difference in his church grew continually more flagrant and was entertained by interminable letters and statements on both sides, until at last the provost-marshal intervened, ordering the arrest of Dr. McPheeters, excluding him from his pulpit, and taking the control of his church out of the hands of its trustees. This action gave rise to extended comment, not

only in Missouri, but throughout the Union. The President, being informed of it, wrote<sup>3</sup> to General Curtis disapproving the act of the provost-marshal, saying, in a terse and vigorous phrase, which immediately obtained wide currency, "The United States Government must not, as by this order, undertake to run the churches. When an individual in a church, or out of it, becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked; but let the churches, as such, take care of themselves." But even this peremptory and unmistakable command did not put an end to the discussion. Taking the hands of the government away from the preacher did not quench the dissensions in the church, nor restore the pastor to the position which he occupied before the war; and almost a year later some of the friends of Dr. McPheeters considered it necessary and proper to ask the intervention of the President to restore to him all his ecclesiastical privileges in addition to the civil rights which they admitted he already enjoyed. This the President, in a letter<sup>4</sup> of equal clearness and vigor, refused to do. "I have never interfered," he said, "nor thought of interfering, as to who shall, or shall not, preach in any church; nor have I knowingly or believingly tolerated any one else to so interfere by my authority"; but he continues, "If, after all, what is now sought is to have me put Dr. McPheeters back over the heads of a majority of his own congregation, that too will be declined. I will not have control of any church on any side." The case finally ended by the exclusion of Dr. McPheeters from his pulpit by the order of the presbytery having ecclesiastical authority in the case.

In this wise and salutary abstention from any interference with the churches, which was dictated by his own convictions as well as enjoined by the Constitution, the President did not always have the support of his subordinates. He had not only, as we have seen, to administer occasional rebukes to his over-zealous generals, but even in his own Cabinet he was sometimes compelled to overrule a disposition to abuse of authority in things spiritual. Several weeks after he had so clearly expressed himself in the McPheeters case, he found, to his amazement, that the Secretary of War had been giving orders virtually placing the army in certain places at the disposition of a Methodist bishop for the enforcement of his ecclesiastical decrees. He addressed to Mr. Stanton a note of measured censure,<sup>5</sup> which was followed by an order from the War Department explaining and modifying the more objectionable features of the

<sup>1</sup> Report of Judge-Advocate General, April 30, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> March 7, 1864. <sup>3</sup> Jan. 2, 1863. <sup>4</sup> Dec. 22, 1863.

<sup>5</sup> "After having made these declarations in good faith and in writing, you can conceive of my embar-

former document. The Secretary explained that his action had no other intention than to furnish "a means of rallying the Methodist people in favor of the Union, in localities where the rebellion had disorganized and scattered them."<sup>1</sup> This explanation was not entirely satisfactory to the President, but he thought best to make no further public reference to the matter. Scarcely was this affair disposed of when a complaint was received from Memphis of some interference by the military with a church edifice there. Mr. Lincoln made upon the paper this peremptory indorsement: "If the military have military need of the church building, let them keep it; otherwise, let them get out of it, and leave it and its owners alone, except for the causes that justify the arrest of any one."<sup>2</sup> Two months later the President, hearing of further complications in the case, made still another order, which even at the risk of wearying the reader we will give, from his own manuscript, as illustrating not only his conscientious desire that justice should be done, but also the exasperating obstacles he was continually compelled to surmount, in those troubled times, to accomplish, with all the vast powers at his disposition, this reasonable desire.

I am now told that the military were not in possession of the building; and yet that in pretended execution of the above they, the military, put one set of men out of and another set into the building. This, if true, is most extraordinary. I say again, if there be no military need for the building, leave it alone, neither putting any one in or out of it, except on finding some one preaching or practicing treason, in which case lay hands upon him, just as if he were doing the same thing in any other building, or in the streets or highways.<sup>3</sup>

He at last made himself understood and his orders respected; yet so widespread was the tendency of generals to meddle with matters beyond their jurisdiction, that it took three years of such vehement injunctions as these to teach them to keep their hands away from the clergy and the churches.

Lincoln had a profound respect for every form of sincere religious belief. He steadily refused to show favor to any particular denomination of Christians; and when General Grant issued an unjust and injurious order against the Jews, expelling them from his department, the President ordered it to be revoked the moment it was brought to his notice.<sup>4</sup>

He was a man of profound and intense religious feeling. We have no purpose of arraignment at now having brought to me what purported to be a formal order of the War Department, bearing date November 30, 1863, giving Bishop Ames control and possession of all the Methodist churches in certain Southern military departments whose pastors have not been appointed by a loyal bishop or bishops, and ordering the military to aid him against any resistance

tempting to formulate his creed; we question if he himself ever did so. There have been swift witnesses who, judging from expressions uttered in his callow youth, have called him an atheist, and others who, with the most laudable intentions, have remembered improbable conversations which they bring forward to prove at once his orthodoxy and their own intimacy with him. But leaving aside these apocryphal evidences, we have only to look at his authentic public and private utterances to see how deep and strong in all the latter part of his life was the current of his religious thought and emotion. He continually invited and appreciated, at their highest value, the prayers of good people. The pressure of the tremendous problems by which he was surrounded; the awful moral significance of the conflict in which he was the chief combatant; the overwhelming sense of personal responsibility, which never left him for an hour—all contributed to produce, in a temperament naturally serious and predisposed to a spiritual view of life and conduct, a sense of reverent acceptance of the guidance of a Superior Power. From that morning when, standing amid the falling snowflakes on the railway car at Springfield, he asked the prayers of his neighbors in those touching phrases whose echo rose that night in invocations from thousands of family altars, to that memorable hour when on the steps of the Capitol he humbled himself before his Creator in the sublime words of the second inaugural, there is not an expression known to have come from his lips or his pen but proves that he held himself answerable in every act of his career to a more august tribunal than any on earth. The fact that he was not a communicant of any church, and that he was singularly reserved in regard to his personal religious life, gives only the greater force to these striking proofs of his profound reverence and faith.

In final substantiation of this assertion, we subjoin two papers from the hand of the President, one official and the other private, which bear within themselves the imprint of a sincere devotion and a steadfast reliance upon the power and benignity of an overruling Providence. The first is an order which he issued on the 16th of November, 1864, on the observance of Sunday:

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, desires and enjoins the orderly observ-

which may be made to his taking such possession and control. What is to be done about it?" [Lincoln to Stanton, MS., Feb. 11, 1864.]

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Hogan, Feb. 13, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln MS., March 4, 1864.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln MS., May 13, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> War Records, Vol. XVII., pp. 424, 530.

ance of the Sabbath by the officers and men in the military and naval service. The importance for man and beast of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine will, demand that Sunday labor in the Army and Navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity. The discipline and character of the national forces should not suffer, nor the cause they defend be imperiled, by the profanation of the day or name of the Most High. "At this time of public distress [adopting the words of Washington in 1776] men may find enough to do in the service of their God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality." The first General Order issued by the Father of his Country after the Declaration of Independence indicated the spirit in which our institutions were founded and should ever be defended. "The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."<sup>1</sup>

The date of this remarkable order leaves no possibility for the insinuation that it sprung from any political purpose or intention. Mr. Lincoln had just been reelected by an overwhelming majority; his party was everywhere triumphant; his own personal popularity was unbounded; there was no temptation to hypocrisy or deceit. There is no explanation of the order except that it was the offspring of sincere conviction. But if it may be said that this was, after all, an exoteric utterance, spring-

<sup>1</sup> General McDowell used to tell a story which illustrates Mr. Lincoln's Sabbatarian feeling. The President had ordered a movement which required dispatch, and in his anxiety rode to McDowell's headquarters to inquire how soon he could start. "On Monday morning," said McDowell; "or, by pushing things, perhaps Sunday afternoon." Lincoln, after a moment's thought, said, "McDowell, get a good ready and start Monday." [Herman Haupt, MS. Memoirs.]

ing from those relations of religion and good government which the wisest rulers have always recognized in their intercourse with the people, we will give one other document, of which nothing of the sort can be said. It is a paper which Mr. Lincoln wrote in September, 1862, while his mind was burdened with the weightiest question of his life, the weightiest with which this century has had to grapple. Wearing with all the considerations of law and of expediency with which he had been struggling for two years, he retired within himself and tried to bring some order into his thoughts by rising above the wrangling of men and of parties, and pondering the relations of human government to the Divine. In this frame of mind, absolutely detached from any earthly considerations, he wrote this meditation. It has never been published. It was not written to be seen of men. It was penned in the awful sincerity of a perfectly honest soul trying to bring itself into closer communion with its Maker.

The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both *may* be and one *must* be wrong. God cannot be *for* and *against* the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true; that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere great power on the minds of the now contestants, he could have either *saved* or *destroyed* the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun, he could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.

## TO A PAINTER. (J. A. B.)

POET, whose golden songs in silence sung  
 Thrill from the canvas to the hearts of men,—  
 Sweet harmonies that speak without a tongue,  
 Melodious numbers writ without a pen,—  
 The great gods gifted thee and hold thee dear;  
 Placed in thy hand the torch which genius lit,  
 Touched thee with genial sunshine, and good cheer,  
 And swift heat lightnings of a charming wit  
 Whose shafts are ever harmless, though so bright;  
 Gave thee of all life's blessings this, the best,—  
 The true love of thy kind,—for thy delight.  
 So be thou happy, poet-painter blest,  
 Whose gentle eyes look out, all unaware,  
 Beneath the brow of Keats, soft-crowned with shadowy hair.

*Celia Thaxter.*

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## CABINET CHANGES—LINCOLN REELECTED—CHASE AS CHIEF-JUSTICE.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### CABINET CHANGES.



THE principal concession in the Baltimore platform made by the friends of the Administration to its opponents was the resolution which called for harmony in the Cabinet; and although no method was specified by which such harmony could be attained, it was no secret that the convention requested, and, so far as its authority went, required, that the Cabinet should be rendered homogeneous by the dismissal of those members who were stigmatized as conservatives. The President at first took no notice, either publicly or privately, of this resolution, and it was with something akin to consternation that the radical body of his supporters heard of the first change which occurred in his Cabinet after the convention adjourned. The resignation of Mr. Chase, whom the extreme radicals regarded as in some sort their special representative in the Government, took them entirely by surprise. The demonstration made by Mr. Wade and Mr. Davis some weeks later increased the feeling of restlessness among them, and brought upon the President a powerful pressure from every quarter to induce him to give satisfaction to the radical demand by the dismissal from the Cabinet of Montgomery Blair, the Postmaster-General, who had gradually attracted to himself the hostility of all the radical Republicans in the country. The unpopularity into which Mr. Blair had fallen among the radicals was one of those incidents that recall the oft-repeated simile that compares political revolutions to Saturn devouring his offspring. Mr. Blair was one of the founders of the Republican party. After graduating at West Point and serving for a year in the Seminole war, he resigned his commission in the army and began to practice law in St. Louis. He immediately gained high distinction in his profession, and became, while yet a young man, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He returned to Maryland, and in 1855 was appointed solicitor of the United States in the Court of Claims. The repeal of

the Missouri Compromise made a Republican of him. President Buchanan removed him from office in 1858 on account of his zealous antislavery attitude. He was counsel for the plaintiff in the famous Dred Scott case, and presided over the Republican convention of Maryland in 1860. With the exception of his brother Frank in Missouri, and Cassius M. Clay in Kentucky, he was beyond question the most prominent opponent of the extension of slavery in all the Southern States. The immediate cause which occasioned his loss of caste among the radical antislavery men was the quarrel which sprung up between his family and General Frémont in Missouri. In this also he had the mortification of feeling that he had nursed the pinion that impelled the steel. The reputation of General Frémont was the creation of the Blairs. It was at their solicitation that the President appointed the Pathfinder a major-general in the regular army, and gave him command of the important department of Missouri. So late as the 24th of August, 1861, General Frémont relied upon Montgomery Blair for all the support and assistance he required in Washington. The Postmaster-General, writing to him on that date, spoke of the President and his colleagues with the indiscreet frankness of confidential friendship. "Chase," he said, "has more horror of seeing treasury notes below par than of seeing soldiers killed, and therefore has held back too much, I think. I do not believe at all in that style of managing the Treasury." He goes on lamenting his lack of influence in the Government in a style which reminds us of Mr. Chase himself.

This, I can see [he says], is partly my own fault. I have been too obstreperous, perhaps, in my position, and men do not like those who have exposed their mistakes beforehand and dun them with them afterwards. The main difficulty is, however, with Lincoln himself. He is of the Whig school, and that brings him naturally not only to incline to the feeble policy of the Whigs, but to give his confidence to such advisers. It costs me a great deal of labor to get anything done, because of this inclination in the mind of the President, or leading members of the Cabinet, including Chase, who never voted a Democratic ticket in his life. But you have got the people at your back, and I am doing all I

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by J. G. Nicolay and John Hay, 1886. All rights reserved.

can to cut red tape and get things done. I will be more civil and patient than heretofore, and see if that will work.

No man can be sufficiently sure of friends to write them such letters as this. A few months later Frémont was Blair's deadliest enemy, and these letters, being printed, came up like impertinent ghosts between the Postmaster-General and his colleagues at the Cabinet table.

In the beginning of this quarrel the Blairs were unquestionably right; but being unjustly assailed by the radicals, the natural pugnacity of their dispositions would not permit them to rest firmly planted on their own ground. They entered upon a course of hostility that was at first confined to their factious enemies, but which gradually broadened and extended till it landed them both in the Democratic party. Montgomery Blair was doubtless unconscious of his progress in that direction. He thought himself the most zealous of Republicans until the moment that he declared himself the most zealous of Democrats. Every admonition he received but increased the heat and energy with which he defended himself. The Union League of Philadelphia, towards the close of 1863, left out his name in the resolutions by which they elected all the rest of the Cabinet honorary members of the League. He chose to consider Mr. Winter Davis responsible for some attacks made upon him, and desired to defeat him in Maryland. The President, who had certainly no cause to show personal favor to Mr. Davis, said that as he was the choice of the Union men of Maryland he merited and should receive what friendly support the Administration could give him. Mr. Blair made a speech in Rockville touching upon the subject of reconstruction, and indulged in vigorous and somewhat acrid allusions to some of his leading Republican assailants. This brought upon him, and upon Mr. Lincoln, over his shoulders, much vehement criticism. It was in relation to this speech that the President said:

The controversy between the two sets of men represented by Blair and by Sumner is one of mere form and little else. I do not think Mr. Blair would agree that the States in rebellion are to be permitted to come at once into the political family and renew their performances, which have already so bedeviled us, and I do not think Mr. Sumner would insist that when the loyal people of a State obtain supremacy in their councils and are ready to assume the direction of their own affairs they should be excluded. I do not understand Mr. Blair to admit that Jefferson Davis may take his seat in Congress again as a representative of his people. I do not understand Mr. Sumner to assert that John Minor Botts may not. So far as I understand Mr. Sumner, he seems in favor of Congress taking from the Executive the power it at present exercises over

insurrectionary districts and assuming it to itself; but when the vital question arises as to the right and privilege of the people of these States to govern themselves, I apprehend there will be little difference among loyal men. The question at once is presented, in whom is this power vested? and the practical matter for discussion is how to keep the rebellious population from overwhelming and outvoting the loyal minority.<sup>1</sup>

It was about this time that the President wrote the letter of kindly and sensible advice to General Frank Blair which we have given in another place; a letter which, when published many months afterwards, gave great and lasting offense to the enemies of Blair in Congress and in the country. Although General Blair at this time retired from the contest for the speakership, the Postmaster-General continued, with equally bad taste and judgment, to oppose the nomination of Mr. Colfax for that place. Upon Colfax going to him in person and demanding the motive of his hostility, Mr. Blair was so indiscreet as to give as a reason for his opposition that Colfax was running as a Chase candidate.<sup>2</sup>

The opposition to Blair was not confined to the radical demonstrations in the Baltimore convention and out of it. Some of the most judicious Republicans in the country, who were not personally unfriendly to Blair, urged upon the President the necessity of freeing himself from such a source of weakness and discord. Even in the bosom of the Government itself a strong hostility to Mr. Blair made itself felt. While Mr. Chase remained in the Cabinet there was always a condition of smoldering hostility between the two men. Mr. Blair's enmity to Mr. Seward also became more and more violent in its expression, and his relations with Mr. Stanton were subject to a strain which was hardly endurable. There was still, however, so much in his character and antecedents that was estimable, the President had so deep a regard for both the Blairs, and especially for their father, that he had great reluctance to take any action against the Postmaster-General. In the middle of July, after the termination of Early's raid upon Washington, General Halleck, exasperated by the report of stringent and sarcastic remarks which Mr. Blair, under the provocation of the destruction by rebels of his property in the suburbs of Washington, had made, in reference to the laxity or poltroonery of the defenders of the capital, addressed an angry note to the Secretary of War, saying that he wished to know "whether such wholesale denouncement and accusation by a member of the Cabinet receives the sanction and approbation of the President of the United States.

<sup>1</sup> J. H., Diary, Nov. 1.

<sup>2</sup> J. H., Diary, Nov. 21.

If so," said General Halleck, "the names of the officers accused should be stricken from the rolls of the army; if not, it is due to the honor of the accused that the slanderer should be dismissed from the Cabinet." Mr. Stanton sent this letter of Halleck's to the President without comment. The President, on the same day, replied in his most masterful manner. After summarizing Halleck's letter, he said:

Whether the remarks were really made I do not know, nor do I suppose such knowledge is necessary to a correct response. If they were made, I do not approve them; and yet, under the circumstances, I would not dismiss a member of the Cabinet therefor. I do not consider what may have been hastily said in a moment of vexation at so severe a loss is sufficient ground for so grave a step. Besides this, truth is generally the best vindication against slander. I propose continuing to be myself the judge as to when a member of the Cabinet shall be dismissed.<sup>1</sup>

Not satisfied with this, the President, when the Cabinet came together, made them this impressive and oracular little speech:

I must myself be the judge how long to retain in and when to remove any of you from his position. It would greatly pain me to discover any of you endeavoring to procure another's removal, or in any way to prejudice him before the public. Such endeavor would be a wrong to me, and, much worse, a wrong to the country. My wish is that on this subject no remark be made nor question asked by any of you, here or elsewhere, now or hereafter.<sup>2</sup>

This, we are inclined to think, is one of the most remarkable speeches ever made by a President. The tone of authority is unmistakable. Washington was never more dignified; Jackson was never more peremptory.

The feeling against Mr. Blair and the pressure upon the President to remove him increased throughout the summer. Henry Wilson wrote on the 5th of September, "Blair every one hates. Tens of thousands of men will be lost to you or will give a reluctant vote on account of the Blairs." The President's mail was filled with such appeals as this; but through the gloom and discouragement of midsummer he declined to act. There was a moment, as we have seen, when he lost heart in the campaign, and believed that the verdict of the country would be against him. Yet even then he refused to make the concession to the radical spirit which he was assured from every quarter would result so greatly to his advantage; but with the victories which came later in the season, and with the response of the country to the infamy of the surrender of the Chicago convention, there came a great and inspiring change of public opinion, and before the

month of September ended the assured triumph of the Union cause became evident to one so capable as was Mr. Lincoln to discern and appreciate the signs of the times. He felt that it was his duty no longer to retain in his Cabinet a member who, whatever his personal merits, had lost the confidence of the great body of Republicans. He had learned also during the long controversy more than he had ever known before of the violent and unruly candor of the Postmaster-General. Exasperated by the attacks made upon him, there were no limits to Mr. Blair's jealousy and suspicion. He wearied the President by insisting upon it that all the leading Republicans were Lincoln's enemies. After Chase left the Cabinet he insisted that Seward and Stanton were in league against Lincoln; that Stanton went into the Cabinet to break down the Administration by thwarting McClellan, and that Seward was coquetting with the Copperheads. Mr. Lincoln listened to these denunciations with growing fatigue and impatience. He protested against them. He said once to Mr. Blair, in the presence of another, "It is much better not to be led from the region of reason into that of hot blood by imputing to public men motives which they do not avow."<sup>3</sup> Towards the end of September the President, reasonably sure of his reelection, and feeling that he ought not any longer to delay complying with the demand of a party which was giving him so earnest and loyal a support, wrote this letter to the Postmaster-General:

You have generously said to me more than once that whenever your resignation could be a relief to me it was at my disposal. The time is come. You very well know that this proceeds from no dissatisfaction of mine with you personally or officially. Your uniform kindness has been unsurpassed by that of any other friend; and while it is true that the war does not so greatly add to the difficulties of your department as to those of some others, it is yet much to say, as I most truly can, that in the three years and a half during which you have administered the General Post-office, I remember no single complaint against you in connection therewith.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Blair accepted his dismissal in a manner which was to have been expected from his manly and generous character. He called upon the President at once, not pretending to be pleased at what had happened, but assuming that the President had good reasons for his action, and refraining from any demand for explanation. He went immediately to Maryland and busied himself in speaking and working for the Union cause, and for the reelection of Mr. Lincoln. He made a

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Stanton, July 14, 1864. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln. MS.

<sup>3</sup> J. H., Diary.

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln to Blair, September 23, 1864.

speech a few days later in New York, at a great war meeting, in which he said that the action of the President in asking his resignation was suggested by his own father. All the family received this serious reverse in the temper of fighting men ready for all the chances of battle, and of bold players whose traditional rule of conduct when the cards go against them is, "Pay and look pleasant." General Blair wrote to his father that he was sure in advance that his brother had acted for the good of the country, and in the interest of the reelection of Mr. Lincoln, in which he says "the safety of the country is involved."

I believe [he continued] that the failure to elect Mr. Lincoln would be the greatest disaster that could befall the country, and the sacrifice made by the judge to prevent this is so incomparably small that I feel it would not cost him a pang to make. . . . He leaves the Cabinet with an untarnished name, and a reputation of having administered the department with the greatest ability and success; and so far as worldly considerations go, it is better for him to go out than to remain in the Cabinet. As to the future I have no fear. If Mr. Lincoln's reelection is secured, no matter what his personal disposition may be towards us, or what his political necessities may compel him to do, if the country is saved and restored, those who have served it in its trials will some day be rewarded for the patriotism they have shown by a higher power than that of the President.

After the death of Judge Taney, Mr. Blair for a while indulged the hope that he might be appointed Chief-Justice, a position for which his natural abilities, his legal learning, his former judicial service, and his large acquaintance with the more important matters which would come before the court eminently fitted him; but the competition of Mr. Chase was too strong for any rival, however worthy, and he was chosen, to the bitter disappointment of the Blairs. Even this did not shake their steadfast loyalty to the Union cause, nor their personal fidelity and friendship to the President. Immediately after his second inauguration Mr. Lincoln offered Montgomery Blair his choice of the Spanish or the Austrian mission, an offer which was peremptorily though respectfully declined.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Blair's successor in the Cabinet, ex-Governor William Dennison of Ohio, had been selected beforehand. The President informed him of his appointment in a curt telegram, and directed him to proceed to Washington as soon as possible. Mr. Dennison had rendered admirable service to the Government as governor of Ohio at the outbreak of the war. He was a gentleman of the highest character, of great ability and perfect integrity, and of peculiarly winning and gracious manners. We find

<sup>1</sup> Seward to Lincoln, March 9, 1865. MS.

among the President's papers a letter written by his intimate friend, David Davis, on the 2d of June, suggesting Governor Dennison as a proper person to preside over the Baltimore convention. Judge Davis says: "He is a pure, upright man, one of your most devoted friends. If, during this or your subsequent administration, you think it your duty to modify your Cabinet, in my judgment you could not get a wiser counselor than Governor Dennison." This, so far as we know, was the first, perhaps the only, suggestion made to the President in favor of Mr. Dennison for a place in the Cabinet. The claim of localities always had a disproportionate weight in his mind. When Mr. Chase resigned Mr. Lincoln appointed Governor Tod in his place, and after Tod had declined he was glad to find an opportunity to call another Ohio statesman into his Cabinet.

The reconstruction of the Cabinet went on by gradual disintegration rather than by any brusque or even voluntary action of the President. Mr. Bates, the Attorney-General, before the end of the year 1864 grew weary, not only of the labors of his official position, but also of the rapid progress of the revolution of which he had been one of the earliest advocates. Although heartily devoted to the cause of freedom and emancipation, he was wedded, by constitutional temperament and lifelong habit, to the strictest rules of law and precedent. Every deviation from tradition pained him inexpressibly. The natural and unavoidable triumph of the radical party in St. Louis politics, and to a certain extent in those of the nation, seemed to him the herald of the trump of doom. He grew tired of it all, and expressed to the President his desire for retirement. If he had not himself wished to retire, the President would probably not have suggested it; he was greatly displeased at an announcement made by Simon Cameron, as if upon his authority, that in the event of reelection he would call around him fresh and earnest antislavery men. Mr. Lincoln, on hearing of this indiscreet and injurious statement, said, "They need not be so savage about a change in the Government. There are now only three left of the original Cabinet." He put a vacant judgeship at the disposition of the Attorney-General; but Mr. Bates declined it, not without some petulant remarks about the "uselessness of a legal system in a State dominated by the revolutionary spirit which then ruled in Missouri." He said he could not work in harmony with the radicals, whom he regarded as enemies of law and order; there was no such thing as a patriotic and honest American radical; some of the transcendental Republican Germans were honest enough in their moon-struck theorizing, but the

Americans impudently and dishonestly arrogated to themselves the title of unconditional loyalty, when the whole spirit of their faction was contempt of and opposition to the law. "While the present state of things continues in Missouri there is no need of a court; so says Judge Treat, and I agree with him." Considering the subject of a successor to Mr. Bates, the President, his mind still hampered by the consideration of locality, weighed for several days the names of all the leading men of Missouri who were in any way fitted for the place, but found good reasons for rejecting them all. One of his secretaries said to him, "Why confine yourself to Missouri? Why not go to the adjoining State and take Judge Holt?" The President looked up with some surprise and said: "Why, that would be an excellent appointment. I question if I could do better. I had always intended, though I had never mentioned it to any one, that if a vacancy should occur on the Supreme Bench in any Southern district I would appoint him; but giving him a place in the Cabinet would not hinder that."

Mr. Bates tendered his resignation at last on the 24th of November.

Heretofore [he said], it has not been compatible with my ideas of duty to the public and fidelity to you to leave my post of service for any private considerations, however urgent. Then the fate of the nation hung in doubt and gloom; even your own fate, as identified with that of the nation, was a source of much anxiety. Now, on the contrary, the affairs of the Government display a brighter aspect; and to you, as head and leader of the Government, all the honor and good fortune that we hoped for has come. And it seems to me, under these altered circumstances, that the time has come when I may, without dereliction of duty, ask leave to retire to private life. In tendering the resignation of my office of Attorney-General of the United States (which I now do) I gladly seize the occasion to repeat the expression of my gratitude, not only for your good opinion which led to my appointment, but also for your uniform and unvarying courtesy and kindness during the whole time in which we have been associated in the public service. The memory of that kindness and personal favor I shall bear with me into private life, and hope to retain it in my heart as long as I live. Pray let my resignation take effect on the last day of November.

A few days before the end of November the President offered the place of Attorney-General to Joseph Holt; but Mr. Holt, with that modesty and conscientiousness which formed the most striking trait of his noble character, believed that the length of time which had elapsed since he had retired from active service at the bar had rendered him unfit for the preparation and presentation of cases in an adequate manner before the Supreme Court, and therefore declined the appointment. The President was

not at first inclined to accept this as a sufficient reason for declination; but on the 30th of November Mr. Holt wrote a letter formally reiterating his refusal to accept the appointment.

After the most careful reflection [he said] I have not been able to overcome the embarrassments referred to at our last interview, and which then disinclined me to accept, as they must now determine me respectfully to decline, the appointment tendered in terms at once so generous and so full of encouragement. In view of all the circumstances, I am satisfied that I can serve you better in the position which I now hold at your hands than in the more elevated one to which I have been invited. I have reached this conclusion with extreme reluctance and regret; but having reached it, and with decided convictions, no other course is open to me than that which has been taken. I beg you will be assured that I am and shall ever be most grateful for this distinguished token of your confidence and good-will. In it I cannot fail to find renewed incentives to the faithful and zealous performance of the public duties with which you have already charged me.

Failing to secure Mr. Holt, the mind of the President turned naturally enough to another Kentuckian, Mr. James Speed, an able and accomplished lawyer, a man of high professional and social standing in his State, and the brother of the most intimate friend of the President's youth, Joshua F. Speed. Mr. Holt warmly recommended Mr. Speed. He said:

I can recall no public man in the State, of uncompromising loyalty, who unites in the same degree the qualifications of professional attainments, fervent devotion to the Union and to the principles of your administration, and spotless purity of personal character. To these he adds—what I should deem indispensable—a warm and hearty friendship for yourself, personally and officially.

Soon after the opening of the new year Mr. Fessenden was again elected to the Senate from Maine, and resigned his office as Secretary of the Treasury. In his letter of resignation he said:

I carry with me great and increased respect for your personal character and for the policy which has marked your administration of the Government at a period requiring the most devoted patriotism and the highest intellectual and moral qualities for a place so exalted as yours. Allow me also to congratulate you upon the greatly improved aspect of our national affairs, to which, and to the auspicious result of our prolonged struggle for national life, now, as I sincerely believe, so near at hand, no one can claim to have so largely contributed as the chosen Chief Magistrate of this great people.

The place thus vacated instantly excited a wide and spirited competition of recommendations. The principal bankers of Chicago joined in recommending Hugh McCulloch of Indiana, who had made a remarkably favorable official record as Comptroller of the Currency



in the supervision of the national banks; Governor Morgan was strongly presented by nearly the entire State of New York, though a few of the so-called radicals of that State joined with the great mass of the people of New England in recommending Governor Andrew, whose splendid executive qualities no less than his fiery zeal and patriotism had endeared him to the earnest antislavery people throughout the country. Both branches of the Maine legislature recommended ex-Vice-President Hamlin to take the place vacated by his distinguished colleague. Mr. Jay Cooke, who was carrying on with such remarkable success at that time the great funding operations of the Treasury Department, reinforced with his recommendation the demand of the Western politicians and bankers for Mr. McCulloch. Mr. Montgomery Blair, who still retained his friendly and confidential relations with the President, wrote to him on the 22d of February, saying that Mr. Hamlin did not wish his claim to be appointed Secretary of the Treasury urged upon the President; that Mr. Morgan positively refused the appointment. He supplemented these two important bits of information with the characteristic and irrelevant suggestion that Mr. Seward should leave the Cabinet, that Sumner should take his place, and that Governor Andrew might then succeed Sumner in the Senate. He also added that it would be a good thing to encourage Garibaldi to drive the French from Mexico. The President concluded to nominate Governor Morgan, who declined the honor. Mr. McCulloch was then appointed; upon which Mr. Usher, on the 8th of March, desiring, as he said, to relieve the President from any possible embarrassment which might arise from the fact that two members of the Cabinet were from the same State, resigned his place as Secretary of the Interior. The President indorsed the resignation, "Accepted, to take effect May 15, 1865." Before that date should arrive tremendous changes were to take place in the Government of the United States.

#### LINCOLN REELECTED.

FROM the moment the Democratic convention named its candidates the stars in their courses seemed to fight against them. During the very hours when the streets of Chicago were blazing with torches, and the air was filled with the perfervid rhetoric of the peace men rejoicing over their work, Hood was preparing for the evacuation of Atlanta; and the

same newspapers which laid before their readers the craven utterances of the Vollandigham platform announced the entry of Sherman into the great manufacturing metropolis of Georgia—so close together came bane and antidote. The convention had declared the war was a failure, and demanded that the Government should sue for terms of peace. Lincoln's reply three days afterwards was a proclamation announcing to the country "the signal successes that Divine Providence has recently vouchsafed" the people at Mobile and Atlanta, and calling for "devout acknowledgment to the Supreme Being in whose hands are the destinies of nations." He also tendered, by proclamation, the national thanks to Farragut, Canby, and Granger, and to General Sherman and the gallant officers and soldiers of their respective commands, and ordered that national salutes of one hundred guns should be fired on successive days from all the arsenals and navy yards in the United States in honor of these glorious victories. Thus, amid the prayers and thanksgivings of a grateful people, and the thunder and smoke of great guns uttering from their iron throats the general joy, the presidential campaign began. The darkest hour had come just before the dawn, and the light broadened on the political campaign from beginning to end.<sup>1</sup>

One of the earliest speeches of the autumn was made by Mr. Seward at his home in Auburn, New York.<sup>2</sup> He spoke avowedly without authority from the President, yet, as well from his intimacy with Mr. Lincoln as from his commanding place in the Administration, his speech demanded and received great attention. He said:

While the rebels continue to wage war against the Government of the United States, the military measures affecting slavery, which have been adopted from necessity to bring the war to a speedy and successful end, will be continued, except so far as practical experience shall show that they can be modified advantageously, with a view to the same end. When the insurgents shall have disbanded their armies and laid down their arms the war will instantly cease; and all the war measures then existing, including those which affect slavery, will cease also; and all the moral, economical, and political questions, as well questions affecting slavery as others, which shall then be existing between individuals and States and the Federal Government, whether they arose before the civil war began, or whether they grew out of it, will, by force of the Constitution, pass over to the arbitration of courts of law and to the councils of legislation.

Referring to the Chicago declaration in favor of the immediate cessation of hostilities, and

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Dr. Thompson, calling on the President soon after this, congratulated him on the improved aspect of politics, and asked him whether he attributed it in greater part to the Chicago platform or

to the victory at Atlanta. "I should say the victory," Mr. Lincoln answered; "at least, I should prefer to have that repeated."

<sup>2</sup> September 3, 1864.

the paralyzing effect on the action of the Government which would follow the success of the Democrats upon such a platform, he asked, in that contingency, "Who can vouch for the safety of the country against the rebels during the interval which must elapse before the new Administration can constitutionally come into power?"<sup>1</sup> The opposition journalists immediately seized upon this as a threat that the Administration was determined to keep itself in power whatever might be the verdict of the people, and this clamor went on until the President, as we shall show, put an effectual quietus upon it.

Mr. Lincoln himself took little part in the contest. He was forced, from time to time, to assist with his presence charitable demonstrations in favor of the sick and wounded soldiers; and being always obliged on these occasions to say a few words, he acquitted himself of these necessary tasks with dignity and discretion. He made no personal reference to his opponents, and spoke of his enemies North and South with unflinching charity and moderation. Regiments of soldiers returning to their homes after their term of service was over sometimes called upon him, and in brief and pithy speeches he thanked them for calling, and always added a word or two of wise or witty political thought. Speaking to an Ohio regiment, he defined in one phrase the essential character of our republican government with more accuracy and clearness than ever Jefferson had done:

I wish it might be more generally and universally understood what the country is now engaged in. We have, as all will agree, a free government, where every man has a right to be equal with every other man. In this great struggle this form of government, and every form of human rights, is endangered if our enemies succeed. . . . There is involved in this struggle the question whether your children and my children shall enjoy the privileges we have enjoyed. . . . When you return to your homes, rise up to the height of a generation of men worthy of a free government, and we will carry out the great work we have commenced.

To another regiment he said:

I happen, temporarily, to occupy this house. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father's child has done. It is in order that each one of you may have, through this free government which we have enjoyed, an open field and a fair chance for your industry, enterprise, and intelligence—that you

<sup>1</sup> Ten days later, when Mr. Seward had returned to Washington, he said, in answer to a serenade: "The Democracy of Chicago, after waiting six weeks to see whether this war for the Union is to succeed or fail, finally concluded that it would fail, and therefore went in for a nomination and platform to make it a sure thing by a cessation of hostilities and an abandonment of the contest. At Baltimore, on the contrary, we

may all have equal privileges in the race of life with all its desirable human aspirations—it is for this that the struggle should be maintained, that we may not lose our birthright. . . . The nation is worth fighting for to secure such an inestimable jewel.

Being invited to attend a Union mass meeting at Buffalo, the President at first thought of writing a letter, and we find among his papers the following fragment in his own manuscript:

Yours inviting me to attend a Union mass meeting at Buffalo is received. Much is being said about peace, and no man desires peace more ardently than I. Still I am yet unprepared to give up the Union for a peace which, so achieved, could not be of much duration. The preservation of our Union was not the sole avowed object for which the war was commenced. It was commenced for precisely the reverse object—to destroy our Union. The insurgents commenced it by firing upon the *Star of the West* and on Fort Sumter, and by other similar acts. It is true, however, that the Administration accepted the war thus commenced for the sole avowed object of preserving our Union; and it is not true that it has since been, or will be, prosecuted by this Administration for any other object. In declaring this I only declare what I can know, and do know, to be true, and what no other man can know to be false.

In taking the various steps which have led to my present position in relation to the war, the public interest and my private interest have been perfectly parallel, because in no other way could I serve myself so well as by truly serving the Union. The whole field has been open to me where to choose. No place-hunting necessity has been upon me urging me to seek a position of antagonism to some other man, irrespective of whether such position might be favorable or unfavorable to the Union.

Of course, I may err in judgment; but my present position in reference to the rebellion is the result of my best judgment, and, according to that best judgment, it is the only position upon which any executive can or could save the Union. Any substantial departure from it insures the success of the rebellion. An armistice—a cessation of hostilities—is the end of the struggle, and the insurgents would be in peaceable possession of all that has been struggled for. Any different policy in regard to the colored man deprives us of his help, and this is more than we can bear. We cannot spare the hundred and forty or fifty thousand now serving us as soldiers, seamen, and laborers. This is not a question of sentiment or taste, but one of physical force, which may be measured and estimated as horsepower and steam-power are measured and estimated. Keep it, and you can save the Union. Throw it away, and the Union goes with it. Nor is it possible for any administration to retain the services of these

determined that there should be no such thing as failure, and therefore we went in to save the Union by battle to the last. Sherman and Farragut have knocked the bottom out of the Chicago nominations, and the elections in Vermont and Maine prove the Baltimore nominations stanch and sound. The issue is thus squarely made up—McClellan and disunion, or Lincoln and Union."

people with the express or implied understanding that upon the first convenient occasion they are to be reënslaved. It cannot be, and it ought not to be.

After he had written thus far he seems to have changed his mind as to the good taste or the expediency of aiding even thus far in his own canvass. He therefore laid his letter aside and wrote a brief note<sup>1</sup> declining to address the meeting, on the ground, first, that it would be a breach of precedent, and, secondly, that if he once began to write letters it would be difficult to discriminate between meetings having equal claims.

Although the dignity and self-control with which Mr. Lincoln held himself aloof from the work of the canvass has been generally acknowledged, there is one incident of the campaign which was the object of severe criticism at the time. Governor Johnson, in accordance with the request of the State convention of Tennessee, had issued a proclamation<sup>2</sup> specifying the manner in which the vote for presidential electors should be taken, the qualification of voters, and the oath which they should be required to take. The Democratic candidates on the electoral ticket of that State, regarding themselves aggrieved by these requirements of the convention and the governor, united in a protest against this proceeding, and one of their number, a Mr. Lelleyet, was sent to present the protest in person.<sup>3</sup> In the account of his interview with the President, which he published in the newspapers, Mr. Lelleyet said that the President told him "he would manage his side of this contest in his own way, and the friends of General McClellan could manage their side in theirs." It is not impossible that, in a moment of irritation at the presentation of a petition which was in itself an insinuation that he was making a selfish and corrupt use of his power, the President may have treated Mr. Lelleyet with scant courtesy; but he took the protest, nevertheless, and told him he would answer it at his convenience. There is certainly nothing of malice or of petulance in the grave and serious tone of the reply which the President sent a few days later to the McClellan electors of Tennessee. He informed them that he had had no communication whatever with Governor Johnson on the subject of his proclamation; that he had given to the subject such consideration as was in his power in the midst of so many pressing public duties.

My conclusion is [he said] that I can have nothing to do with the matter, either to sustain the plan as the convention and Governor Johnson have initiated it, or to revoke or modify it as you demand. By the Constitution and laws the President is charged

with no duty in the conduct of a presidential election in any State; nor do I, in this case, perceive any military reason for his interference in the matter.

The movement set on foot by the convention and Governor Johnson does not, as seems to be assumed by you, emanate from the National Executive. In no proper sense can it be considered other than as an independent movement of at least a portion of the loyal people of Tennessee.

I do not perceive in the plan any menace of violence or coercion towards any one. Governor Johnson, like any other loyal citizen of Tennessee, has the right to favor any political plan he chooses, and, as military governor, it is his duty to keep the peace among and for the loyal people of the State. I cannot discern that by this plan he purposes any more.

But you object to the plan. Leaving it alone will be your perfect security against it. Do as you please on your own account, peacefully and loyally, and Governor Johnson will not molest you, but will protect you against violence so far as in his power.

I presume the conducting of a presidential election in Tennessee in strict accordance with the old code of the State is not now a possibility.

It is scarcely necessary to add that if any election shall be held, and any vote shall be cast in the State of Tennessee for President and Vice-President of the United States, it will belong not to the military agents, nor yet to the Executive Department, but exclusively to another department of the Government, to determine whether they are entitled to be counted in conformity with the Constitution and laws of the United States. Except it be to give protection against violence, I decline to interfere in any way with any presidential election.<sup>4</sup>

The McClellan electors thereupon withdrew from the contest; Lincoln and Johnson electors were chosen, but their votes were not counted by Congress.

The most important utterance of the President during the campaign was a speech which he made on the evening of the 19th of October, in which he referred to the construction which had been placed on the remarks of the Secretary of State at Auburn, already quoted. He thought the distorted and unjust conclusions which had been drawn from Seward's remarks had gone far enough and that the time had come to put an end to them, and he seized, for that purpose, the occasion of a serenade from a party of loyal Marylanders who were celebrating in Washington the victory which the party of emancipation had gained in the elections in their State. He said a few words of congratulation upon that auspicious event, and then added:

A word upon another subject. Something said by the Secretary of State, in his recent speech at Auburn, has been construed by some into a threat that if I shall be beaten at the election I will, between then and the end of my constitutional term, do what I may be able to ruin the Government. Others regard the fact that the Chicago convention

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to Schermerhorn, Sept. 12, 1864. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 30, 1864. <sup>3</sup> Oct. 16, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln to William B. Campbell *et al.*, Oct. 22, 1864.

adjourned, not *sine die*, but to meet again, if called to do so by a particular individual, as the intimation of a purpose that if their nominee shall be elected he will at once seize control of the Government. I hope the good people will permit themselves to suffer no uneasiness on either point.

I am struggling to maintain government, not to overthrow it. I am struggling especially to prevent others from overthrowing it. I therefore say that if I shall live I shall remain President until the 4th of next March; and that whoever shall be constitutionally elected therefor, in November, shall be duly installed as President on the 4th of March; and that, in the interval, I shall do my utmost that whoever is to hold the helm for the next voyage shall start with the best possible chance to save the ship.

This is due to the people both on principle and under the Constitution. Their will, constitutionally expressed, is the ultimate law for all. If they should deliberately resolve to have immediate peace, even at the loss of their country and their liberty, I know not the power or the right to resist them. It is their own business, and they must do as they please with their own. I believe, however, they are still resolved to preserve their country and their liberty; and in this, in office or out of it, I am resolved to stand by them.<sup>1</sup>

During the progress of the campaign Mr. Lincoln was frequently called upon to assist his friends, to oppose his enemies, and to exercise his powerful influence in appeasing discords in different States and districts. He interfered as little as possible, and always in the interests of the party at large, rather than in those of individuals. He took no account of the personal attitude of candidates towards himself. In the case of those who were among his intimate friends he would go no further than to demand that Government officers should not work against them. When Mr. Arnold of Chicago, who had incurred the hostility of Mr. Scripps, the postmaster at that place, complained of the opposition of that official and called upon the President to put a stop to it, the President would do nothing more than to order the offending postmaster to content himself with the exercise of his own rights as a citizen and a voter and to allow his subordinates to do the same. The postmaster answered, as was natural, that this was precisely what he had been doing, and that this was the source of Mr. Arnold's complaint; that the congressman wanted his active official assistance, and would be satisfied with nothing less. Although Arnold was an intimate and valued friend of the President, he declined to exercise any further pressure upon the postmaster, and Mr. Arnold soon afterwards withdrew from the contest. After candidates had been regularly

and fairly nominated, the President had no hesitation in doing all in his power to conciliate hostilities and to unite the party in support of them. He tolerated in these cases no factious or malicious opposition on the part of his office-holders, and he laid his hands most heavily upon those injudicious friends of his own who attempted to defeat the reelection of Republican congressmen who had not been especially friendly to him. A large number of the leading Republicans in Roscoe Conkling's district had declared their intention to oppose him. Mr. Conkling's friends appealed to the President, claiming that the Republican opposition to him had its rise and origin among friends of the Secretary of State. The President commended their complaint to the attention of Mr. Seward, and answered for himself: "I am for the regular nominee in all cases, and no one could be more satisfactory to me as the nominee in that district than Mr. [Roscoe] Conkling. I do not mean to say there are not others as good as he in the district, but I think I know him to be at least good enough."<sup>2</sup> Being informed of some hostility on the part of the custom-house officials in New York against Frederick A. Conkling, he wrote similar admonitions to them. The postmaster of Philadelphia being accused of interference against William D. Kelley, the President sent for him, and following his custom in grave matters, he read to him a reprimand which he had committed to paper in the following words:

Complaint is made to me that you are using your official power to defeat Judge Kelley's renomination to Congress. I am well satisfied with Judge Kelley as a member of Congress, and I do not know that the man who might supplant him would be as satisfactory; but the correct principle, I think, is that all our friends should have absolute freedom of choice among our friends. My wish, therefore, is that you will do just as you think fit with your own suffrage in the case, and not constrain any of your subordinates to do other than as he thinks fit with his. This is precisely the rule I inculcated and adhered to on my part when a certain other nomination now recently made was being canvassed for.<sup>3</sup>

The reform of the civil service had not at that time been formulated by its friends, nor even adopted in principle by the country at large, yet it would be difficult even in the light of this day to improve upon this statement of its essential principle as applied to the conduct of office-holders. The postmaster, of course, promised exact obedience; but later in the summer the President was informed, on authority that he credited, that of the two or three hundred employees in the post-office not one of them was openly in favor of the renomination of Judge Kelley. Upon learning

<sup>1</sup> Autograph MS.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln to Ward Hunt, Aug. 16, 1864. MS.

<sup>3</sup> June 20, 1864. MS.

this, Mr. Lincoln wrote to an influential friend in Philadelphia, stating these facts and adding:

This, if true, is not accidental. Left to their free choice, there can be no doubt that a large number of them, probably as much or more than half, would be for Kelley. And if they are for him and are not restrained they can put it beyond question by publicly saying so. Please tell the postmaster he must find a way to relieve me from the suspicion that he is not keeping his promise to me in good faith.<sup>1</sup>

The postmaster felt at last the hand of iron under the velvet glove, and Kelley was renominated and reelected, as he has been ever since—to the honor and advantage of his district and State.

The summer was full of brief panics and flurries among the politicians, and they were continually rushing to Mr. Lincoln to urge him to action or inaction in the interests of the canvass. We believe there is no instance in which he yielded to these solicitations. A matter of especial difficulty was the draft for half a million of men which had been issued on the 18th of July. Leading Republicans all over the country, fearing the effect of the draft upon the elections, begged the President to withdraw the call or suspend operations under it. Mr. Cameron, so late as the 19th of October, after the State elections had been secured, advised against the draft in Philadelphia. Mr. Chase on the same day telegraphed from Ohio, which had been carried triumphantly by the Republicans a few days before, recommending the suspension of the draft for three weeks—Chief-Justice Taney having died a week before. Judge Johnston of Ohio reports that he was with the President when a committee came from Ohio to request him to suspend the draft until after the elections, and that Mr. Lincoln quietly answered, "What is the Presidency worth to me if I have no country?" But these solicitations were not all in the same direction. General Sherman telegraphed from the field, "If the President modifies the draft to the extent of one man, or wavers in its execution, he is gone forever; the army would vote against him." The politicians and the general probably exaggerated in equal measure; the army would not have rejected him if he had seen fit to suspend the draft; and the people stood by him in his refusal to do it. He went so far in compliance with the earnest request of the Union people in Indiana as to write to Sherman expressing his sense of the importance of allowing as many of the Indiana soldiers as possible to go home to vote. Most of the other States which voted in October allowed their soldiers to vote in the field. Indiana had not

passed the necessary legislation for this purpose. The draft was steadily proceeding in that State, and, in the opinion of the leading men there, was endangering the success of the Union party in the elections. "Anything you can safely do," Mr. Lincoln wrote, "to let her soldiers, or any part of them, go home and vote at the State election will be greatly in point. They need not remain for the presidential elections, but may return to you at once."<sup>2</sup> He was careful, however, not to urge General Sherman to any course of action which he might consider injurious. "This is," he added, "in no sense an order, but is merely intended to impress you with the importance, to the army itself, of your doing all you safely can, yourself being the judge of what you can safely do." There were also reports from Missouri that Rosecrans was inclined to deny the soldiers the right of attending the elections, on the assumed ground that they would get drunk and make disturbance. The President, on being informed of this, quoted to Rosecrans the following words from the letter which he had written to Schofield: "'At elections see that those, and only those, are allowed to vote who are entitled to do so by the laws of Missouri, including as of those laws the restrictions laid by the Missouri convention upon those who may have participated in the rebellion.' This," said Lincoln, "I thought right then and think right now, and I may add I do not remember that either party complained after the election of General Schofield's action under it. Whenever the law allows soldiers to vote, their officers must also allow it."<sup>3</sup>

The opposition to Mr. Lincoln within the ranks of his own party did not entirely die away, even after the Chicago nomination and the changed political prospect which immediately followed it. So late as the 20th of September Thurlow Weed wrote to Mr. Seward that

The conspiracy against Mr. Lincoln collapsed on Monday last. It was equally formidable and vicious, embracing a larger number of leading men than I had supposed possible. Knowing that I was not satisfied with the President, they came to me for coöperation; but my objection to Mr. Lincoln is that he has done too much for those who now seek to drive him out of the field. Their last meeting was early last week at the house of Dudley Field, which was attended by Greeley, George Wilkes, Tilton, Opdyke, Noyes, and twenty-five others of the same stripe.

He also stated that a circular had been sent to leading Republicans in other States inquiring as to the feasibility of making another nomination for President at that time; that the malcontents, finding themselves in solitude, had concluded to break up operations and try to control the regular State convention.

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln to McMichael, Aug. 5, 1864. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln to Sherman, Sept. 19, 1864. MS.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln to Rosecrans, Sept. 26, 1864. MS.

After every semblance of open hostility had disappeared everywhere else in the country the fire of faction still kept it alive in Missouri. A singular state of things existed there. The radical party had almost entirely absorbed the Union sentiment of the State; the conservative party, the President's friends, had almost ceased to exist. The incumbents of the Government offices, a few of the intimate personal friends of Blair, still stood out against the radicals; and so long as this attitude was maintained the radicals, while working vigorously for their State and local tickets, refused to avow themselves in favor of Lincoln. So far as can be ascertained the only reason for this absurd position was that the "Clay Banks," as the conservatives were called, wished the radicals to declare for Lincoln as a pretext by which they could join the vast majority of their party, and the radicals spitefully refused to allow them this accommodation. Mr. Fletcher, the radical candidate for governor, refused during the greater part of the campaign to make any public statement that he would vote for Lincoln. His reason for this, privately given, was that he feared such an announcement would alienate from his support a large number of the more furious anti-Lincoln Germans. At last, however, he concluded to declare for the regular Republican presidential ticket, and a meeting was appointed for the purpose; but, to the astonishment of the moderate Union men, he went no further at this meeting than to say he would not vote for McClellan, and in explanation of this singular performance he told the President's private secretary<sup>1</sup> that he had found at the hotel where his speech was made a letter of the "Clay Bank" committee offering their support on condition of his declaring for Lincoln, and that he would not be coerced into it. The President sent messages to the moderate Unionists expressing his desire that the absurd and futile quarrel should come to an end, and they, to do them justice, desired nothing more. The only condition of their support which they made was that candidates should declare themselves for Lincoln, which they in turn would have been willing to do if it were not that the "Clay Banks" requested it.

So far as practical results went the party was united enough [Mr. Nicolay reported]; it seems to be well understood that, with the exception of very few impracticables, the Union men will cast their votes for you, for the radical congressmen, for the emancipation candidates, for the State legislature and the State convention, so that in practice nearly everybody is right and united, while in profession everybody is wrong or at cross purposes.

This was surmised while the clatter of factious fighting was going on, and was abundantly

proved by the result. While the radical candidate for governor only claimed that he would be elected by a majority of ten thousand, which claim by many of his party was considered sanguine, when the votes were counted it was found that Lincoln had carried the State by the immense majority of forty thousand.

The electoral contest began with the picket firing in Vermont and Maine in September, was continued in what might be called the grand guard fighting in October, in the great States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, and the final battle all along the line took place in November. Vermont and Maine were carried by good Republican majorities, the canvass in the latter State having been managed by James G. Blaine with a dash and energy which gave a presage of his future career. Before the October elections came on, auguries of Republican success had become so significant and universal that there was little doubt in the best-informed political circles of the result. The President, however, was too old a politician to be sure of anything until the votes were counted, and it was not without some natural trepidation that on the evening of the 11th of October he walked over to the War Department to get from the telegraphic instruments the earliest intimations of the course of the contest. The first dispatch he received contained the welcome intelligence of the election of Rutherford B. Hayes and his Republican colleague from the hard-fought Cincinnati districts. Next came dispatches announcing a Republican majority in Philadelphia and indicating a similar result in the State of Pennsylvania. The news continued very much in the same strain during the evening, and the President in the lull of dispatches read aloud to Stanton and Dana selected chapters of the Nasby papers. As the votes of the soldiers in the different camps in the vicinity of Washington began to be reported they were found to be nearly unanimous in favor of the Republican candidate, the proportion among Western troops being generally that of ten to one: among the Eastern troops, although there was everywhere a majority, it was not so large. Carver Hospital, by which Lincoln and Stanton passed every day on their way to the country, gave the heaviest opposition vote reported—about one out of three. Lincoln turned to the Secretary and said, "That's hard on us, Stanton! They know us better than the others." The sum of the day's work was of enormous importance. Indiana indicated a gain of thirty thousand in two years. Governor Morton and the entire Republican ticket were elected by twenty thousand majority, with the gain of four congressmen. Pennsylvania, whose representatives in

<sup>1</sup> Nicolay to Lincoln, Oct. 18, 1864. MS.

Congress had been equally divided, now changed their proportion to fifteen against nine, and made her legislature strongly Republican in both branches, with popular majorities ranging from ten to fifteen thousand. The Unionists carried Ohio by a majority of over fifty-four thousand and effected a complete revolution in her representation in Congress; for while in 1862 she had elected fourteen Democrats and five Republicans, she now sent to Washington seventeen Republicans and two Democrats. But the success of the day which lay nearest to the heart of the President was the adoption in Maryland of the new State constitution abolishing slavery forever on her soil. The majority was a very slender one, the vote of the soldiers in the field being necessary to save emancipation; but it served, and the next month the Union majority was greatly increased.

It would seem strange that after this decisive victory there should have been any room left for hope or confidence on the side of the opposition or for anxiety and panic among Republican politicians; but alternating fits of confidence and despondency are inseparable from all long-continued political campaigns, and even after these overwhelming successes we find the Democratic speeches and papers full of boasting, and the private correspondence of the most experienced Republican leaders full of tremor and apprehension. The President, however, had passed through his moment of despondency, and from this time to the end entertained no shadow of doubt of the result. Mr. Washburne wrote to him on the 17th of October from Galena: "It is no use to deceive ourselves about this State. Everything is at sixes and sevens; no head or tail to anything. There is imminent danger of our losing the State"; and more in the same strain. The President laid away the letter, writing on the envelope the single word, "Stamped." Ten days later Washburne had recovered his spirits, and wrote, "John Logan is carrying everything before him in Egypt." Earlier in the campaign Mr. Washburne, desiring to do all in his power to forward the Union cause, had written to Grant asking permission to print a letter from him in favor of Lincoln. Grant replied that he had no objection to this, but he thought that "for the President to answer all the charges the opposition would bring against him would be like setting a maiden to work to prove her chastity." A friend of Mr. Seward communicated to him about the same time an astonishing mare's nest, in which he claimed to have discovered that the opposition policy for the presidential campaign would be to abstain from voting. The Secretary submitted this letter to the

President. To Mr. Lincoln, with his life-long observation of politics, this idea of abstention from voting seemed more amusing than threatening. He returned the letter to the Secretary with this indorsement: "More likely to abstain from stopping when once they get at it."

As the time drew near for the election in November a flight of rumors of intended secessionist demonstrations in the principal States of the North covered the land. The points of danger which were most clearly indicated were the cities of Chicago and New York. We have related in another place the efficient measures taken to prevent any outbreak in Chicago, with the arrest and punishment of the conspirators. The precautionary measures in the other States prevented any attempt at disorder. To preserve the public peace in the city of New York and to secure the guarantee of a fair and orderly election there, General Butler was sent with a considerable force of troops to that city. He issued an order on the 5th of November declaring that troops had been detailed for duty in that district sufficient to preserve the peace of the United States, to protect public property, to prevent disorder, and to insure calm and quiet. He referred to the charge made by the opposition that the presence of Union troops might possibly have an effect upon the free exercise of the duty of voting at the ensuing election. He hotly repudiated this accusation.

The armies of the United States [he said] are ministers of good and not of evil. . . . Those who fear them are accused by their own consciences. Let every citizen having the right to vote act according to the inspiration of his own judgment freely. He will be protected in that right by the whole power of the Government if it shall become necessary.

He denounced energetically the crime of fraudulent voting, but did not assume to himself the duty of separating the tares from the wheat. He simply warned the evil-intentioned that fraudulent voting would be detected and punished after the election was over. Governor Seymour had been, as usual, much exercised for fear of executive usurpation at the polls, and had issued a proclamation on the 2d of November urging the avoidance of all measures which would tend to strife or disorder. He called upon sheriffs of counties to take care that every voter should have a free ballot in the manner secured to him by the constitutional laws, and to exercise the full force of the law and call forth, if need be, the power of their districts against the interference of the military in the vicinity of the polling-places.

There was by no means a unanimous agreement among even the supporters of the Administration as to the expediency of sending

General Butler to New York at this time. The action was taken by Mr. Stanton on his own responsibility. Thurlow Weed disapproved of it, and up to the day of election thought, on the whole, the proceeding was injurious, in spite of Butler's admirable general order; but Butler acted under the circumstances with remarkable judgment and discretion. He devoted the days which elapsed between his arrival and the election to making himself thoroughly acquainted with the city, with its police arrangements, and the means at his disposal to preserve order. Every hour was occupied with a careful study of maps, of police arrangements, of telegraphic communication between his headquarters and every region of the city, and in consultations with general officers, the creation of an improvised engineer department, and the planning of a system of barricades in case of a widespread insurrection. But the object to which he gave special attention, and in which he most thoroughly succeeded, was the avoidance of any pretext for any charge of interference with the rights of citizens at the polls. On the morning of the 8th of November, although the city was absolutely in the hands of the disciplined military force which had been sent to guard it, not a soldier was visible to the thousands of voters who thronged the streets; but everybody knew that they were there, and the result was, as Butler telegraphed to Lincoln at noon on election day, "the quietest city ever seen."

To Mr. Lincoln this was one of the most solemn days of his life. Assured of his personal success, and devoutly confident that the day of peace and the reestablishment of the Union was not far off, he felt no elation and no sense of triumph over his opponents. His mind seemed filled with mingled feelings of deep and humble gratitude to the vast majority of his fellow-citizens who were this day testifying to him their heartfelt confidence and affection, and of a keen and somewhat surprised regret that he should be an object in so many quarters of so bitter and vindictive an opposition. He said to one of his secretaries: "It is singular that I, who am not a vindictive man, should always, except once, have been before the people for election in canvasses marked for their bitterness. When I came to Congress it was a quiet time; but always, except that, the contests in which I have been prominent have been marked with great rancor."<sup>1</sup>

In the evening he went over, as was his custom, to the War Department. The night was rainy and dark. As he entered the telegraph room he was handed a dispatch from Mr. Forney claiming 10,000 Union majority in Philadelphia. The figures were so far above his estimate that he said, "Forney is a little ex-

citable." A moment after a dispatch came from Mr. Felton in Baltimore, "15,000 in the city, 5000 in the State. All hail, free Maryland!" A moment after there came messages from Boston announcing majorities for Mr. Hooper and Mr. Rice of something like 4000 each. The President, astonished, asked if this was not a clerical error for 400, but the larger figures were soon confirmed. Mr. Rice afterwards, in speaking of these astounding majorities in districts where there was never the least charge made of irregularity at the polls, quoted an explanation made by a constituent of his, with no irreverent intention, "The Almighty must have stuffed the ballot boxes."

The entrance of General Eckert, who came in covered with mud from a fall in crossing the street, reminded the President of an incident of his defeat by Douglas. He said: "For such an awkward fellow, I am pretty sure-footed. It used to take a rather dexterous man to throw me. I remember the evening of the day in 1858 that decided the contest for the Senate between Mr. Douglas and myself was something like this—dark, raining, and gloomy. I had been reading the returns and had ascertained that we had lost the legislature, and started to go home. The path had been worn hog-backed and was slippery. Both my feet slipped from under me, but I recovered myself and lit clear; and I said to myself, 'It is a slip, and not a fall.'"

Mr. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, indulged in some not unnatural exultation over the complete effacement of Henry Winter Davis from Maryland politics. Mr. Davis had assailed the navy with a peculiarly malicious opposition for two years for no cause that Mr. Fox could assign except that he was a brother-in-law of Montgomery Blair. The President would not agree with him. "You have more of that feeling of personal resentment than I," he said. "Perhaps I have too little of it; but I never thought it paid. A man has no time to spend half his life in quarrels. If any man ceases to attack me I never remember the past against him." All the evening the dispatches kept the same tenor of widespread success—in almost all cases above the estimates. The October States showed increased majorities, and long before midnight the indications were that the State of New York had cast her ponderous vote for Lincoln, and made the verdict of the North almost unanimous in his favor, leaving General McClellan but 21 electoral votes, derived from New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky, 212 being cast for Lincoln and Johnson.

It was two o'clock in the morning before the President left the War Department. At the

<sup>1</sup> J. H., Diary.



door he met a party of serenaders with a brass band who saluted him with music and cheers, and, in the American fashion, demanded a speech. He made a brief response, saying that he did not pretend that those who had thought the best interests of the nation were to be subserved by the support of the present Administration embraced all the patriotism and loyalty of the country. He continued:

I do believe, and I trust without personal interest, that the welfare of the country does require that such support and indorsement be given.

I earnestly believe that the consequence of this day's work (if it be as you assume, and as now seems probable) will be to the lasting advantage, if not to the very salvation, of the country. I cannot at this hour say what has been the result of the election. But, whatever it may be, I have no desire to modify this opinion, that all who have labored to-day in behalf of the Union organization have wrought for the best interest of their country and the world, not only for the present, but for all future ages.

I am thankful to God for this approval of the people; but, while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. I do not impugn the motives of any one opposed to me. It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one; but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity.

For several days the torrent of congratulations came pouring in. Frank Blair wrote from Georgia, where he was leading an army corps under Sherman to the sea: "The vote in this army to-day is almost unanimous for Lincoln. Give Uncle Abe my compliments and congratulations." Grant paused for a moment in his labors in the investment of Richmond to express his sense of the vast importance and significance of the election. He thought a tremendous crisis in the history of the country had been met and triumphantly passed by the quiet and orderly conduct of the American people on the 8th of November.

The manner in which the President received these tumultuous demonstrations of good-will was so characteristic that it seems to us worthy of special attention. He was absolutely free from elation or self-congratulation. He seemed to deprecate his own triumph and to sympathize rather with the beaten than the victorious party. He received notice that on the night of the 10th of November the various Republican clubs in the District of Columbia would serenade him. Not wishing to speak extempore on an occasion where his words would receive so wide a publication, he sat down and hastily wrote a speech which, while it has not received the world-wide fame of certain other of his utterances, is one of the weightiest and wisest of all

his discourses. He read it at the window which opens on the north portico of the Executive Mansion, a secretary standing beside him lighting the page with a candle. "Not very graceful," he said, "but I am growing old enough not to care much for the manner of doing things."<sup>1</sup> There was certainly never an equal compliment paid to a serenading crowd. The inmost philosophy of republican government was in the President's little speech.

It has long been a grave question [he said] whether any government not too strong for the liberties of its people can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies. On this point the present rebellion has brought our republic to a severe test, and a presidential election occurring in regular course during the rebellion has added not a little to the strain. If the loyal people united were put to the utmost of their strength by the rebellion, must they not fail when divided and partially paralyzed by a political war among themselves? But the election was a necessity. We cannot have a free government without elections; and if the rebellion could force us to forego or postpone a national election, it might fairly claim to have already conquered and ruined us. The strife of the election is but human nature practically applied to the facts of the case. What has occurred in this case must ever recur in similar cases. Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men who have passed through this, we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and as wise, as bad and as good. Let us, therefore, study the incidents of this as philosophy to learn wisdom from, and none of them as wrongs to be revenged. But the election, along with its incidental and undesired strife, has done good, too. It has demonstrated that a people's government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. Until now, it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows, also, how sound and how strong we still are. It shows that, even among candidates of the same party, he who is most devoted to the Union and most opposed to treason can receive most of the people's vote. It shows, also, to an extent yet unknown, that we have more men now than we had when the war began. Gold is good in its place; but living, brave, patriotic men are better than gold.

But the rebellion continues; and, now that the election is over, may not all having a common interest reunite in a common effort to save our common country? For my own part, I have striven and shall strive to avoid placing any obstacle in the way. So long as I have been here, I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom. While I am duly sensible to the high compliment of a reelection, and duly grateful, as I trust, to Almighty God for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion, as I think, for their own good, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be disappointed or pained by the result.

May I ask those who have not differed with me to join with me in this same spirit towards those who have? And now let me close by asking three

<sup>1</sup> J. H., Diary.

hearty cheers for our brave soldiers and seamen, and their gallant and skillful commanders.<sup>1</sup>

In this lofty and magnanimous spirit he received all the addresses of congratulation that came in upon him in these days. To a delegation from Maryland who ascribed it to his rare discretion that Maryland was then a free State he replied with deep appreciation of their courtesy, and he added: "Those who differ from and oppose us will yet see that defeat was better for their own good than if they had been successful." He not only had no feeling of malicious triumph himself, he had no patience with it in others. When Mr. Raymond, who represented his special friends in New York, wrote a letter breathing fire and vengeance against the officials of the custom-house, who, he said, had come near defeating him in the race for Congress, the President merely observed that it was "the spirit of such letters as that which created the factious malignity of which Mr. Raymond complained." To all those who begged for a rigorous and exemplary course of punishment for political derelictions in the late canvass his favorite expression was, "I am in favor of short statutes of limitation in politics." He rejected peremptorily some suggestions of General Butler and the War Department having in view the punishment of flagrant offenders in New York: "We must not sully victory with harshness." His thoughtful and chivalrous consideration for the beaten party did not, however, prevent him from feeling the deepest gratitude for those who had labored on his side. He felt that the humblest citizen who had done his duty had claims upon him. Hearing that Deacon John Phillips of Sturbridge, Massachusetts, a man who had already completed his 104th year, and had voted at every presidential election since the foundation of the Government, had taken the pains to go to the polls to vote for him, the President wrote him a grateful letter of thanks.

The example [he said] of such devotion to civic duties in one whose days have already been extended an average life-time beyond the Psalmist's limit cannot but be valuable and fruitful. It is not for myself only, but for the country which you have in your sphere served so long and so well, that I thank you.

The venerable man, who had attained his majority in the midst of the war of the Revolution, and who had arrived at middle age before this century opened, answered in a note which greatly pleased and moved the President, as coming from one of the oldest men living on the earth.

I feel that I have no desire to live [he said] but to see the conclusion of this wicked rebellion and the power of God displayed in the conversion of the nations. I believe, by the help of God, you will finish the first, and also be the means of establishing universal freedom and restoring peace to the Union. That the God of mercy will bless you in this great work, and through life, is the prayer of your unworthy servant,  
JOHN PHILLIPS.

There is one phrase of the President's speech of the 10th of November which we have quoted which is singularly illustrative, not only of the quick apprehension with which he seized upon facts of importance, but also of the accuracy and method with which he ascertained and established them. Within a few hours after the voting had closed he was able to say that the election had shown that "we have more men now than we had when the war began." A great bundle of papers which lies before us as we write, filled with telegrams from every quarter annotated in his own neat handwriting, with a mass of figures which would have dismayed an ordinary accountant, shows the importance which he attached to this fact and the industry with which he investigated it. In his message to Congress a few weeks later he elaborated this statement with the utmost care. He showed from the comparative votes in 1860 and in 1864 a net increase of votes during the three years and a half of war of 145,551. The accomplished statisticians of "The Tribune" almanac in the following month, after the closest study of the official returns, expressed their surprise "at the singular accuracy of the President's figures."

An extract from his annual message to Congress gives the best summing up of the results of the election that has ever been written.

The purpose of the people within the loyal States to maintain the integrity of the Union was never more firm nor more nearly unanimous than now. The extraordinary calmness and good order with which the millions of voters met and mingled at the polls give strong assurance of this. Not only all those who supported the Union ticket so called, but a great majority of the opposing party also, may be fairly claimed to entertain and to be actuated by the same purpose. It is an unanswerable argument to this effect, that no candidate for any office whatever, high or low, has ventured to seek votes on the avowal that he was for giving up the Union. There have been much impugning of motives, and much heated controversy as to the proper means and best mode of advancing the Union cause; but on the distinct issue of Union or no Union the politicians have shown their instinctive knowledge that there is no diversity among the people. In affording the people the fair opportunity of showing one to another and to the world this firmness and unanimity of purpose, the election has been of vast value to the national cause.

On the day of election General McClellan

<sup>1</sup> Autograph MS.

resigned his commission in the army, and the place thus made vacant was filled by the appointment of General Philip H. Sheridan, a fit type and illustration of the turn in the tide of affairs, which was to sweep from that time rapidly onward to the great and decisive national triumph.

#### CHASE AS CHIEF-JUSTICE.

CHIEF-JUSTICE TANEY died on the 12th day of October, 1864, during the public rejoicings that hailed the success of the Union party at the autumnal elections. He was a man of amiable character, of blameless life, of great learning, of stainless integrity; yet such is the indiscriminating cruelty with which public opinion executes its decrees, that this aged and upright judge was borne to his grave with few expressions of regret, and even with a feeling not wholly suppressed that his removal formed a part of the good news which the autumn had brought to the upholders of the Union. Toilsome and irreproachable as his life had been, so far as purity of intentions were concerned, it was marked by one of those mistakes which are never forgiven. In a critical hour of history he had made a decision contrary to the spirit of the age, contrary to the best hopes and aspirations of the nation at large. Before he had assumed the grave responsibilities of Chief-Justice he had not been insensible to those emotions and sympathies which animated the majority of his countrymen in later years. So early as 1818 he had spoken of slavery as a blot on our national character, and expressed the confident hope that it would effectually though gradually be wiped away. "Until it shall be accomplished, until the time shall come when we can point without a blush to the language held in the Declaration of Independence," he said, "every friend of humanity will seek to lighten the galling chain of slavery and better to the utmost of his power the wretched condition of the slave." But when he assumed public office he became a part of the machinery of his party. He accepted its tenets and carried them unflinchingly to their logical result, so that to a mind so upright and straightforward in its operations there seemed nothing revolting in the enunciation of the dismal and inhuman propositions of the Dred Scott decision. His whole life was therefore read in the light of that one act, and when he died, the nation he had so faithfully served according to his lights looked upon his death as the removal of a barrier to human progress. The general feeling found expression in the grim and profane witticism of Senator Wade, uttered some months before, when it seemed likely that the Chief-Justice would survive the ad-

ministration of Mr. Lincoln: "No man ever prayed as I did that Taney might outlive James Buchanan's term, and now I am afraid I have overdone it."

The friends of Mr. Chase immediately claimed that the place thus vacated belonged to him. They not only insisted that he was best fitted of all the public men in the country for the duties of that high office; that the great issues of the war would be safest in his hands; that the rights of the freedmen would be most secure with an ardent and consistent abolitionist; that the national currency would be best cared for by its parent; they also claimed that the place had been promised him by the President, and this claim, though not wholly true, was not without foundation. Several times during the last year or two the President had intimated in conversation with various friends of Mr. Chase that he thought favorably of appointing him Chief-Justice if a vacancy should occur. These expressions had been faithfully reported to the Secretary, and promptly entered by him in his diary at the time.<sup>1</sup> When Mr. Curtin was a candidate for reelection as governor of Pennsylvania, John Covode came to Mr. Chase and told him if Curtin was elected governor he would shape matters in Pennsylvania so as to secure its delegates in the presidential convention, but that the majority of the loyal men in Pennsylvania preferred Mr. Chase. Mr. Chase replied that no speculations as to Governor Curtin's future course could excuse the loyal men from supporting him now; that the future must take care of itself; that he, Mr. Chase, was not anxious for the Presidency; that there was but one position in the Government which he would really like to have, if it were possible to have it without any sacrifice of principle or public interest, and that was the chief-justiceship. At this Mr. Covode expressed himself satisfied, and went away resolved to permit the renomination of Curtin, which, it may be said in passing, he could have done nothing to prevent. Mr. Chase's eyes seemed pretty constantly fixed upon the bench in the intervals of his presidential aspirations. For a few days after his resignation his feelings against the President were of such bitterness that he seems to have given up that prospect. He was on the verge of open revolt from the party with which he had been so long associated. In his diary of the 6th of July he says:

Pomeroy says he means to go on a buffalo hunt and then to Europe. He cannot support Lincoln, but won't desert his principles. I am much of the same sentiments, though not willing now to decide what duty may demand next fall. Pomeroy remarked that on the news of my resignation reaching

<sup>1</sup> August 30, 1863.

the Senate, several of the Democratic senators came to him and said, "We'll go with you now for Chase." This meant nothing but a vehement desire to overthrow the existing Administration, but might mean much if the Democrats would only cut loose from slavery, and go for freedom and the protection of labor by a national currency. If they would do that I would cheerfully go for any man they might nominate.

A few days later he wrote recounting his efforts for the public good, and added:

My efforts were stoutly resisted outside, and had not earnest sympathy inside of the Administration. They were steadily prevailing, however, when a sense of duty to myself and the country also compelled me to resign.

A few malignant opponents of Mr. Lincoln still continued to write to Mr. Chase and keep alive in his mind the fancy of a possible nomination to the Presidency. His weakness before the people had been signally shown by an ill-judged attempt to secure him the nomination for Congress in Cincinnati, but in spite of this he still responded readily to suggestions from factious partisans. To one writing from Michigan he replied that he was now a private citizen and expected to remain such.

No one [he said] has been authorized to use my name in any political connection, except that I said I should not feel at liberty to refuse my services to the citizens of my congressional district if spontaneously and unanimously demanded. I think now that I erred in saying this; but it seemed right at the time. No such movement as the one you suggest seems to me expedient so far as I am concerned. Whether it would be expedient or patriotic in reference to some other name, I am not able to judge. I see only, as all see, that there is a deplorable lack of harmony, caused chiefly, in my judgment, by the injudicious course of some of Mr. Lincoln's chief advisers, and his own action on their advice.<sup>1</sup>

Even to comparative strangers he could not write without speaking slightly of the President. To one he said: "I fear our good President is so anxious for the restoration of the Union that he will not care sufficiently about the basis of representation." To another, with a singular and unusual lack of dignity, he said: "Some seem to think that a man who has handled millions must be rich, and so I should be if I could have retained for myself even one per cent. of what I saved to the people; but I would not exchange the consciousness of having kept my hands free from the touch of one cent of public treasure for all the riches in the world." Mr. Chase

was, of course, absolutely and unquestionably honest, but that virtue is not so rare in public men that one should celebrate it in himself. He passed the heat of the midsummer in the White Mountains. During his absence his tone of bitter and sullen comment towards the President and his associates in the Cabinet continued,<sup>2</sup> but after the fall of Atlanta, and the evident response of the country to the Chicago nominations, his tone underwent a sudden change. He announced himself at last in favor of the election of Mr. Lincoln. In his diary of the 17th of September, after he had returned to Washington, he said:

I have seen the President twice. . . . His manner was cordial and so were his words; and I hear of nothing but good-will from him. But he is not at all demonstrative, either in speech or manner. I feel that I do not know him, and I found no action on what he says or does. . . . It is my conviction that the cause I love and the general interests of the country will be best promoted by his reelection, and I have resolved to join my efforts to those of almost the whole body of my friends in securing it.

He continues in his usual tone of self-portraiture:

I have been told that the President said he and I could not get along together in the Cabinet. Doubtless there was a difference of temperament, and on some points of judgment I may have been too earnest and eager, while I thought him not earnest enough and too slow. On some occasions, indeed, I found that it was so. But I never desired anything else than his complete success, and never indulged a personal feeling incompatible with absolute fidelity to his administration.

He repeats over and again in his letters and diaries that he never really desired the Presidency; that he seized the first opportunity of withdrawing from the canvass. From Washington he went to Ohio, where he brought himself at last to make an open declaration of his preference for Mr. Lincoln as against McClellan; he voted for the Republican ticket at the election in October, and sent a telegram to the President that the result was "all right in Ohio and Indiana."

The death of Chief-Justice Taney occurred immediately afterwards, and the canvass for a successor on the part of the friends of Mr. Chase began without a moment's delay. Mr. Sumner was particularly ardent and pressing. "A Chief-Justice is needed," he wrote to the President, "whose position on the slavery question is already fixed and will not need argument of counsel to convert him." A mass

<sup>1</sup> Chase to Charles S. May, August 31, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Bowles wrote September 4, 1864: "Do you notice that the 'Antislavery Standard' and the 'Liberator,' the representatives of the old abolitionists, are both earnest for Lincoln? Yet a new crop of rad-

icals have sprung up, who are resisting the President and making mischief. Chase is going around, peddling his griefs in private ears and sowing dissatisfaction about Lincoln. Oh, how little great men can be!" ["Life and Times of Samuel Bowles," Vol. I., p. 413.]

of solicitations of the same character came in upon the President, and they were reinforced inside the Cabinet by the earnest influence of Mr. Fessenden and Mr. Stanton; and although these and other friends of Mr. Chase were so strongly encouraged by Mr. Lincoln's response that they had no hesitation in assuring him that he would without doubt be made Chief-Justice, the President gave no decided intimation of his purpose. It is altogether probable that he intended from the first to appoint him, but he resolved at the same time to say nothing about it until he was ready to act. He said to his secretary, "I shall be very 'shut pan' about this matter." When one day his secretary brought him a letter from Mr. Chase in Ohio, he said, "What is it about?" "Simply a kind and friendly letter," the secretary answered. Mr. Lincoln, without reading it, replied, with his shrewd smile, "File it with his other recommendations."

So reticent was Mr. Lincoln in regard to his purpose that the enemies of Mr. Chase, who were especially abundant and active in Ohio, endeavored to prevent his nomination by the presentation of strong and numerous signed protests against it. The President received them not too affably, and while he listened respectfully to all they had to say in regard to the merits of the case, he sternly checked them when they began to repeat instances of Mr. Chase's personal hostility to himself. He treated with the same contempt a more serious statement which he received from New York that Mr. Cisco, who had personally declared for McClellan, gave as his reason for such a course that Secretary Chase had told him that Mr. Lincoln was incompetent and unfit for the position he held, though he added that Mr. Chase on his return to Washington had informed him that he then considered it his public duty to support Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency. Strangely enough from the Treasury Department itself came an earnest protest against the late Secretary. The venerable Judge Lewis, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, protested that he was not a man of large legal or financial knowledge; that his selfishness had gradually narrowed and contracted his views of things in general; that he was amazingly ignorant of men; that it was the opinion in the department that he really desired towards the end of his term of office to injure and as far as possible to destroy the influence and popularity of the Administration. By his constant denunciation of the extravagance of disbursements, and his tone of malevolent comment against every act of the President, he clearly indicated his desire to excite popular discontent and grumbling against the Government. Judge Lewis said that with the exception of a

few sycophants the entire department was relieved by the change. Even Mr. Field, for whose sake he gave up his place, expressed himself as gratified by it. To all these representations Mr. Lincoln made no reply. He was equally silent as to the merits of other distinguished jurists whose names were mentioned to him. He had the highest esteem and regard for Mr. Evarts; he had great confidence in the legal learning and weight of character of Judge Swayne; he had a feeling of hearty friendship for Mr. Montgomery Blair, and although he had thought proper in the preceding autumn to ask for his resignation, the intimate and even affectionate relations which he maintained towards the ex-Postmaster-General encouraged him and his friends to believe that he would receive the appointment. The late Vice-President Wilson, shortly before his death,<sup>1</sup> said that Blair met him one day near the War Department and solicited his good word, saying that Chase would certainly not be nominated. Wilson was startled by Blair's confident tone and went at once to the President, to whom he reiterated the arguments already used in favor of Mr. Chase's nomination, saying that the President could well afford to overlook the harsh and indecorous things which Chase had said of him during the summer. "Oh! as to that," replied Lincoln, "I care nothing. Of Mr. Chase's ability and of his soundness on the general issues of the war there is, of course, no question. I have only one doubt about his appointment. He is a man of unbounded ambition, and has been working all his life to become President. That he can never be; and I fear that if I make him Chief-Justice he will simply become more restless and uneasy and neglect the place in his strife and intrigue to make himself President. If I were sure that he would go on the bench and give up his aspirations and do nothing but make himself a great judge, I would not hesitate a moment."

So strong was this impression upon Mr. Lincoln's mind that he half formed the intention of sending for Mr. Chase and saying frankly to him that the way was open to him to become the greatest Chief-Justice the Supreme Court had ever had if he would dismiss at once and forever the subject of the Presidency from his mind. But speaking on the subject with Senator Sumner, he saw in a moment's conversation how liable to misconstruction and misapprehension such action would be. In his eagerness to do what he thought best for the interests of both Mr. Chase and the country, he lost sight for an instant of the construction which Mr. Chase would inevitably place upon such a proposition coming from his twice-successful rival. Convinced as he was of Chase's

<sup>1</sup> April, 1874. Conversation with J. G. N.

great powers, and hoping rather against his own convictions that once upon the bench he would see in what direction his best prospects of usefulness and fame rested, he concluded to take all risks, and on the 6th of December nominated him to the Senate for Chief-Justice. He communicated his intention to no one, and wrote out the nomination in full with his own hand. It was confirmed at once without reference to a committee. Mr. Chase on reaching home the night of the same day was saluted at his door under his new title by his daughter, Mrs. Sprague. He at once sent the President a note, saying:

Before I sleep I must thank you for this mark of your confidence, and especially for the manner in which the nomination was made. I will never forget either, and trust you will never regret either. Be assured that I prize your confidence and goodwill more than any nomination to office.

The appointment was received with the greatest satisfaction throughout the Union. Although the name of Mr. Chase had been especially pressed upon the President by the publicmen who represented the most advanced antislavery sentiment of the North, the appointment when once made met with little opposition from any quarter. Mr. Chase, in a long life of political prominence and constant controversy, had won the universal respect of the country, not only for his abilities, but also for his courage, his integrity, and a certain solid weight of character of which his great head and massive person seemed a fitting embodiment. He had placed his portrait on the lower denominations of the legal-tender notes, saying with his customary heavy pleasantry, "I had put the President's head on the higher priced notes, and my own, as was becoming, on the smaller ones." His handsome face and features had thus become more familiar in the eyes of the people than those of any other man in America; and though neither then nor at any other period of his life did he become what could be called universally popular, the image of him became fixed in the general instinct as a person of serious importance in the national life. The people who gave themselves the trouble to reason about the matter said it was impossible that an original abolitionist should be untrue to the principles of freedom, or that the father of the national currency should ever disown his own offspring; while those who thought and spoke on impulse took it for granted that such a man as Mr. Chase should never for any length of time be out of the highest employment.

After all, the fears of the President in regard to the Chief-Justice were better founded than his hopes. Mr. Chase took his place on the

bench with a conscientious desire to do his whole duty in his great office, to devote his undoubted powers and his prodigious industry to making himself a worthy successor of the great jurists who before him had illustrated the bench, but he could not discharge the political affairs of the country from his mind. He still considered himself called upon to counteract the mischievous tendencies of the President towards conciliation and hasty reconstruction. His slighting references to him in his letters and diaries continued from the hour he took his place on the bench. When the fighting had ended around Richmond, and on the capitulation of Lee the fabric of the Southern Confederacy had fallen about the ears of its framers like a house of cards, the Chief-Justice felt himself called on to come at once to the front, and he wrote from Baltimore to the President:

I am very anxious about the future, and most about the principles which are to govern reconstruction, for as these principles are sound or unsound so will be the work and its results. You have no time to read a long letter nor have I time to write one, so I will be brief. And first as to Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

He advised the President to stand by the Peirpoint government. As to the other rebel States, he suggested the enrollment of the loyal citizens without regard to complexion.

This, you know [he said], has long been my opinion. . . . The application of this principle to Louisiana is made somewhat difficult by the organization which has already taken place, but happily the Constitution authorizes the legislature to extend the right of suffrage. . . . What reaches me of the condition of things in Louisiana impresses me strongly with the belief that this extension will be of the greatest benefit to the whole population.

He advised, as to Arkansas, an amendment of the Constitution, or a new convention, the members to be elected by the loyal citizens, without distinction of color. "To all the other States," he said, "the general principle may be easily applied." He closed by saying: "I most respectfully, but most earnestly, commend these matters to your attention. God gives you a great place and a great opportunity. May he guide you in the use of them." But the same day the President delivered from a window of the White House that final speech to the people which he had prepared without waiting for the instructions of the Chief-Justice, and the day after Mr. Chase wrote again from Baltimore reviewing the record of both, reminding the President of his former errors from which Mr. Chase had tried to save him, discussing

<sup>1</sup> Chase to Lincoln, April 11, 1865.

in full the Louisiana case, of which the President had made so masterly and luminous a presentation in his speech, insinuating that if the President were only as well informed as he was he would see things very differently.<sup>1</sup> Almost before the ink was dry on this unasked and superfluous sermon the President was dead. The Chief-Justice, writing to a friend in Ohio, said: "The schemes of politicians will now adjust themselves to the new conditions. I want no part in them."<sup>2</sup> He retained his attitude at the head of the extreme Republicans until about the time of the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. Over this famous trial he presided with the greatest dignity and impartiality; with a knowledge of law which was never at fault, and with a courage which rose superior to all the threats and all the entreaties of his friends. But his action during the trial and its result alienated him at once from the great body of those who had been his strongest supporters, while it created a momentary appearance of popularity among his life-long opponents. His friends began to persuade him, and he began to think, that he might be the candidate of the Democratic party for the Presidency. He commenced writing voluminous letters to leading Democrats expressing his indifference to the nomination, but at the same time saying he had always been a Democrat, was a Democrat still, and that the course which the Democracy ought to adopt would be to embrace true Democratic principles and declare for universal suffrage in the reconstruction of the Union. He did not flinch for an instant from his position on this important question. He said: "I believe I could refuse the throne of the world if it were offered me at the price of abandoning the cause of equal rights and exact justice to all men."<sup>3</sup> Following his inveterate habit of taking a subjective view of the world of politics, he thought it possible that the Democratic party might be converted in the twinkling of an eye by virtue of his broad and liberal views. He cherished this pleasant delusion for several months. Whenever an obscure politician called upon him or wrote to him from some remote corner of the country, expressing a desire that he should be the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, he would say, "Such indications . . . afford ground for hope that a change is going on in the views and policy of the Democratic party which warrants good hopes for the future."<sup>4</sup> There was for a moment a vague

impression among the leading Democrats that as it was hopeless to make a campaign with one of their own party against the overwhelming popularity of General Grant, it might be worth while to try the experiment of nominating the Chief-Justice with the hope of diverting a portion of the Republican vote, and a correspondence took place between August Belmont and Mr. Chase in relation to that subject. Mr. Chase wrote:

For more than a quarter of a century I have been, in my political views and sentiments, a Democrat, and I still think that upon questions of finance, commerce, and administration generally, the old Democratic principles afford the best guidance.<sup>5</sup>

But he stoutly asserted, even in the face of this temptation, his belief in universal suffrage, though he coupled it with universal amnesty, and said:

If the white citizens hitherto prominent in affairs will simply recognize their [the negroes'] right of suffrage, and assure them against future attempts to take it from them, I am sure that those citizens will be welcomed back to their old lead with joy and acclamation, . . . and a majority, if not all, the Southern States may be carried for the Democratic candidates at the next election.

He repeated this sanguine statement in his correspondence with other leading Democrats, but the negotiation came to nothing; the Democratic convention met in New York, and Mr. Chase's name, mentioned by accident, gained a roar of cheers from the assembly and one-half of one vote from a California delegate. He professed his entire indifference to the result, and took no further interest in the canvass. An injudicious Republican politician in New York asked him to address a Grant meeting. He declined, of course, stating that he could not unreservedly support the Republican ticket, and that this was not the time for discrimination in a public address. "The action of the two parties has obliged me to resume with my old faith my old position, . . . that of Democrat, by the grace of God, free and independent." When his old enemy, General Blair, came to the front in the progress of the canvass and rather overshadowed the more conservative Seymour, the Chief-Justice intimated<sup>6</sup> that men of his way of thinking would be constrained to the support of General Grant.

But if the political attitude of Mr. Chase in his later years was a subject of amazement

<sup>1</sup> "I most earnestly wish you could have read the New Orleans papers for the past few months. Your duties have not allowed it. I have read them a good deal; quite enough to be certain that if you had read what I have your feelings of humanity and justice would not let you rest till all loyalists are made equal

in the right of self-protection by suffrage." [Chase to Lincoln, April 12, 1865.]

<sup>2</sup> Chase to Ashley, April 16, 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Chase to Barney, May 29, 1868.

<sup>4</sup> Chase to Belmont, May 30, 1868.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> In a letter to Col. Brown of Kentucky, Sept. 29, 1868.

and sorrow to his ardent supporters, his decisions upon the bench were a no less startling surprise to those who had insisted upon his appointment as the surest means of conserving all the victories of the war. He who had sustained Mr. Stanton in his most energetic and daring acts during the war now declared such acts illegal; he who had continually criticized, not always loyally, the conduct of the President for what he considered his weak reverence for the rights of States, now became the earnest champion of State rights; and finally the man to whose personal solicitations a majority of Congress had yielded in passing the legal-tender act, without which he said that the war could not have been successfully carried on, from his place on the bench declared the act unconstitutional. But so firm

was the impression in the minds of the people of the United States of the great powers and perfect integrity, the high courage, the exalted patriotism of this man, that when he died, worn out by his tireless devotion to the public welfare, he was mourned and praised as, in spite of all errors and infirmities, he deserved to be. Although his appointment had not accomplished all the good which Mr. Lincoln hoped for when he made it, it cannot be called a mistake. Mr. Chase had deserved well of the Republic. He was entitled to any reward the Republic could give him; and the President, in giving to his most powerful and most distinguished rival the greatest place which a President ever has it in his power to bestow, gave an exemplary proof of the magnanimity and generosity of his own spirit.

## LIFE.

I AM o'er-weary picturing the strife;  
 This is a solemn fate—to ride to death  
 Lashed through the hurrying fatal lists of life,  
 Strengthless to cease, begging for one short breath,  
 Yet spurned for answer by a Power that thrusts  
 Its spurs into the soul. Upon the brow  
 Stand beads of blood; the very javelin rusts  
 From tears; the drooping form can scarce but bow  
 To earth. "One moment, Power, one resting-space,  
 Have mercy!" "On, on, on!" the stern reply.  
 I urge, "I once have triumphed, is not grace  
 For victory?" "Have on! Thy grace am I!"  
 "Is there no pause, no rest, however brief?"  
 "On to the fight! Thy death is thy relief."

*Louise Morgan-Smith.*

## TO GEORGE KENNAN.

UNFLINCHING Dante of a later day,  
 Thou who hast wandered through the realms of pain  
 And seen with aching breast and whirling brain  
 Woes which thou wert unable to allay,  
 What frightful visions hast thou brought away:  
 Of torments, passions, agonies, struggles vain  
 To break the prison walls, to rend the chain—  
 Of hopeless hearts too desperate to pray!  
 Men are the devils of that pitiless hell!  
 Men guard the labyrinth of that ninefold curse!  
 Marvel of marvels! Thou hast lived to tell,  
 In prose more sorrowful than Dante's verse,  
 Of pangs more grievous, sufferings more fell,  
 Than Dante or his master dared rehearse!

*Nathan Haskell Dole.*



# ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

## BLAIR'S MEXICAN PROJECT—THE HAMPTON ROADS CONFERENCE—THE XIIIITH AMENDMENT.

BY JOHN G. NICOLAY AND JOHN HAY, PRIVATE SECRETARIES TO THE PRESIDENT.

### BLAIR'S MEXICAN PROJECT.



HE triumphant reëlection of Mr. Lincoln in November, 1864, greatly simplified the political conditions as well as the military prospects of the country. Decisive popular majorities had pointedly rebuked the individuals who proclaimed, and the party which had resolved, that the war was a failure. The verdict of the ballot-box not only decided the continuance of a war administration and a war policy, but renewed the assurance of a public sentiment to sustain its prosecution. When Congress convened on the 6th of December, and the President transmitted to that body his annual message, he included in his comprehensive review of public affairs a temperate but strong and terse statement of this fact and its potent significance. Inspired by this majestic manifestation of the popular will to preserve the Union and maintain the Constitution, he was able to speak of the future with hope and confidence. But, with characteristic prudence and good taste, he uttered no word of boasting and indulged in no syllable of acrimony; on the contrary, in terms of fatherly kindness, he again offered the rebellious States the generous conditions he had previously tendered them by various acts and declarations, and specifically in his amnesty proclamation of December 8, 1863. The statement of the whole situation with its alternative issues was so admirably compressed into the closing paragraphs of his message as to leave no room for ignorance or misunderstanding.

The national resources, then [he said], are unexhausted, and, as we believe, inexhaustible. The public purpose to reëstablish and maintain the national authority is unchanged, and, as we believe, unchangeable. The manner of continuing the effort remains to choose. On careful consideration of all the evidence accessible, it seems to me that no attempt at negotiation with the insurgent leader could result in any good. He would accept nothing short

of severance of the Union—precisely what we will not and cannot give. His declarations to this effect are explicit and oft-repeated. He does not attempt to deceive us. He affords us no excuse to deceive ourselves. He cannot voluntarily re-accept the Union; we cannot voluntarily yield it. Between him and us the issue is distinct, simple, and inflexible. It is an issue which can only be tried by war, and decided by victory. If we yield, we are beaten; if the Southern people fail him, he is beaten. Either way, it would be the victory and defeat following war. What is true, however, of him who heads the insurgent cause is not necessarily true of those who follow. Although he cannot re-accept the Union, they can. Some of them, we know, already desire peace and reunion. The number of such may increase. They can, at any moment, have peace simply by laying down their arms, and submitting to the national authority under the Constitution. After so much, the Government could not, if it would, maintain war against them. The loyal people would not sustain or allow it. If questions should remain, we would adjust them by the peaceful means of legislation, conference, courts, and votes, operating only in constitutional and lawful channels. Some certain, and other possible, questions are, and would be, beyond the Executive power to adjust; as, for instance, the admission of members into Congress, and whatever might require the appropriation of money. The Executive power itself would be greatly diminished by the cessation of actual war. Pardons and remissions of forfeitures, however, would still be within Executive control. In what spirit and temper this control would be exercised can be fairly judged of by the past. A year ago general pardon and amnesty, upon specified terms, were offered to all, except certain designated classes; and it was, at the same time, made known that the excepted classes were still within contemplation of special clemency. . . . In presenting the abandonment of armed resistance to the national authority, on the part of the insurgents, as the only indispensable condition to ending the war on the part of the Government, I retract nothing heretofore said as to slavery. I repeat the declaration made a year ago, that "While I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress." If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an Executive duty to reënslave such persons, another, and not I, must be their instrument

<sup>1</sup> Copyright by J. G. Nicolay and John Hay, 1886. All rights reserved.

to perform it. In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the Government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it.<sup>1</sup>

The country was about to enter upon the fifth year of actual war; but at length all the indications were pointing unmistakably to a speedy collapse of the rebellion. This foreshadowed disaster to the Confederate armies gave rise to another volunteer peace project and negotiation, which, from the boldness of its animating thought and the official prominence of its actors, assumes a special historical importance.

The veteran politician Francis P. Blair, senior, who as a young journalist, thirty-five years before, had helped President Jackson throttle the South Carolina nullification; who, from his long political and personal experience at Washington, perhaps knew better than almost any one else the individual characters and tempers of Southern leaders; and who, moreover, was ambitious to crown his remarkable career with another dazzling chapter of political intrigue, conceived that the time had arrived when he might perhaps take up the rôle of a successful mediator between the North and the South. He gave various hints of his desire to President Lincoln, but received neither encouragement nor opportunity to unfold his plans. "Come to me after Savannah falls," was Lincoln's evasive reply; and when, on the 22d of December, Sherman announced the surrender of that city as a national Christmas gift, Mr. Blair hastened to put his design into execution. Three days after Christmas the President gave him a simple card bearing the words:

Allow the bearer, F. P. Blair, Sr., to pass our lines, go south, and return.

December 28, 1864.<sup>2</sup>

A. LINCOLN.

With this single credential he went to the camp of General Grant, from which he forwarded, by the usual flags of truce, the following letters to Jefferson Davis at Richmond:

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,  
December 30, 1864.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, President, etc., etc.

MY DEAR SIR: The loss of some papers of importance (title papers), which I suppose may have been taken by some persons who had access to my house when Genl. Early's army were in possession of my place, induces me to ask the privilege of visiting Richmond and beg the favor of you to facilitate my inquiries in regard to them.

Your mo. ob. st.  
F. P. BLAIR.<sup>3</sup>

HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Dec'r 30, 1864.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, President, etc., etc.

MY DEAR SIR: The fact stated in the inclosed note may serve to answer inquiries as to the object of my visit, which, if allowed by you, I would not communicate fully to any one but yourself. The main purpose I have in seeing you is to explain the views I entertain in reference to the state of the affairs of our country, and to submit to your consideration ideas which in my opinion you may turn to good and possibly bring to practical results—that may not only repair all the ruin the war has brought upon the nation, but contribute to promote the welfare of other nations that have suffered from it. In candor I must say to you in advance that I come to you wholly unaccredited except in so far as I may be by having permission to pass our lines and to offer to you my own suggestions—suggestions which I have submitted to no one in authority on this side the lines, and will not, without my conversation with you may lead me to suppose they may lead to something practicable. With the hope of such result, if allowed, I will confidentially unbosom my heart frankly and without reserve. You will of course hold in reserve all that is not proper to be said to one coming, as I do, merely as a private citizen and addressing one clothed with the highest responsibilities. Unless the great interests now at stake induce you to attribute more importance to my application than it would otherwise command I could not expect that you would invite the intrusion. I venture however to submit the matter to your judgment.

Your most obedient servant,

F. P. BLAIR.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Davis returned a reply with permission to make the visit; but by some mischance it did not reach Mr. Blair till after his patience had become exhausted by waiting and he had returned to Washington. Proceeding then to Richmond he was received by Jefferson Davis in a confidential interview on the 12th of January, 1865,<sup>5</sup> which he so thoroughly described in a written report that it is quoted in full:

"I introduced the subject to Mr. Davis by giving him an account of the mode in which I obtained leave to go through the lines, telling him that the President stopped me when I told him 'I had kindly relations with Mr. Davis, and at the proper time I might do something towards peace,' and said, 'Come to me when Savannah falls'—how after that event he shunned an interview with me, until I perceived he did not wish to hear me, but desired I should go without explanation of my object. I then told Mr. Davis that I wanted to know, if he thought fit to communicate it, whether he had any commitments with European powers which would control his conduct in making arrangements with the Government of the United States. He said in the most de-

<sup>1</sup> Message, Dec. 6, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> MS.

<sup>3</sup> Unpublished MS.

<sup>4</sup> Unpublished MS.

<sup>5</sup> Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 612.

cisive manner that there were none, that he had no commitments; and expressed himself with some vehemence that he was absolutely free and would die a freeman in all respects. This is pretty much his language; it was his sentiment and manner certainly. I told him that that was an all-important point, for if it were otherwise I would not have another word to say. I then prefaced the reading of the paper—which I had intended to embody in a letter to him, or present in some form if I could not reach him, or if I were prevented from seeing him personally—by saying that it was somewhat after the manner of an editorial and was not of a diplomatic character, and that I was like a shoemaker who sticks to his last, and could not change my mode of expressing my thoughts; moreover, I had become an old man, and what I was about to submit to him might be the dreams of an old man, but that I depended upon his practical good sense to assure me whether they were dreams that could be realized or not; that I had no doubt that he would deal with me with the utmost frankness, and give me credit for the like candor; that he knew that every drop of my blood and that of my children flowed from a Southern source; that I loved my whole country, but could not help feeling the force of the affections which my native instincts, enforced by habit, had attached me to the South. He replied that he gave me his full confidence, knew that I was an earnest man, and believed I was an honest man, and said he reciprocated the attachment which I had expressed for him and his family; that he was under great obligations to my family for kindnesses rendered to his, that he would never forget them, and that even when dying they would be remembered in his prayers. I then read the paper to him.<sup>1</sup>

*“ Suggestions submitted to Jefferson Davis, President, etc., etc.*

“The amnesty proclamation of President Lincoln in connection with his last message to Congress, referring to the termination of the rebellion, presents a basis on which I think permanent peace and union between the warring sections of our country may be reestablished. The amnesty offered would doubtless be enlarged to secure these objects and made to embrace all who sincerely desired to renew and confirm their allegiance to the Government of the United States by the extinction of the institution which originated the war against the National Republic. The proposition of the message is, that the war should be no longer waged by the United States against those who began it, after it had been relinquished by

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished MS.

them, with the designs it was meant to accomplish. This, simply as the first step to peace, is a proposal of an armistice, that, with proper conditions arranged to accommodate it to the feelings, the wishes, the interests of all concerned, might facilitate a restoration of perfect harmony among the parties to the war and lead on again the prosperity which has been so unhappily interrupted.

“Slavery no longer remains an insurmountable obstruction to pacification. You propose to use the slaves in some mode to conquer a peace for the South. If this race be employed to secure the independence of the Southern States by risking their lives in the service, the achievement is certainly to be crowned with their deliverance from bondage. But why should blacks or whites, the slaves or the free, be offered as victims to slaughter to acquire freedom and independence, when both objects are now attainable without such sacrifice? The white race of the South for almost a century have justly considered themselves, both as individuals and States, free and independent. If that proud eminence can again be reached, with the addition of all the material prosperity which has distinguished the free States, without making hecatombs of either whites or blacks, merely by the manumission of the latter, why should the atonement by blood be further insisted on? Slavery, “the cause of all our woes,” is admitted now on all sides to be doomed. As an institution all the world condemns it.

“This expiation made, what remains to distract our country? It now seems a free-will offering on the part of the South as essential to its own safety. Being made, nothing but military force can keep the North and South asunder. The people are one people, speak a common language, are educated in the same common law, are brought up in one common habitude,—the growth of republican representative institutions,—all fixed in freeholds rooted in the soil of a great luxuriant continent bound as one body by backbone mountains, pervaded in every member with gigantic streams running in every direction to give animation and strength like arteries and veins in the human system. Such an embodiment, in such a country, cannot be divided. The instruction of all ages appealing to the intelligence of the race brings conviction that union is strength—strength to build up the grandeur of the Republic; strength essential to secure the peace, the safety, the prosperity and glory of a great Republic. At the birth of the Government the necessities of commerce and the influence of social relations among a people of the same origin overcame the repugnance generated between the Northern and Southern States by the presence of negro slavery in the latter, and

brought them together as one people under a general government in spite of the revolting principle of slavery incorporated into the free system, which made liberty its essential element. Now that the ingredient, adverse to union, which produced disruption is removed, there is nothing left to counteract the powerful attraction that even as colonies brought our people together as a nation and which still resists victoriously the frenzy of revolution. The instincts of kindred, the bonds of commerce delineated on our maps, rivers, railroads, canals, which mark its transit, are circulating the life's blood of a gigantic race which claims the continent for its pedestal. The love of liberty nurtured by popular institutions, so dear to the Anglo-Saxon race, makes its attachments indestructible on this continent. We see them coming together again, after momentary rupture, along the Ohio, the Mississippi, upon the Gulf, the Potomac, and gradually in the interior wherever defense is assured from the military power that at first overthrew the Government. It is now plain to every sense that nothing but the interposition of the soldiery of foreign tyrannies can prevent all the States from resuming their places in the Union, casting from them the demon of discord. The few States remaining in arms that made the war for slavery as the *sine qua non* now propose to surrender it, and even the independence which was coveted to support it, as a price for foreign aid.

“Slavery abandoned, the issue is changed, and war against the Union becomes a war for monarchy; and the cry for independence of a government that assured the independence of the Southern States of all foreign powers and their equality in the Union, is converted into an appeal for succor to European potentates, to whom they offer, in return, homage as dependencies! And this is the price they propose to pay for success in breaking up the National Government! But will the people who have consented to wage this war for an institution once considered a property, now that they have abandoned it, continue the war to enslave themselves? Would they abandon slavery to commend themselves to the protection of European monarchies, and thus escape the embrace of that national Republic as a part of which they have enjoyed almost a century of prosperity and renown? The whole aspect of the controversy upon this view is changed. The patriarchal domestic institution given up and the idea of independence and ‘being let alone’ in happy isolation surrendered to obtain the boon of foreign protection under the rule of monarchy! The most modern exemplification of this programme for discontented republican States defeating their popular in-

stitution by intestine hostilities is found in the French emperor's Austrian deputy, Maximilian, sent to prescribe for their disorders. Certainly a better choice for a vice-royalty under the auspices of France and Germany could not have been made. This scion of the house of Hapsburg must have inherited from a line of ancestors extending to the Dark Ages the very innate instincts of that despotism which has manacled the little republics of Italy and the little principalities of Germany, and subjected them to the will of the Kaiser for more than a thousand years. With the blessing of Heaven, the great American Republic will foil this design of the central despotism of Europe to destroy all that remains of liberty on the civilized continents of the earth. Great Britain's jealousy and apprehension of her ancient enemy, and the ambition of Russia, looking to the South for aggrandizement, will unite in arresting the strides to power of this new Holy Alliance in the heart of Europe. England, for her wars in Europe, draws her armies from India and America. She will never consent to see France, which is a laboratory of soldiers, add to her means of creating armies by making military colonies of Mexico and the Southern States of this Union for the purpose.

“The design of Louis Napoleon in reference to conquest on this continent is not left to conjecture. With extraordinary frankness he made a public declaration that his object was to make the Latin race supreme in the southern section of the North American continent. This is a Napoleonic idea. The great Napoleon, in a letter or one of his dictations at St. Helena, states that it had been his purpose to embody an army of negroes in San Domingo, to be landed in the slave States with French support to instigate the blacks there to insurrection, and through revolution effect conquest. Louis Napoleon saw revolution involving the struggle of races and sections on the question of slavery made to his hand, when he instantly recurred to his uncle's ideas of establishing colonies to create commerce and a navy for France and to breed the material for armies to maintain his European empire. The moment he perceived our frenzied people engaged in perpetrating a national suicide he invaded Mexico to take up a position on the southern flank of this Republic, to avail himself of its distractions as well as those of Mexico, to give effect to the darling scheme of the Bonapartist dynasty to make for the Latin race in all our regions on the Gulf a seat of power under the auspices of France. His phrase “Supremacy of the Latin race” was to conciliate to his object the whole Spanish as well as the French and the mixed populations which originally founded and built up the colonies that introduced civ-

ilization around the Gulf of Mexico and on the streams of its wilderness interior. Jefferson Davis is the fortunate man who now holds the commanding position to encounter this formidable scheme of conquest, and whose fiat can at the same time deliver his country from the bloody agony now covering it in mourning. He can drive Maximilian from his American throne, and baffle the designs of Napoleon to subject our Southern people to the "Latin race." With a breath he can blow away all pretense for proscription, conscription, or confiscation in the Southern States, restore their fields to luxuriant cultivation, their ports to the commerce of the world, their constitutions and their rights under them as essentially a part of the Constitution of the United States to that strong guaranty under which they flourished for nearly a century not only as equals, but down to the hour of conflict the prevalent power on the continent. All this may be achieved by means which, so far from subjecting the weaker section of our Republic to humiliation or those asserting its cause by secession to dishonor, will add to the glory of both.

"To accomplish this great good for our common country President Lincoln has opened the way in his amnesty proclamation and the message which looks to armistice. Suppose the first enlarged to embrace all engaged in the war; suppose secret preliminaries to armistice enable President Davis to transfer such portions of his army as he may deem proper for his purpose to Texas, held out to it as the land of promise; suppose this force on the banks of the Rio Grande, armed, equipped, and provided, and Juarez propitiated and rallying the Liberals of Mexico to give it welcome and support—could it not enter Mexico in full confidence of expelling the invaders, who, taking advantage of the distractions of our own Republic, have overthrown that of Mexico and established a foreign despotism to rule that land and spread its power over ours? I know Romero, the able, patriotic minister who represents the Republic of Mexico near our Government. He is intimate with my son Montgomery, who is persuaded that he could induce Juarez to devolve all the power he can command on President Davis—a dictatorship, if necessary—to restore the rights of Mexico and her people and provide for the stability of its government. With such hopes inspiring and a veteran army of invincibles to rally on, such a force of Mexicans might be embodied as would make the conquest of the country the work of its own people under able leading. But if more force were wanted than these Mexican recruits and the army of the South would supply, would not multitudes of the army of the North, officers and men, be found ready to embark in an

enterprise vital to the interests of our whole Republic? The Republican party has staked itself on the assertion of the Monroe doctrine proposed by Canning and sanctioned by a British cabinet. The Democrats of the North have proclaimed their adhesion to it, and I doubt not from the spirit exhibited by the Congress now in session, however unwilling to declare war, it would countenance all legitimate efforts short of such result to restore the Mexican Republic. I think I could venture to pledge my son General Blair, now commanding a corps against the Confederacy, to resign his commission, expatriate himself, and join all the force he could draw to the standard borne on a crusade for the expulsion of the European despotism now threatening our confines. There is no cause so dear to the soul of American patriotism as that which embodies resistance to the intrusion of a foreign tyranny. Its infancy, nurtured in the sternest trials of a war against dictation from potentates of another hemisphere, has grown to a manhood that will never permit its approaches. He who expels the Bonaparte-Hapsburg dynasty from our southern flank, which General Jackson in one of his letters warned me was the vulnerable point through which foreign invasion would come, will ally his name with those of Washington and Jackson as a defender of the liberty of the country. If in delivering Mexico he should model its States in form and principle to adapt them to our Union and add a new Southern constellation to its benignant sky while rounding off our possession on the continent at the Isthmus, and opening the way to blending the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific, thus embracing our Republic in the arms of the ocean, he would complete the work of Jefferson, who first set one foot of our colossal government on the Pacific by a stride from the Gulf of Mexico. Such achievement would be more highly appreciated in the South, inasmuch as it would restore the equipoise between the Northern and Southern States—if indeed such sectional distinctions could be recognized after the peculiar institution which created them had ceased to exist."

It is of course possible that the hard mental processes in political metaphysics through which Jefferson Davis had forced his intellect in pursuing the ambitious hallucinations which led him from loyalty to treason, had blighted all generous sentiment and healthy imagination. But if his heart was yet capable of a single patriotic memory and impulse, strange emotions must have troubled him as he sat listening to the reading of this paper by the man who had been the familiar friend, the trusted adviser, it might almost be said the confidential voice, of Andrew Jackson. It was as

though the ghost of the great President had come from his grave in Tennessee to draw him a sad and solemn picture of the ruin and shame to which he was bringing, and had almost brought, the American Republic, especially "his people" of the Southern States—nationality squandered, slavery doomed, and his Confederacy a supplicant for life at the hands of European despotisms. If he did not correctly realize the scene and hour in all its impressiveness, he seems at least to have tacitly acknowledged that his sanguinary adventure in statesmanship was moribund, and that it was high time to listen earnestly to any scheme which might give hope of averting from himself and his adherents the catastrophe to whose near approach he could no longer shut his eyes. Mr. Blair's report thus narrates the remainder of the interview:

"I then said to him, 'There is my problem, Mr. Davis; do you think it possible to be solved?' After consideration he said, 'I think so.' I then said, 'You see that I make the great point of this matter that the war is no longer made for slavery, but monarchy. You know that if the war is kept up and the Union divided, armies must be kept afoot on both sides, and this state of things has never continued long without resulting in monarchy on one side or the other, and on both generally.' He assented to this, and with great emphasis remarked that he was like Lucius Junius Brutus, and uttered the sentiment ascribed to him in Shakspeare, without exactly quoting it:

There was a Brutus once that would have brooked  
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome  
As easily as a king.

Then he said that he was thoroughly for popular government, that this feeling had been born and bred in him. Touching the project, he said, of bringing the sections together again, the great difficulty was the excessive vindictiveness produced by outrages perpetrated in the invaded States during the war. He said reconciliation must depend, he thought, upon time and events, which he hoped would restore better feelings, but that he was certain that no circumstance would have a greater effect than to see the arms of our countrymen from the North and the South united in a war upon a foreign power assailing principles of government common to both sections and threatening their destruction. And he said he was convinced that all the powers of Europe felt it their interest that our people in this quarrel should exhaust all their energies in destroying each other, and thus make them a prey to the potentates of Europe, who felt that the destruction of our Government was necessary to the maintenance of the monarchical

principles on which their own were founded. I told him that I was encouraged by finding him holding these views, and believed that our country, if impressed with them, as I thought it might be universally, would soon resume its happy unity. He said I ought to know with what reluctance he had been drawn out of the Union; that he labored to the last moment to avoid it; that he had followed the old flag longer and with more devotion than anything else on earth; that at Bull Run when he saw the flag he supposed it was his own hanging on the staff,—they were more alike then than now,—and when the flag of the United States unfurled itself in the breeze he saw it with a sigh, but he had to choose between it and his own, and he had to look to it as that of an enemy. He felt now that it was laid up, but the circumstances to which he had adverted might restore it and reconciliation be easier. With regard to Mexico, if the foreign power was driven out, it would have to depend on the events there to make it possible to connect that country with this and restore the equipoise to which I looked; nobody could foresee how things would shape themselves.

"In relation to the vindictiveness produced by the war, I said I thought he was mistaken in supposing it would be attended with great difficulty in producing reconciliation between the States and people; I told him I had spent four hours on the picket line and perceived that kind feeling existed, instead of estrangement, between the men on both sides who stood armed to shoot each other. There was nothing to prevent the immediate indulgence of hostile feelings if they felt them. But they manifested a friendly feeling. A Boston Captain Deacon, who carried me through the lines to deliver me over to Captain Davis of South Carolina, drew his bottle from his bag and proposed to drink his health. They drank together with mutual good-will and gave each other their hands. This spirit of magnanimity exists in the soldiery on both sides. It is only the politicians and those who profit, or hope to profit, by the disasters of the war who indulge in acrimony. Mr. Davis said that what I remarked was very just in the main. He admitted that it was for the most part the people at home, who brooded over the disasters of the war, who indulged in bitterness.

"Touching the matter of arrangement for reconciliation proposed by me, he remarked that all depended upon well-founded confidence, and, looking at me with very significant expression, he said, 'What, Mr. Blair, do you think of Mr. Seward?' I replied: 'Mr. Seward is a very pleasant companion; he has good social feelings, but I have no doubt that where his ambition is concerned his selfish

feelings prevail over all principle. I have no doubt he would betray any man, no matter what his obligations to him, if he stood in the way of his selfish and ambitious schemes. But, I said, 'this matter, if entered upon at all, must be with Mr. Lincoln himself. The transaction is a military transaction, and depends entirely upon the Commander-in-Chief of our armies. If he goes into it he will certainly consider it as the affair of the military head of the Government. Now I know that Mr. Lincoln is capable of great personal sacrifices—of sacrificing the strongest feelings of his heart, of sacrificing a friend when he thinks it necessary for the good of the country; and you may rely upon it, if he plights his faith to any man in a transaction for which he is responsible as an officer or a man, he will maintain his word inviolably.' Mr. Davis said he was glad to hear me say so. He did not know Mr. Lincoln; but he was sure I did, and therefore my declaration gave him the highest satisfaction. As to Mr. Seward, he had no confidence in him himself, and he did not know any man or party in the South that had any.

"In relation to the mode of effecting the object about which we had been talking, he said we ought soon to have some understanding, because things to be done or omitted will depend upon it; that he was willing to appoint persons to have conferences, without regard to forms; that there must be some medium of communication; that he would appoint a person or persons who could be implicitly relied on by Mr. Lincoln; that he had on a former occasion indicated Judge Campbell, of the Supreme Court, as a person who could be relied on. I told him he was a person in whom I had unbounded confidence, both as regarded talents and fidelity.

"In reply to some remarks that I made as to the fame he would acquire in relieving the country from all its disasters, restoring its harmony, and extending its dominion to the Isthmus, he said what his name might be in history he cared not. If he could restore the prosperity and happiness of his country, that was the end and aim of his being. For himself, death would end his cares, and that was very easy to be accomplished.

"The next day after my first interview he sent me a note, saying he thought I might desire to have something in writing in regard to his conclusion, and therefore he made a brief statement which I brought away."<sup>1</sup>

The substantial accuracy of Mr. Blair's re-

port is confirmed by the memorandum of the same interview which Jefferson Davis wrote at the time and has since printed.<sup>2</sup> In this conversation the rebel leader took little pains to disguise his entire willingness to enter upon the wild scheme of military conquest and annexation which could easily be read between the lines of a political crusade to rescue the Monroe doctrine from its present peril. If Mr. Blair felt elated at having so quickly made a convert of the Confederate President, he was still further gratified at discovering yet more favorable symptoms in his official surrounding at Richmond. In the three or four days he spent at the rebel capital he found nearly every prominent personage convinced of the hopeless condition of the rebellion, and even eager to seize upon any contrivance to help them out of their direful prospects. The letter which he bore from Jefferson Davis to be shown to President Lincoln was in the following language:

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, January 12, 1865.

F. P. BLAIR, ESQ.

SIR: I have deemed it proper, and probably desirable to you, to give you, in this form, the substance of remarks made by me, to be repeated by you to President Lincoln, etc., etc. I have no disposition to find obstacles in forms, and am willing now, as heretofore, to enter into negotiations for the restoration of peace; and am ready to send a commission whenever I have reason to suppose it will be received, or to receive a commission, if the United States Government shall choose to send one. That, notwithstanding the rejection of our former offers, I would, if you could promise that a commissioner, minister, or other agent would be received, appoint one immediately, and renew the effort to enter into conference, with a view to secure peace to the two countries.

Yours, etc.,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.<sup>3</sup>

But the Government councils at Washington were not ruled by the spirit of political adventure. Abraham Lincoln had a loftier conception of patriotic duty and a higher ideal of national ethics. The proposal to divert his nation, "conceived in Liberty," from its grand task of preserving for humanity "government of the people, by the people, for the people," and degrade its heroic struggle and sacrifice to the low level of a joint filibustering foray, which, instead of crowning his work of emancipation, might perhaps eventuate in a renewal, extension, and perpetuation of slavery, did not receive from him an instant's consideration. His whole interest in Mr. Blair's mission was in the despondency of the rebel leaders which it disclosed, and the possibility of bringing them to an acknowledgment of their despair and the abandonment of their resistance. His only response to the overture thus half officially brought to his notice was to open the door of negotiation a little wider than he had done

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished MS.

<sup>2</sup> Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 612 et seq.

<sup>3</sup> "House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 229.

before, but for the specific and exclusive objects of union and peace. As an answer to Jefferson Davis's note he therefore wrote Mr. Blair the following:

WASHINGTON, January 18, 1865.

F. P. BLAIR, Esq.

SIR: You having shown me Mr. Davis's letter to you of the 12th instant, you may say to him that I have constantly been, am now, and shall continue ready to receive any agent whom he, or any other influential person now resisting the national authority, may informally send to me, with the view of securing peace to the people of our one common country.

Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.<sup>1</sup>

With this note Mr. Blair returned to Richmond, giving Mr. Davis such feeble excuses as he could hastily frame why Mr. Lincoln had rejected his overture for a joint invasion of Mexico,<sup>2</sup> alleging that Mr. Lincoln was embarrassed by radical politicians and could not use "political agencies." Mr. Blair then, but again without authority, proposed a new project, namely, that Grant and Lee should enter into negotiations, the scope and object of which, however, he seems to have left altogether vague. The simple truth is evident that Mr. Blair was, as best he might, covering his retreat from an abortive intrigue. He soon reported to Davis that military negotiation was out of the question.

Jefferson Davis therefore had only two alternatives before him—either to repeat his stubborn ultimatum of separation and independence, or frankly to accept Lincoln's ultimatum of reunion. The principal Richmond authorities knew, and some of them had tacitly admitted, that their Confederacy was nearly in collapse. Vice-President Stephens, in a secret speech to the rebel Senate, had pointed out that "we could not match our opponents in numbers, and should not attempt to cope with them in direct physical power," and advocated a Fabian policy which involved the abandonment of Richmond.<sup>3</sup> Judge Campbell, rebel Assistant Secretary of War, had collected facts and figures, which a few weeks later he embodied in a formal report, showing the South to be in practical exhaustion.<sup>4</sup> Lee sent

a dispatch saying he had not two days' rations for his army.<sup>5</sup> Richmond was already in a panic at rumors of evacuation. Flour was selling at a thousand dollars a barrel in Confederate currency. The recent fall of Fort Fisher had closed the last avenue through which blockade runners could bring them foreign supplies. Governor Brown of Georgia was refusing to obey orders from Richmond and characterizing them as "usurping" and "despotic."<sup>6</sup> Under such circumstances a defiant cry of independence would not reassure anybody; nor, on the other hand, was it longer possible to remain silent. Mr. Blair's first visit to Richmond had created general interest. Old friends plied him with eager questions and laid his truthful answers concerning their gloomy prospects solemnly to heart. The fact of his secret consultation with Davis transpired. When Mr. Blair came a second time and held a second secret consultation with the rebel President wonder and rumor rose to fever heat.

Impelled to take action, Mr. Davis had not the courage to be frank. He called, first, Vice-President Stephens, and afterward his cabinet, to a discussion of the project. A peace commission of three was appointed, consisting of Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President; R. M. T. Hunter, senator and ex-Secretary of State; and John A. Campbell, Assistant Secretary of War—all of them convinced that the rebellion was hopeless, and yet unwilling to admit the logical consequences and necessities. The drafting of instructions for the guidance of the commissioners was a difficult problem, since the explicit condition prescribed by Mr. Lincoln's note was that he would only receive an agent sent him "with the view of securing peace to the people of our one common country." The astute Mr. Benjamin, rebel Secretary of State, in order to make the instructions "as vague and general as possible," proposed the simple direction to confer "upon the subject to which it relates."<sup>7</sup> His action and language were broad enough to carry the inference that in his secret heart he too was sick of rebellion and ready to make terms. Whether it was so meant or not, his chief refused to receive the delicate suggestion.

<sup>1</sup> "House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 229.

<sup>2</sup> "He [Blair] then unfolded to me [writes Davis] the embarrassment of Mr. Lincoln on account of the extreme men, in Congress and elsewhere, who wished to drive him into harsher measures than he was inclined to adopt; whence it would not be feasible for him to enter into any arrangement with us by the use of political agencies; that if anything beneficial could be effected it must be done without the intervention of the politicians. He therefore suggested that Generals Lee and Grant might enter into an arrangement by which hostilities would be suspended, and a way paved for the restoration of peace. I responded that I would

willingly intrust to General Lee such negotiation as was indicated." [Davis, "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., pp. 616, 617.]

<sup>3</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., pp. 587-589.

<sup>4</sup> See "Open Letters" of this number of the magazine, for a letter from Judge Campbell to Judge Curtis entitled, "A View of the Confederacy from the Inside."—EDITOR.

<sup>5</sup> J. B. Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. II., p. 384.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 395.

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin to Davis, May 17, 1877. "Southern Historical Papers," Vol. IV., pp. 212-214.



With the ruin and defeat of the Confederate cause staring him full in the face Davis could bring himself neither to a dignified refusal nor to a resigned acceptance of the form of negotiation as Mr. Lincoln had tendered it. Even in this gulf of war and destitution into which he had led his people he could not forego the vanity of masquerading as a champion. He was unwilling, says Mr. Benjamin, to appear to betray his trust as Confederate President. "You thought, from regard to your personal honor, that your language ought to be such as to render impossible any malignant comment on your actions."<sup>1</sup> But if so, why not adopt the heroic alternative and refuse to negotiate? Why resort to the yet more humiliating absurdity of sending a commission on terms which he knew Mr. Lincoln had pointedly rejected?<sup>2</sup> With greater sacrifice of personal dignity the Confederate President adopted the devious alternative—a continuation of the narrow, unmanly, pettifogging misrepresentation with which Southern leaders had deluded the Southern people. Instead of Mr. Benjamin's phraseology, Jefferson Davis wrote the following instruction to the commissioners, which carried a palpable contradiction on its face:

RICHMOND, January 28, 1865.

In conformity with the letter of Mr. Lincoln, of which the foregoing is a copy, you are requested to proceed to Washington City for informal conference with him upon the issues involved in the existing war, and for the purpose of securing peace to the two countries. Your obedient servant,  
JEFFERSON DAVIS.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE HAMPTON ROADS CONFERENCE.

WITH this double-meaning credential the commissioners presented themselves at the Union lines near Richmond on the evening of January 29, 1865, and, instead of frankly showing their authority, asked admission "in accordance with an understanding claimed to exist with Lieutenant-General Grant, on their way to Washington as peace commissioners."<sup>4</sup> The application being telegraphed to Washington, Mr. Stanton answered that no one should be admitted under such character or profession until the President's instructions were received.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Lincoln, being apprised of the application, promptly dispatched a

special messenger with written directions to admit the commissioners under safe conduct if they would say in writing that they came for the purpose of an informal conference on the basis of his note of January 18 to Mr. Blair, "with a view of securing peace to the people of our one common country."<sup>6</sup> Before this messenger arrived, however, the commissioners reconsidered the form of their application and addressed a new one to General Grant, asking permission "to proceed to Washington to hold a conference with President Lincoln upon the subject of the existing war, and with a view of ascertaining upon what terms it may be terminated, in pursuance of the course indicated by him in his letter to Mr. Blair of January 18, 1865."<sup>7</sup>

Pursuant to this request, they were provisionally conveyed to Grant's headquarters. One of them records with evident surprise the unostentatious surroundings of the General-in-Chief.

I was instantly struck with the great simplicity and perfect naturalness of his manners, and the entire absence of everything like affectation, show, or even the usual military air or *mien* of men in his position. He was plainly attired, sitting in a log-cabin, busily writing on a small table, by a kerosene lamp. It was night when we arrived. There was nothing in his appearance or surroundings which indicated his official rank. There were neither guards nor aids about him. . . . He furnished us with comfortable quarters on board one of his dispatch boats. The more I became acquainted with him, the more I became thoroughly impressed with the very extraordinary combination of rare elements of character which he exhibited. During the time he met us frequently and conversed freely upon various subjects, not much upon our mission. I saw, however, very clearly that he was very anxious for the proposed conference to take place.<sup>8</sup>

The commissioners' note to Grant had been a substantial compliance with the requirements of President Lincoln; and so accepting it, he, on the 31st of January, sent Secretary Seward to meet them, giving him for this purpose the following written instructions:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,

WASHINGTON, January 31, 1865.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State:

You will proceed to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, there to meet and informally confer with Messrs.

'the two countries,' to which Mr. Davis replied that he so understood it. A. LINCOLN."

["House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 229.]

<sup>3</sup> "Southern Historical Papers," Vol. IV., p. 214.

<sup>4</sup> Wilcox to Parke, Jan. 29, 1865. "House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 230.

<sup>5</sup> Stanton to Ord, Jan. 29, 1865, 10 P. M. Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>6</sup> Lincoln to Eckert, Jan. 30, 1865. Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>8</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., p. 597.

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin to Davis, May 17, 1877. "Southern Historical Papers," Vol. IV., p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> [INDORSEMENT BY MR. LINCOLN.]

"To-day [January 28] Mr. Blair tells me that on the 21st instant he delivered to Mr. Davis the original, of which the within is a copy, and left it with him; that at the time of delivering it Mr. Davis read it over twice in Mr. Blair's presence, at the close of which he (Mr. Blair) remarked that the part about 'our one common country' related to the part of Mr. Davis's letter about

Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell, on the basis of my letter to F. P. Blair, Esq., of January 18, 1865, a copy of which you have. You will make known to them that three things are indispensable, to wit: *First*, the restoration of the national authority throughout all the States. *Second*, no receding by the Executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message to Congress, and in preceding documents. *Third*, no cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war, and the disbanding of all forces hostile to the Government. You will inform them that all propositions of theirs, not inconsistent with the above, will be considered and passed upon in a spirit of sincere liberality. You will hear all they may choose to say, and report to me. You will not assume to definitely consummate anything.

Yours, etc.,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Seward started on the morning of February 1, and simultaneously with his departure the President repeated to General Grant the monition which the Secretary of War had already sent him two days before through the special messenger, "Let nothing which is transpiring change, hinder, or delay your military movements or plans."<sup>2</sup> Grant responded to the order, promising that no armistice should ensue, adding, "The troops are kept in readiness to move at the shortest notice, if occasion should justify it."<sup>3</sup> The special messenger, Major Thomas J. Eckert, arrived while Mr. Seward was yet on his way. On informing the commissioners of the President's exact requirement, they replied by presenting Jefferson Davis's instruction. This was receding from the terms contained in their note to Grant, and Major Eckert promptly notified them that they could not proceed further unless they complied strictly with President Lincoln's terms. Thus at half-past nine on the night of February 1 the mission of Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell was practically at an end. It was never explained why they took this course, for the next day they again changed their minds. The only conjecture which seems plausible is that they hoped to persuade General Grant to take some extraordinary and dictatorial step. One of them hints as much in a newspaper article written long after the war. "We had tried," he wrote, "to intimate to General Grant, before we reached Old Point, that a settlement generally satisfactory to both sides could be more easily effected through him and General Lee by an armistice than in any other way. The attempt was in vain."<sup>4</sup> The general had indeed

listened to them, with great interest; and in their eagerness to convert him they had probably indulged in stronger phrases of repentance than they felt. About an hour after the commissioners refused Major Eckert's ultimatum General Grant telegraphed the following to Secretary Stanton, from which it will be seen that at least two of the commissioners had declared to him their personal willingness "to restore peace and union."

February 1, 10.30 P. M., 1865.

Hon. EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War:

Now that the interview between Major Eckert, under his written instructions, and Mr. Stephens and party has ended, I will state confidentially, but not officially, to become a matter of record, that I am convinced, upon conversation with Messrs. Stephens and Hunter, that their intentions are good and their desire sincere to restore peace and union. I have not felt myself at liberty to express even views of my own, or to account for my reticency. This has placed me in an awkward position, which I could have avoided by not seeing them in the first instance. I fear now their going back without any expression from any one in authority will have a bad influence. At the same time I recognize the difficulties in the way of receiving these informal commissioners at this time, and do not know what to recommend. I am sorry, however, that Mr. Lincoln cannot have an interview with the two named in this dispatch, if not all three now within our lines. Their letter to me was all that the President's instructions contemplated to secure their safe conduct, if they had used the same language to Major Eckert.

U. S. GRANT, Lieut.-General.<sup>5</sup>

On the morning of February 2, President Lincoln went to the War Department, and, reading Major Eckert's report, was about to recall Mr. Seward by telegraph, when Grant's dispatch was placed in his hands. The communication served to change his purpose. Resolving not to neglect the indications of sincerity here described, he immediately telegraphed in reply, "Say to the gentlemen I will meet them personally at Fortress Monroe as soon as I can get there."<sup>6</sup> The commissioners by this time had decided to accept Mr. Lincoln's terms, which they did in writing to both Major Eckert and General Grant, and thereupon were at once conveyed from General Grant's headquarters at City Point to Fort Monroe, where Mr. Lincoln joined Secretary Seward on the same night.

On the morning of February 3, 1865, the rebel commissioners were conducted on board the *River Queen*, lying at anchor near Fort Monroe, where President Lincoln and Secretary Seward awaited them; and in the saloon of that steamer an informal conference of four hours' duration ensued. It was agreed beforehand that no writing or memorandum should be made at the time, so that the record of the interview remains only in the separate accounts

<sup>1</sup> "House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> "Southern Historical Papers," Vol. III., p. 175 (April, 1877).

<sup>5</sup> "House Journal," 2d Session 38th Congress, p. 235.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

which each of the rebel commissioners afterward wrote out from memory, neither Mr. Seward nor President Lincoln ever having made any report in detail. Former personal acquaintance made the beginning easy and cordial, through pleasant reminiscences of the past and mutual inquiries after friends. In a careful analysis of these reports, thus furnished by the Confederates themselves, the first striking feature is the difference of intention between the parties. It is apparent that Mr. Lincoln went, honestly and frankly in all friendliness, to offer them the best terms he could to secure peace and reunion, but to abate no jot of official duty and personal dignity; while the main thought of the commissioners was to evade the express condition on which they had been admitted to conference; to seek to postpone the vital issue; and to propose an armistice, by debating a mere juggling expedient, against which they had in a private agreement with one another already committed themselves.

Mr. Stephens began the discussion by asking whether there was no way of restoring the harmony and happiness of former days; to which Mr. Lincoln replied, "There was but one way that he knew of, and that was, for those who were resisting the laws of the Union to cease that resistance." Mr. Stephens rejoined that they had been induced to believe that both parties might for a while leave their present strife in abeyance and occupy themselves with some continental question till their anger should cool and accommodation become possible.

Here Mr. Lincoln interposed promptly and frankly: "I suppose you refer to something that Mr. Blair has said. Now it is proper to state at the beginning that whatever he said was of his own accord, and without the least authority from me. When he applied for a passport to go to Richmond, with certain ideas which he wished to make known to me, I told him flatly that I did not want to hear them. If he desired to go to Richmond of his own accord, I would give him a passport; but he had no authority to speak for me in any way whatever. When he returned and brought me Mr. Davis's letter, I gave him the one to which you alluded in your application for leave to cross the lines. I was always willing to hear propositions for peace on the conditions of this letter, and on no other. The restoration of the Union is a *sine qua non* with me, and hence my instructions that no conference was to be held except upon that basis."

Despite this express disavowal Mr. Stephens persisted in believing that Mr. Lincoln had come with ulterior designs, and went on at considerable length to elaborate his idea of a

joint Mexican expedition, to be undertaken during an armistice and without a prior pledge of ultimate reunion. Such an expedition, he argued, would establish the "right of self-government to all peoples on this continent against the dominion or control of any European power." Establishing this principle of the right of peoples to self-government would necessarily also establish, by logical sequence, the right of States to self-government; and, present passions being cooled, there would ensue "an Ocean-bound Federal Republic, under the operation of this *Continental Regulator*—the ultimate absolute sovereignty of each State." His idea was that "All the States might reasonably be expected, very soon, to return, of their own accord, to their former relations to the Union, just as they came together at first by their own consent, and for their mutual interests. Others, too, would continue to join it in the future, as they had in the past. This great law of the system would effect the same certain results in its organization as the law of gravitation in the material world."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Stephens does not seem to have realized how comically absurd was his effort to convert President Lincoln to the doctrine of secession by this very transparent bit of cunning, and the others listened with considerate and patient gravity. Mr. Seward at length punctured the bubble with a few well-directed sentences, when Mr. Hunter also intervened to express his entire dissent from Mr. Stephens's proposal. "In this view," reports Mr. Stephens naïvely, "he expressed the joint opinion of the commissioners; indeed, we had determined not to enter into any agreement that would require the Confederate arms to join in any invasion of Mexico."<sup>2</sup> But the rebel Vice-President fails to record why, under these circumstances, he had opened this useless branch of the discussion.

At this stage President Lincoln brought back the conversation pointedly to the original object of the conference:

He repeated that he could not entertain a proposition for an armistice on any terms while the great and vital question of reunion was undisposed of. That was the first question to be settled. He could enter into no treaty, convention, or stipulation, or agreement with the Confederate States, jointly or separately, upon that or any other subject, but upon the basis first settled that the Union was to be restored. Any such agreement, or stipulation, would be a *quasi* recognition of the States then in arms against the National Government, as a separate power. That he never could do.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., pp. 600-604.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 608.

<sup>3</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., p. 608.

This branch of the discussion [also reports Judge Campbell] was closed by Mr. Lincoln, who answered that it could not be entertained; that there could be no war without the consent of Congress, and no treaty without the consent of the Senate of the United States; that he could make no treaty with the Confederate States, because that would be a recognition of those States, and that this could not be done under any circumstances; that unless a settlement were made there would be danger that the quarrel would break out in the midst of the joint operations; that one party might unite with the common enemy to destroy the other; that he was determined to do nothing to suspend the operations for bringing the existing struggle to a close to attain any collateral end. Mr. Lincoln in this part of the conversation admitted that he had power to make a military convention, and that his arrangements under that might extend to settle several of the points mentioned, but others it could not.<sup>1</sup>

The sophistical theory of secession as a conservative principle, and the filibustering bait of a joint expedition to steal Mexico under guise of enforcing the Monroe doctrine, being thus effectually cleared away, the discussion at length turned to the only reasonable inquiry which remained. Judge Campbell asked how restoration could be brought about if the Confederate States would consent, mentioning important questions, such as the disbandment of the army, confiscation acts on both sides, the effect of the Emancipation Proclamation, representation in Congress, the division of Virginia, and so on, which would inevitably arise and require immediate adjustment. On these various topics much conversation ensued, which, even as briefly reported, is too long to be quoted entire. It will be more useful to condense, under specific headings, the substantial declarations and offers which the commissioners report Mr. Lincoln to have made.

I. RECONSTRUCTION.—The shortest way the insurgents could effect this, he said, was "by disbanding their armies and permitting the national authorities to resume their functions." Mr. Seward called attention to that phrase of his annual message where he had declared, "In stating a single condition of peace, I mean simply to say that the war will cease on the part of the Government whenever it shall have ceased on the part of those who began it." As to the rebel States being admitted to representation in Congress, "Mr. Lincoln very promptly replied that his own individual opinion was they ought to be. He also thought they would be; but he could not enter into any stipulation upon the subject. His own opinion was that when the resistance ceased and the national authority was recognized the States would be immediately restored to their practical relations to the Union."

II. CONFISCATION ACTS.—"Mr. Lincoln said that so far as the confiscation acts and other penal acts were concerned, their enforcement was left entirely with him, and on that point he was perfectly willing to be full and explicit, and on his assurance perfect reliance might be placed. He should exercise the power of the Executive with the utmost liberality."<sup>2</sup> "As to all questions," says Judge Campbell's report, "involving rights of property, the courts could determine them, and that Congress would no doubt be liberal in making restitution of confiscated property, or by indemnity, after the passions that had been excited by the war had been composed."<sup>3</sup>

III. THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.—"Mr. Lincoln said that was a judicial question. How the courts would decide it he did not know, and could give no answer. His own opinion was, that as the proclamation was a war measure, and would have effect only from its being an exercise of the war power, as soon as the war ceased it would be inoperative for the future. It would be held to apply only to such slaves as had come under its operation while it was in active exercise. This was his individual opinion, but the courts might decide the other way, and hold that it effectually emancipated all the slaves in the States to which it applied at the time. So far as he was concerned, he should leave it to the courts to decide. He never would change or modify the terms of the proclamation in the slightest particular."

At another point in the conversation "He said it was not his intention in the beginning to interfere with slavery in the States; that he never would have done it if he had not been compelled by necessity to do it to maintain the Union; that the subject presented many difficult and perplexing questions to him; that he had hesitated for some time, and had resorted to this measure only when driven to it by public necessity; that he had been in favor of the General Government prohibiting the extension of slavery into the Territories, but did not think that that Government possessed power over the subject in the States, except as a war measure; and that he had always himself been in favor of emancipation, but not immediate emancipation, even by the States. Many evils attending this appeared to him."

Recurring once more to the subject of emancipation, "He went on to say that he would be willing to be taxed to remunerate the South-

<sup>1</sup> Campbell in "Southern Magazine," December, 1874, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., pp. 609, 612, and 617.

<sup>3</sup> Campbell in "Southern Magazine," December, 1874, p. 192.

ern people for their slaves. He believed the people of the North were as responsible for slavery as the people of the South; and if the war should then cease, with the voluntary abolition of slavery by the States, he should be in favor, individually, of the Government paying a fair indemnity for the loss to the owners. He said he believed this feeling had an extensive existence at the North. He knew some who were in favor of an appropriation as high as four hundred millions of dollars for this purpose. I could mention persons, said he, whose names would astonish you, who are willing to do this if the war shall now cease without further expense, and with the abolition of slavery as stated. But on this subject, he said, he could give no assurance—enter into no stipulation. He barely expressed his own feelings and views, and what he believed to be the views of others upon the subject."

IV. THE DIVISION OF VIRGINIA.—"Mr. Lincoln said he could only give an individual opinion, which was, that Western Virginia would be continued to be recognized as a separate State in the Union."

V. THE XIII<sup>TH</sup> AMENDMENT.—Mr. Seward brought to the notice of the commissioners one topic which to them was new; namely, that only a few days before, on the 31<sup>ST</sup> of January, Congress had passed the XIII<sup>TH</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, which, when ratified by three-fourths of the States, would effect an immediate abolition of slavery throughout the entire Union. The reports of the commissioners represent Mr. Seward as saying that if the South would submit and agree to immediate restoration, the restored States might yet defeat the ratification of this amendment, intimating that Congress had passed it "under the predominance of revolutionary passion," which would abate on the cessation of the war. It may well be doubted whether Mr. Seward stated the case as strongly as the commissioners intimate, since he himself, like Mr. Lincoln and his entire cabinet, had favored the measure. It is probable that the commissioners allowed their own feelings and wishes to color too strongly the hypothesis he stated, and to interpret as a probability what he mentioned as only among the possible events of the future.

It will be seen that in what he said upon these various propositions Mr. Lincoln was always extremely careful to discriminate between what he was under the Constitution authorized to do as Executive, and what would devolve upon coördinate branches of the Government under their own powers and limitations. With the utmost circumspection he pointed out the distinctions between his personal opinions and wishes and his official authority. More especially, however, did he repeat and emphasize

the declaration that he would do none of the things mentioned or promised without a previous pledge of reunion and cessation of resistance. "Even in case the Confederate States should entertain the proposition of a return to the Union," says Mr. Stephens's narrative, "he persisted in asserting that he could not enter into any agreement upon this subject [reconstruction], or upon any other matters of that sort, with parties in arms against the Government." Mr. Hunter interposed, and in illustration of the propriety of the Executive entering into agreements with persons in arms against the acknowledged rightful public authority referred to repeated instances of this character between Charles I. of England and the people in arms against him. Mr. Lincoln in reply to this said: "I do not profess to be posted in history. On all such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about the case of Charles I. is that he lost his head." The pertinent retort reduced Mr. Hunter to his last rhetorical resource—a wail of protest, in the very worst tone of sectional egotism, that the Confederate States and their people were by these terms forced to unconditional surrender and submission. To this Mr. Seward replied with patience and dignity "That no words like unconditional submission had been used, or any importing or justly implying degradation, or humiliation even, to the people of the Confederate States. . . . Nor did he think that in yielding to the execution of the laws under the Constitution of the United States, with all its guarantees and securities for personal and political rights, as they might be declared to be by the courts, could be properly considered as unconditional submission to conquerors, or as having anything humiliating in it. The Southern people and the Southern States would be under the Constitution of the United States, with all their rights secured thereby, in the same way, and through the same instrumentalities, as the similar rights of the people of the other States were."

The reader will recall that in his last annual message President Lincoln declared his belief, based "on careful consideration of all the evidence accessible," that it was useless to attempt to negotiate with Jefferson Davis, but that the prospect would be better with his followers. Mr. Lincoln had evidently gone to Fort Monroe in hope of making some direct impression upon Stephens and Hunter, whom Grant represented as having such good intentions "to restore peace and union." He did not neglect to try this joint of the rebel commissioners' armor. Seizing the proper opportunity, he pressed upon Stephens the suggestion of separate State action to bring about a cessation of hostilities. Addressing him, he said:

If I resided in Georgia, with my present sentiments, I'll tell you what I would do if I were in your place. I would go home and get the governor of the State to call the legislature together, and get them to recall all the State troops from the war; elect senators and members to Congress, and ratify this constitutional amendment prospectively, so as to take effect—say in five years. Such a ratification would be valid, in my opinion. I have looked into the subject, and think such a prospective ratification would be valid. Whatever may have been the views of your people before the war, they must be convinced now that slavery is doomed. It cannot last long in any event, and the best course, it seems to me, for your public men to pursue would be to adopt such a policy as will avoid, as far as possible, the evils of immediate emancipation. This would be my course, if I were in your place.

The salutary advice was wasted. Mr. Stephens was a very incarnation of political paradoxes. Perhaps in all the South there was not another man whose personal desires were so moderate and correct, and whose political theories were so radical and wrong. At the beginning he had opposed secession as premature and foolish, war as desperate and ruinous; yet, against his better judgment, he had followed his "corner-stone" theory of slavery and his "supremacy" theory of States rights to the war and the ruin he foretold. Now, at the end of four years' experiment, he still clung obstinately to his new theory of secession as a "continental regulator," and the vain hope that Mr. Lincoln would yet adopt it. When at last the parties were separating, with friendly handshakings, he asked Mr. Lincoln to reconsider the plan of an armistice on the basis of a Mexican expedition. "Well, Stephens," replied Mr. Lincoln, "I will reconsider it; but I do not think my mind will change." And so ended the Hampton Roads conference.<sup>1</sup>

The commissioners returned to Richmond in great disappointment, and communicated the failure of their efforts to Jefferson Davis, whose chagrin was as great as their own. They had all caught eagerly at the hope that this negotiation would somehow extricate them from the dilemmas and dangers whose crushing portent they realized, but had no power to

<sup>1</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., pp. 610-618.

<sup>2</sup> Campbell, "Recollections," etc. Pamphlet.

<sup>3</sup> Stephens, "War between the States," Vol. II., pp. 224-226.

<sup>4</sup> This meeting at the African Church was supplemented, a few days later, by a grand concerted effort at public speech-making at different places in Richmond, intended to electrify the South. Pollard, the Southern historian, thus describes it: "All business was suspended in Richmond; at high noon processions were formed to the different places of meeting; and no less than twenty different orators, composed of the most effective speakers in Congress and the cabinet, and the most eloquent divines of Richmond, took their stands in the halls of legislation, in the churches and the the-

aters, and swelled the eloquence of this last grand appeal to the people and armies of the South. . . . It was an extraordinary day in Richmond; vast crowds huddled around the stands of the speakers or lined the streets; and the air was vocal with the efforts of the orator and the responses of his audience. It appeared indeed that the blood of the people had again been kindled. But it was only the sickly glare of an expiring flame; there was no steadiness in the excitement; there was no virtue in the huzzas; the inspiration ended with the voices and ceremonies that invoked it; and it was found that the spirit of the people of the Confederacy was too weak, too much broken, to react with effect or assume the position of erect and desperate defiance." [Pollard, "The Lost Cause," pp. 684, 685.]

avert except by surrender; and now, when this last hope failed them, they were doubly cast down. Campbell says he "favored negotiations for peace" <sup>2</sup>—doubtless meaning by this language that he advocated the acceptance of the proffered terms. Stephens yet believed that Mr. Lincoln would be tempted by the Mexican scheme and would reconsider his decision. He therefore advised that the results of the meeting should be kept secret; and when the other commissioners and Davis refused to follow this advice, he gave up the Confederate cause as hopeless, withdrew from Richmond, abandoned the rebellion, and went into retirement.<sup>3</sup> His signature to the brief public report of the commissioners stating the result of the Hampton Roads conference was his last participation in the ill-starred enterprise.

Davis took the only course open to him after refusing the honorable peace which Mr. Lincoln had tendered. He transmitted the commissioners' report to the rebel Congress with a brief and dry message, stating that the enemy refused any terms except those the conqueror may grant; and then arranged as vigorous an effort as the circumstances permitted, once more to "fire the Southern heart." A public meeting was called, and on the evening of February 6 Jefferson Davis and others made speeches at the African Church,<sup>4</sup> which, judging from the meager reports that were printed, were as denunciatory and bellicose as the bitterest Confederate could have wished. Davis, particularly, is represented to have excelled himself in that lurid flow of partisan passion and vaunting prophecy which he so effectively used upon Southern listeners for many years. "Sooner than we should ever be united again," he said, "he would be willing to yield up everything he had on earth—if it were possible he would sacrifice a thousand lives"; and further announced his confidence that they would yet "compel the Yankees, in less than twelve months, to petition us for peace on our own terms."<sup>5</sup> He denounced President Lincoln as "His Majesty Abraham the First," and said "before the campaign was over he

aters, and swelled the eloquence of this last grand appeal to the people and armies of the South. . . . It was an extraordinary day in Richmond; vast crowds huddled around the stands of the speakers or lined the streets; and the air was vocal with the efforts of the orator and the responses of his audience. It appeared indeed that the blood of the people had again been kindled. But it was only the sickly glare of an expiring flame; there was no steadiness in the excitement; there was no virtue in the huzzas; the inspiration ended with the voices and ceremonies that invoked it; and it was found that the spirit of the people of the Confederacy was too weak, too much broken, to react with effect or assume the position of erect and desperate defiance." [Pollard, "The Lost Cause," pp. 684, 685.]

<sup>5</sup> "Richmond Dispatch," Feb. 7, 1865.

and Seward might find 'they had been speaking to their masters.'"<sup>1</sup>

This extravagance of impotent anger, this rage of baffled ambition, would seem merely pitifully grotesque were it not rendered ghastly by the reflection that it was the signal which carried many additional thousands of brave soldiers to bloody graves in continuing a palpably hopeless military struggle.

#### THE XIIIITH AMENDMENT.

WE have enumerated with some detail the series of radical antislavery measures enacted at the second session of the Thirty-seventh Congress, which ended July 17, 1862—the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; the prohibition of slavery in the national Territories; the practical repeal of the fugitive slave law; and the sweeping measures of confiscation which in different forms decreed forfeiture of slave property for the crimes of treason and rebellion. When this wholesale legislation was supplemented by the President's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation of September 22, 1862, and his final edict of freedom of January 1, 1863, the institution had clearly received its *coup de grâce* in all except the loyal border States. Consequently the third session of the Thirty-seventh Congress ending March 4, 1863, occupied itself with this phase of the slavery question only to the extent of an effort to put into operation the President's plan of compensated abolishment. That effort took practical shape in a bill to give the State of Missouri fifteen millions on condition that she would emancipate her slaves; but the proposition failed, largely through the opposition of a few conservative members from Missouri, and the session adjourned without having by its legislation advanced the destruction of slavery.

When Congress met again in December, 1863, and organized by the election of Schuyler Colfax of Indiana as Speaker, the whole situation had undergone further change. The Union arms had been triumphant—Gettysburg had been won and Vicksburg had capitulated; Lincoln's edict of freedom had become an accepted fact; fifty regiments of negro soldiers carried bayonets in the Union armies; Vandalism had been beaten for governor in Ohio by a hundred thousand majority; the draft had been successfully enforced in every district of every loyal State in the Union. Under these brightening prospects, military and political, the more progressive spirits in Con-

gress took up anew the suspended battle with slavery which the institution had itself invited by its unprovoked assault on the life of the Government.

The President's reference to the subject in his annual message was very brief:

The movements [said he] by State action for emancipation in several of the States not included in the Emancipation Proclamation are matters of profound gratulation. And while I do not repeat in detail what I have heretofore so earnestly urged upon this subject, my general views and feelings remain unchanged; and I trust that Congress will omit no fair opportunity of aiding these important steps to a great consummation.<sup>2</sup>

His language had reference to Maryland, where during the autumn of 1863 the question of emancipation had been actively discussed by political parties, and where at the election of November 4, 1863, a legislature had been chosen containing a considerable majority pledged to emancipation.

More especially did it refer to Missouri, where, notwithstanding the failure of the fifteen-million compensation bill at the previous session, a State convention had actually passed an ordinance of emancipation, though with such limitations as rendered it unacceptable to the more advanced public opinion of the State. Prudence was the very essence of Mr. Lincoln's statesmanship, and he doubtless felt it was not safe for the Executive to venture farther at that time. "We are like whalers," he said to Governor Morgan one day, "who have been on a long chase: we have at last got the harpoon into the monster, but we must now look how we steer, or with one 'flop' of his tail he will yet send us all into eternity."<sup>3</sup>

Senators and members of the House, especially those representing antislavery States or districts, did not need to be so circumspect. It was doubtless with this consciousness that J. M. Ashley, a Republican representative from Ohio, and James F. Wilson, a Republican representative from Iowa, on the 14th of December, 1863,—that being the earliest opportunity after the House was organized,—introduced, the former a bill and the latter a joint resolution to propose to the several States an amendment of the Constitution prohibiting slavery throughout the United States. Both the propositions were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, of which Mr. Wilson was chairman; but before he made any report on the subject it had been brought before the Senate, where its discussion attracted marked public attention.

Senator John B. Henderson, who with rare courage and skill had, as a progressive conservative, made himself one of the leading champions of Missouri emancipation, on the 11th of January, 1864, introduced into the

<sup>1</sup> Jones, "A Rebel War Clerk's Diary," Vol. II., p. 411.

<sup>2</sup> Message, Dec. 8, 1863.

<sup>3</sup> Carpenter in Raymond, "Life of Abraham Lincoln," p. 752.

Senate a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution that slavery shall not exist in the United States.<sup>1</sup> It is not probable that either he or the Senate saw any near hope of success in such a measure. The resolution went to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, where it caused some discussion, but apparently without being treated as a matter of pressing importance. Nearly a month had elapsed when Mr. Sumner also introduced a joint resolution, proposing an amendment that "Everywhere within the limits of the United States, and of each State or Territory thereof, all persons are equal before the law, so that no person can hold another as a slave."<sup>2</sup> He asked its reference to the select committee on slavery, of which he was chairman; but several senators argued that such an amendment properly belonged to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in this reference Mr. Sumner finally acquiesced. It is possible that this slight and courteously worded rivalry between the two committees induced earlier action than would otherwise have happened, for two days later — February 10 — Mr. Trumbull, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, reported back a substitute in the following language, differing from the phraseology of both Mr. Sumner and Mr. Henderson :

## ARTICLE XIII.

SECTION 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECT. 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.<sup>3</sup>

Even after the Committee on the Judiciary by this report had adopted the measure, it was evidently thought to be merely in an experimental or trial stage, for more than six weeks elapsed before the Senate again took it up for action. On the 28th of March, however, Mr. Trumbull formally opened debate upon it in an elaborate speech. The discussion was continued from time to time until April 8. As the Republicans had almost unanimous control of the Senate, their speeches, though able and eloquent, seemed perfunctory and devoted to a foregone conclusion. Those which attracted most attention were the arguments of Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Mr. Henderson of Missouri,—senators representing slave States,—advocating the amendment. Senator Sumner, whose pride of

erudition amounted almost to vanity, pleaded earnestly for his phrase, "All persons are equal before the law," copied from the Constitution of revolutionary France. But Mr. Howard of Michigan, one of the soundest lawyers and clearest thinkers of the Senate, pointed out the inapplicability of the words, and declared it safer to follow the Ordinance of 1787, with its historical associations and its well-adjudicated meaning.

There was, of course, from the first no doubt whatever that the Senate would pass the constitutional amendment, the political classification of that body being thirty-six Republicans, five Conditional Unionists, and nine Democrats. Not only was the whole Republican strength, thirty-six votes, cast in its favor, but two Democrats,—Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and James W. Nesmith of Oregon,—with a political wisdom far in advance of their party, also voted for it, giving more than the two-thirds required by the Constitution.

When, however, the joint resolution went to the House of Representatives there was such a formidable party strength arrayed against it as to foreshadow its failure. The party classification of the House stood one hundred and two Republicans, seventy-five Democrats, and nine from the border States, leaving but little chance of obtaining the required two-thirds in favor of the measure. Nevertheless there was sufficient Republican strength to secure its discussion; and when it came up on the 31st of May the first vote showed seventy-six to fifty-five against rejecting the joint resolution.

We may infer that the conviction of the present hopelessness of the measure greatly shortened the debate upon it. The question occupied the House only on three different days — the 31st of May, when it was taken up, and the 14th and 15th of June. The speeches in opposition all came from Democrats; the speeches in its favor all came from Republicans, except one. From its adoption the former predicted the direst evils to the Constitution and the Republic; the latter the most beneficial results in the restoration of the country to peace and the fulfillment of the high destiny intended for it by its founders. Upon the final question of its passage the vote stood: yeas, ninety-three; nays, sixty-five; absent or not voting, twenty-three. Of those voting in favor of the resolution eighty-seven were Republicans and four were Democrats.<sup>4</sup> Those voting against it were all Democrats. The resolution, not having secured a two-thirds vote, was

<sup>1</sup> Henry Wilson, "Antislavery Measures in Congress," p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> "Globe," Feb. 8, 1864, p. 521.

<sup>3</sup> "Globe," March 28, 1864, p. 1313.

<sup>4</sup> The Democrats voting for the joint resolution

were Moses F. Odell and John A. Griswold of New York, Joseph Baily of Pennsylvania, and Ezra Wheeler of Wisconsin, the latter having also made the only speech in its favor from the Democratic side.



thus lost; seeing which Mr. Ashley, Republican, who had the measure in charge, changed his vote so that he might, if occasion arose, move its reconsideration.

The ever-vigilant public opinion of the loyal States, intensified by the burdens and anxieties of the war, took up this far-reaching question of abolishing slavery by constitutional amendment with an interest fully as deep as that manifested by Congress. Before the joint resolution had failed in the House of Representatives the issue was already transferred to discussion and prospective decision in a new forum.

When on the 7th of June, 1864, the National Republican Convention met in Baltimore, the two most vital thoughts which animated its members were the renomination of Mr. Lincoln and the success of the constitutional amendment. The first was recognized as a popular decision needing only the formality of an announcement by the convention; and the full emphasis of speech and resolution was therefore centered on the latter, as the dominant and aggressive reform upon which the party would stake its political fortunes in the coming campaign.

It is not among the least of the evidences of President Lincoln's political sagacity and political courage that it was he himself who supplied the spark that fired this train of popular action. The editor of the "New York Independent," who attended the convention, and who with others visited Mr. Lincoln immediately after the nomination, printed the following in his paper of June 16, 1864: "When one of us mentioned the great enthusiasm at the convention, after Senator E. D. Morgan's proposition to amend the Constitution, abolishing slavery, Mr. Lincoln instantly said, 'It was I who suggested to Mr. Morgan that he should put that idea into his opening speech.'" The declaration of Morgan, who was chairman of the National Republican Committee, and as such called the convention to order, immediately found an echo in the speech of the temporary chairman, the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge. The indorsement of the principle by the eminent Kentucky divine, not on the ground of party, but on the high philosophy of true universal government and of genuine Christian religion, gave the announcement an interest and significance accorded to few planks in party platforms. Permanent chairman Dennison reaffirmed the doctrine of Morgan and Breckinridge, and the thunderous applause of the whole convention greeted the formal proclamation of the new dogma of political faith in the third resolution of the platform:

*Resolved*, That as slavery was the cause and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and as it must be always and everywhere hostile to the prin-

ciples of republican government, justice and the national safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic; and that while we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the Government in its own defense has aimed a death blow at this gigantic evil, we are in favor, furthermore, of such an amendment to the Constitution, to be made by the people, in conformity with its provisions, as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of slavery within the limits or the jurisdiction of the United States.

We have related elsewhere how upon this and the other declarations of the platform the Republican party went to battle and gained an overwhelming victory—a popular majority of 411,281, an electoral majority of 191, and a House of Representatives of 138 Unionists to 35 Democrats. In view of this result the President was able to take up the question with confidence among his official recommendations; and in the annual message which he transmitted to Congress on the 6th of December, 1864, he urged upon the members whose terms were about to expire the propriety of at once carrying into effect the clearly expressed popular will. Said he:

At the last session of Congress a proposed amendment of the Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States, passed the Senate, but failed, for lack of the requisite two-thirds vote, in the House of Representatives. Although the present is the same Congress, and nearly the same members, and without questioning the wisdom or patriotism of those who stood in opposition, I venture to recommend the reconsideration and passage of the measure at the present session. Of course the abstract question is not changed; but an intervening election shows, almost certainly, that the next Congress will pass the measure if this does not. Hence there is only a question of *time* as to when the proposed amendment will go to the States for their action. And as it is to so go at all events, may we not agree that the sooner the better? It is not claimed that the election has imposed a duty on members to change their views or their votes any further than, as an additional element to be considered, their judgment may be affected by it. It is the voice of the people, now for the first time heard upon the question. In a great national crisis like ours unanimity of action among those seeking a common end is very desirable—almost indispensable. And yet no approach to unanimity is attainable unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority, simply because it is the will of the majority. In this case the common end is the maintenance of the Union; and, among the means to secure that end, such will, through the election, is most clearly declared in favor of such constitutional amendment.<sup>1</sup>

On the 15th of December Mr. Ashley gave notice that he would on the 6th of January, 1865, call up the constitutional amendment for reconsideration;<sup>2</sup> and accordingly on the

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln, Annual Message, Dec. 6, 1864.

<sup>2</sup> "Globe, Dec. 15, 1864, p. 53.

day appointed he opened the new debate upon it in an earnest speech. General discussion followed from time to time, occupying perhaps half the days of the month of January. As at the previous session, the Republicans all favored, while the Democrats mainly opposed it, but the important exceptions among the latter showed what immense gains the proposition had made in popular opinion and in congressional willingness to recognize and embody it. The logic of events had become more powerful than party creed or strategy. For fifteen years the Democratic party had stood as sentinel and bulwark to slavery; and yet, despite its alliance and championship, the peculiar institution was being consumed like dry leaves in the fire of war. For a whole decade it had been defeated in every great contest of congressional debate and legislation. It had withered in popular elections, been paralyzed by confiscation laws, crushed by Executive decrees, trampled upon by marching Union armies. More notable than all, the agony of dissolution had come upon it in its final stronghold—the constitutions of the slave States. Local public opinion had throttled it in West Virginia, in Missouri, in Arkansas, in Louisiana, in Maryland; and the same spirit of change was upon Tennessee, and even showing itself in Kentucky. Here was a great revolution of ideas, a mighty sweep of sentiment, which could not be explained away by the stale charge of sectional fanaticism, or by alleging technical irregularities of political procedure. Here was a mighty flood of public opinion, overleaping old barriers and rushing into new channels. The Democratic party did not and could not shut its eyes to the accomplished facts. "In my judgment," said Mr. Holman of Indiana, "the fate of slavery is sealed. It dies by the rebellious hand of its votaries, untouched by the law. Its fate is determined by the war; by the measures of the war; by the results of the war. These, sir, must determine it, even if the Constitution were amended."<sup>1</sup> He opposed the amendment, he declared, simply because it was unnecessary. Though few other Democrats were so frank, all their speeches were weighed down by the same consciousness of a losing fight, a hopeless cause. The Democratic leader of the House, and lately defeated Democratic candidate for Vice-President, Mr. Pendleton, opposed the amendment, as he had done at the previous session, by asserting that three-fourths of the States did not possess constitutional power to pass it, this being—if the paradox be excused—at the same time the weakest and the strongest argument: weakest, because the Constitution in terms contradicted the assertion; strongest, because under the circumstances nothing less than unconstitutionality could jus-

tify opposition. But while the Democrats as a party thus persisted in a false attitude, more progressive members had the courage to take independent and wiser action. Not only did the four Democrats—Moses F. Odell and John A. Griswold, of New York; Joseph Baily, of Pennsylvania; and Ezra Wheeler, of Wisconsin—who supported the amendment at the first session again record their votes in its favor, but they were now joined by thirteen others of their party associates, namely: Augustus C. Baldwin, of Michigan; Alexander H. Coffroth and Archibald McAllister, of Pennsylvania; James E. English, of Connecticut; John Ganson, Anson Herrick, Homer A. Nelson, William Radford, and John B. Steele, of New York; Wells A. Hutchins, of Ohio; Austin A. King and James S. Rollins, of Missouri; and George H. Yeaman, of Kentucky; and by their help the favorable two-thirds vote was secured. But special credit for the result must not be accorded to these alone. Even more than of Northern Democrats must be recognized the courage and progressive liberality of members from the border slave States—one from Delaware, four from Maryland, three from West Virginia, four from Kentucky, and seven from Missouri, whose speeches and votes aided the consummation of the great act; and, finally, something is due to those Democrats, eight in number, who were absent without pairs, and thus, perhaps not altogether by accident, reduced somewhat the two-thirds vote necessary to the passage of the joint resolution.

Mingled with these influences of a public and moral nature it is not unlikely that others of more selfish interest, operating both for and against the amendment, were not entirely wanting. One, who was a member of the House, writes:

The success of the measure had been considered very doubtful, and depended upon certain negotiations the result of which was not fully assured, and the particulars of which never reached the public.<sup>2</sup>

So also one of the President's secretaries wrote on the 18th of January:

I went to the President this afternoon at the request of Mr. Ashley, on a matter connecting itself with the pending amendment of the Constitution. The Camden and Amboy railroad interest promised Mr. Ashley that if he would help postpone the Raritan railroad bill over this session they would in return make the New Jersey Democrats help about the amendment, either by their votes or absence. Sumner being the Senate champion of the Raritan bill, Ashley went to him to ask him to drop it for this session. Sumner, however, showed reluctance to adopt Mr. Ashley's suggestion, saying that he hoped the amendment would pass anyhow,

<sup>1</sup> "Globe," Jan. 11, 1865, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> George W. Julian, "Political Recollections," p. 250.

etc. Ashley thought he discerned in Sumner's manner two reasons: (1) That if the present Senate resolution were not adopted by the House, the Senate would send them another in which they would most likely adopt Sumner's own phraseology and thereby gratify his ambition; and (2) that Sumner thinks the defeat of the Camden and Amboy monopoly would establish a principle by legislative enactment which would effectually crush out the last lingering relics of the States rights dogma. Ashley therefore desired the President to send for Sumner, and urge him to be practical and secure the passage of the amendment in the manner suggested by Mr. Ashley. I stated these points to the President, who replied at once: "I can do nothing with Mr. Sumner in these matters. While Mr. Sumner is very cordial with me, he is making his history in an issue with me on this very point. He hopes to succeed in beating the President so as to change this Government from its original form and make it a strong centralized power." Then calling Mr. Ashley into the room, the President said to him, "I think I understand Mr. Sumner; and I think he would be all the more resolute in his persistence on the points which Mr. Nicolay has mentioned to me if he supposed I were at all watching his course on this matter."<sup>1</sup>

The issue was decided in the afternoon of the 31st of January, 1865. The scene was one of unusual interest. The galleries were filled to overflowing; the members watched the proceedings with unconcealed solicitude. "Up to noon," said a contemporaneous formal report, "the pro-slavery party are said to have been confident of defeating the amendment, and after that time had passed, one of the most earnest advocates of the measure said, 'T is the toss of a copper.'<sup>2</sup> There were the usual pleas for postponement and for permission to offer amendments or substitutes, but at four o'clock the House came to a final vote, and the roll-call showed, yeas, 119; nays, 56; not voting, 8. Scattering murmurs of applause had followed the announcement of affirmative votes from several of the Democratic members. This was renewed when by direction of the Speaker the clerk called his name and he voted aye. But when the Speaker finally announced, "The constitutional majority of two-thirds having voted in the affirmative, the joint resolution is passed," "the announcement"—so continues the official report printed in the "Globe"—"was received by the House and by the spectators with an outburst of enthusiasm. The members on the Republican side of the House instantly sprung to their feet, and, regardless of parliamentary rules, applauded with cheers and clapping of hands. The example was followed by the male spectators in the gal-

leries, which were crowded to excess, who waved their hats and cheered loud and long, while the ladies, hundreds of whom were present, rose in their seats and waved their handkerchiefs, participating in and adding to the general excitement and intense interest of the scene. This lasted for several minutes."<sup>3</sup> "In honor of this immortal and sublime event," cried Mr. Ingersoll of Illinois, "I move that the House do now adjourn," and against the objection of a Maryland Democrat the motion was carried by a yea and nay vote. A salute of one hundred guns soon made the occasion the subject of comment and congratulation throughout the city. On the following night a considerable procession marched with music to the Executive Mansion to carry popular greetings to the President. In response to their calls, Mr. Lincoln appeared at a window and made a brief speech, of which only an abstract report was preserved, but which is nevertheless important as showing the searching analysis of cause and effect which this question had undergone in his mind, the deep interest he felt, and the far-reaching consequences he attached to the measure and its success.

He supposed [he said] the passage through Congress of the constitutional amendment for the abolishment of slavery throughout the United States was the occasion to which he was indebted for the honor of this call. The occasion was one of congratulation to the country and to the whole world. But there is a task yet before us—to go forward and have consummated by the votes of the States that which Congress had so nobly begun yesterday. He had the honor to inform those present that Illinois had to-day already done the work. Maryland was about half through, but he felt proud that Illinois was a little ahead. He thought this measure was a very fitting if not an indispensable adjunct to the winding up of the great difficulty. He wished the reunion of all the States perfected, and so effected as to remove all causes of disturbance in the future; and to attain this end, it was necessary that the original disturbing cause should, if possible, be rooted out. He thought all would bear him witness that he had never shrunk from doing all that he could to eradicate slavery, by issuing an Emancipation Proclamation. But that proclamation falls far short of what the amendment will be when fully consummated. A question might be raised whether the proclamation was legally valid. It might be urged, that it only aided those that came into our lines, and that it was inoperative as to those who did not give themselves up; or that it would have no effect upon the children of slaves born hereafter; in fact, it would be urged that it did not meet the evil. But this amendment is a king's-cure-all for all the evils. It winds the whole thing up. He would repeat, that it was the fitting if not the indispensable adjunct to the consummation of the great game we are playing. He could not but congratulate all present—himself, the country, and the whole world—upon this great moral victory.

<sup>1</sup> J. G. N., "Personal Memoranda." MS.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Special Committee of the Union League Club of New York. Pamphlet.

<sup>3</sup> "Globe," Jan. 31, 1865, p. 531.