the other, and each had some stirring incident to relate that we need not now repeat. It was very interesting, however, to note the absence of any symptom of bitterness or remnant of animosity, and the entire cordiality which marked the intercourse of these men. They were from widely different classes; some were educated and refined, others rude and unpolished. They had been arrayed on opposite sides, and at times, as their narratives revealed, had been in fierce antagonism. While the war had lasted they had been alert and unsparing foes, often pushed to dire extremities by each other. But now that the war was over they seemed to have totally forgotten their old hostility; and just as quondam school-boys revive old recollections of hard knocks given and received, or rejoice over the memory of pranks played, feuds waged, rivalries kindled, triumphs won, and defeats suffered, they dwelt upon their mutual conflicts and escapes on a sterner theatre. Not a trace of vindictiveness was visible, and their comradeship seemed as perfect as if it had been uninterrupted. It was difficult to realize that they had ever been hard pressed by each other, and on more than one occasion had been engaged in deadly grapples; and I was amazed at the good humor with which they gossiped over events so full of passion at the time, and on the turn of which hung captivity, or, mayhap, life or death. Instances of this nature were recalled by one and another of the party, and the attendant circumstances were related as though they were capital jokes; and each was as merry over the reminiscence of some "tight place" in which he had been put by some other as though it had been nothing more than a harmless frolic undertaken for mutual pastime.

THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE REPUBLIC.

[Twelfth Paper.]

THE EXPERIMENT OF THE UNION, WITH ITS PREPARATIONS.

THERE are some states and forms of government which have been slowly building themselves up for ages, while others are the artificial results of political theory. The first find support in historical causes and in past political habits. Having grown with a people, and being expressions of their national life, they are in little danger of overthrow from within, and present so great a resistance to aggression from without that nothing but a very superior force can destroy them. The states which are constructed on theory or after an approved model, without being rooted in old habits, are much less sure of continuance. If enacted constitutions do not meet the wants of the nation, they have little self-preserving power, they awaken no enthusiasm, they point back to no history on which a people's pride loves to dwell. Especially is the life-power of institutional nations great. Those ancient institutions which are connected with the habits and affections of a people, and those local ones which carry the spirit of self-government into the smallest territorial divisions, and which are at the opposite pole from centralization—these possess a tenacity of life to which no constitutions founded on the rights of man and on the almost mechanical working of functions of government can possibly attain. If in the course of time it should be found necessary to make changes in the form of government, such institutional nations can make them without changing their political habits. The state puts on another dress, and seems to have passed through a revolution, but the revolution is confined to form; the essential spirit of the polity remains as before.

Yet even a nation wonted to self-government and to political reflection can not hope to escape changes of a different kind from those that generally give birth to revolutions in free communities. The changes to which we refer do not proceed from political causes in the first instance, although such causes may help them in their growth; but they are to be ascribed to moral and social changes affecting large masses in the society. They resemble, on the great scale, those silent alterations in individual character when a man finds his old ways of thinking not so satisfactory to himself as they once were, or when he acquires the means of pleasure or of show of which in his youth he was destitute, or when he forms relations and enters into intimacies with men of a class or of habits to which he was a stranger before. By-and-by he finds his old principles giving way; he was not aware of the direction in which he was drifting until, perhaps, the work on his character or his faith is nearly done. In the same way the influences of changes in the relations of property when there is immense capital in the hands of a few by the side of a great proletarian class, or of a transition from simplicity of life and habits to showiness and expensiveness, or of changes of religious faith and moral principles undermined by social or philosophical causes, and giving way to skepticism or profligacy on the part of many—these influences may go on without being noticed or feared for a long time, but are really more to be dreaded than po-

litical revolutions. Changes from causes like these are hard to be estimated, not only because they are slow and silent, but also because the people themselves are the subject of the change, and the new generations have no exact standard within their reach by which they can compare the present with the past. Their effects, again, on political institutions as well as on social life can not be prevented. You might as well try to keep a stream from running downward as to prevent these consequences altogether. Take an example: the feudal system could keep its sway over a nation as long as the feudal lords held all the land, and there was no, or next to no, personal property; but as soon as the towns became great centres of manufacturing and commerce, as soon as large merchants could lend money to kings and so turn the fortune of war against the nobles, so soon a new estate was in its germ, which, in the nature of the case, would demand a place in the political system, and could not long be kept out. Such an instance is a plain one, because the external side of life is visible to all, and is easily measured by the historian. But what shall we say of a general loss of religious faith in a nation, of the decay of simplicity, of integrity in public and private affairs, of honor, of respect for the institutions or habits of forefathers? Shall we not say that these changes in a people's moral principles must have an effect upon their capacity to endure political restraints, to bear political freedom, to deal soberly with obstacles in the way of prosperity, to respect the relations of private life, to be orderly and contented amidst the inequalities of fortune?

In forecasting the dangers to which national union or liberty is exposed, in estimating the probabilities for the future of good or evil growing out of causes already active or now beginning to act, in endeavoring to form a judgment on the continuity of political habits, in discussing the question whether a community has a self-reforming power when evil is already admitted into its system—we must look at moral and historical influences both. These may be coeval and concurrent at their origin, while afterward a new set of causes may come in and act either together or on opposite sides. If they are found in decided conflict—the historical, for instance, being conservative, and those of a moral nature destructive—the tendency will be toward national weakness and decay, unless there is life enough left to reform the body-politic. Or they may come into existence at different epochs; and in general it is true that new moral influences, themselves the results, in part, of changes in society, appear after states are fully organized, and amidst great public as well as private prosperity.

Bearing these remarks in mind, let us look at the development of our institutions from the time of the first English colonies onward. For one of the most hopeful things to be said of these United States is that we are what we are not chiefly by any forecast of our own, still less by any intention to form a great English-speaking nation on this side of the water, but because historical causes which could not be foreseen shaped and moulded us into a tolerably homogeneous and compact people. This is the only nation of civilized men of which it can be said that we passed through all the stages of our life, from birth onward, through revolution to self-government and political greatness, in a natural progress, so that what some call historical accidents stand out, in our case most especially, to a man who sees a God in the world, as His guidance and purpose to make something good out of us: which purpose we can thwart, but one is filled with hope by believing that it is real.

Among the advantages which the English colonies had at their commencement deserve to be mentioned the nationality of the first colonists, the time at which they emigrated, and their general character.

We are not disposed, on the score of race, to claim a superiority for the Anglo-Saxons over the inhabitants of other parts of Europe; nor can we believe that if there had been no Norman conquest, no check on the kings by the nobles, no parliaments, no opposition to papal interference by statutes of *præmunire* and against provisors, no Protestant Reformation, the English race would have of course developed itself by its inherent energies into something great and good. It was, in fact, owing to national decline that William of Normandy succeeded in his conquest of Saxon England. But we rejoice that the first colonies were composed chiefly of Englishmen, because they brought with them the habits and traditions of a land

> "Where freedom broadens slowly down
> From precedent to precedent."

It was not in England, as on the Continent, that the towns needed to conspire with the kings against an oppressive nobility, or that the nobility gained privileges exclusively for their own order, leaving the others to take care of themselves, but the Magna Charta and all the securities of freedom that followed it were for the benefit of all. There the Parliament at an early day separated into two Houses, and by its power of granting or withholding taxes, which was derived from feudalism, came to have a material part in making the laws. It was there that the town privileges and habits of local self-government maintained themselves with more permanence than on the Continent. There arose a numerous yeomanry, holders of small portions of land in their own rights—a class

which since the emigrations has almost disappeared in the old country. There, too, the freemen were called to act on juries, and felt that they were part of the power of the country. Thus the colonists brought with them habits of self-government and the spirit of free Englishmen, which were not likely to fade out of their characters in the new wilderness life where they were forced, in great measure, to model their own institutions.

The time of the emigrations was the best possible for the formation of new self-governing communities. If they had begun in the century before the Reformation, when the civil wars of England had destroyed a large part of the upper classes and barbarized the people, the star of empire setting its way westward would have shed a baleful light. Little intelligence, no learning, small acquaintance with the arts, no religious thoughtfulness, and an ill-defined feeling of political rights would have presided over the birth of the new settlements. If they had begun in the middle of the eighteenth century, when England had fallen to its lowest degree of moral and religious degeneracy, and when the old yeomanry were beginning to disappear, these States would have been founded by a less hardy class, with purposes in changing their homes that were less noble, and with less of the vigorous manhood required in the conquest of nature. It is a remark of the political economists that the best prospects for successful colonization belong to an age anterior to division of labor on a great scale. Men whose lives are spent in one process of manufacture are not well fitted for all the various employments of a settlement in the wilderness, where every one must know a little of the numerous arts of life, or succumb in the conflict with unsubdued nature. The time which determined the character of the American colonies was prior to the great modern triumphs of mechanical invention.

We have also great reason to be thankful for the average character of the early colonists. M. Guizot, in speaking of the English and French revolutions, contrasts them in this respect: that the English occurred in a religious age among a religious people, while the French broke out in an age when the human mind doubted, or denied with extreme boldness, every thing that had been settled before. The first colonies belonged to that religious age, and though it would not be true to say that religious liberty was the only motive of even the Puritan colonists, yet it was a very strong motive, and it furnished the best conditions for the rise of a God-fearing and liberty-loving nation. For they who planted first of all the church, and the school by its side, who within a few years founded a college, as a pattern for all that should afterward arise, might indeed be narrow in some of their views and practices, but they were the best possible pioneers of a coming host of freemen. So, also, the Quaker settlements were dictated by the desire to enjoy their religion in peace, away from the oppressive laws of England and of its colonies; their leaders were among the best men of the mother country. The Catholics of Maryland founded their colony for the sake of religious freedom. The Dutch of New Netherlands did not, indeed, emigrate for this purpose; but they belonged to a noble race, in whose memories the times of William the Silent were still fresh, and their settlements at the end of his son Maurice's life were favored by the more liberal of the two political parties. The more southern colonies did not, it is true, have motives in their emigrations much beyond the ordinary ones that lead people away from their homes. Some, moreover, who joined them at an early time added any thing but character and strength; yet the chivalrous spirit and the attachment to English institutions which animated the best of the settlers in that quarter were to become valuable elements in the formation of the national character.

Besides the classes of colonists just mentioned, two others deserve to be spoken of, although, on account of their small number and the later date of their emigration, they contributed comparatively little to the qualities which mark the American people. One of these were the Huguenots, who came in the greatest numbers soon after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who, making small settlements in New York, Massachusetts, Virginia, and South Carolina, have given to the country a number of honorable and important families. Larger and more compact settlements were made by the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of Ulster in New Hampshire, Western Pennsylvania, and North Carolina—a class of inhabitants of whom their descendants have a right to be proud.

Another most fortunate circumstance in the early history of the country was the substantial equality of the early settlers. They nearly all belonged to that industrious middle class which is the strength of a nation. A few servants came with the more opulent of the colonists, and a few younger branches or near connections of noble families established themselves both in the Northern and the Southern settlements, but not enough to have any sensible influence either on the spirit or the destinies of the land. It was fixed well-nigh a century before the Revolution that if such an event should happen, and the colonies become self-governing, there could be no strife of orders to add complexity to the struggle with the mother country.

Still, again, it deserves notice that the

slowness with which population and wealth increased during a century and a half contributed to the steadiness, the simplicity of manners, and sobriety of judgment of the people. The colonies went into the war of independence with a population of less than three millions. There were no towns containing twenty-five thousand inhabitants at the peace in 1783. There were no centres of business in the last century such as now exist. Merchants in some of the smaller villages of the Eastern States imported their goods directly from England; as, indeed, it was the custom in parts of the South for the planters of a district to receive their annual supplies from the old countries and send back their tobacco and other commodities in the same vessel. In regard to social distinctions it may be said that they were more marked than now. Certain families here and there had a pre-eminence conceded to them, which rather grew out of old ancestral respectability than out of wealth, which was acknowledged willingly and accepted without pride. In a few large places a style prevailed which wanted the show and expense of our times, but approached nearer to the style of true gentlemanly living. This was a tradition from the usages of the upper middle class in England, which was as natural, as much expected from persons of a certain standing, as plain living was from the mass of the people. In those families, however, who set the mode, thrift, domestic economy, a training of the daughters for housekeeping, are believed to have prevailed which are now passing away. As there was slow growth, with no perceptible change, steady habits grew up in political as well as in social life. Take the colony of Connecticut for an example. Three Wyllyses of the same family were Secretaries of State in succession all the time from 1712 to 1810, and the middle one of the three for sixty-one years. One member of what is now called the House of Representatives was elected by his town to seventy-two Legislatures in succession, that is—since there were two annual elections—through a period of thirty-six years. It was comparatively rare for a minister to leave his parish until death called him away. Capital accumulated so slowly, and families were in general so large, that strict economy, the parent of many civic virtues, was almost a necessity. Men were free, and felt themselves to be equal, but marks of respect were voluntarily rendered to persons in public stations. When on Sunday the service was over, the minister and his family went out of church first, the congregation all rising, and in some places bowing until they had passed through the aisle. The display in dress was very small, but if the thick brocades which are now shown here and there as having belonged to a grandmother or a great-grandmother afford a criterion for judgment, materials were chosen which would last almost a lifetime, while the ordinary household garb was very simple. If habits such as particulars like these show to have existed did indeed prevail, they mark a character contented with the present, averse to innovation, neither anxious nor speculative—the best possible character for hardening and toughening a people in preparation for future struggles. And here, again, our good fortune in having had no aristocratic class in the proper sense of the term may be referred to as another cause of simplicity of manners. For if there had been but a moderate number of noble families with large incomes and domains distributed through the colonies, their mode of living and dressing would have been the ideal, and would have made many dissatisfied with their moderate means. It might have been as it has since been in the new settlements of some of the Western States, where a very small percentage—say, five or eight per cent.—of slaves was diffused through the district. This small ratio was enough to bring white labor into disrepute. So, in the case supposed, a sprinkling of persons belonging to a noble class might have been enough to affect injuriously those solid and homely virtues which are the strength of a country.

And here we are reminded of the one bitter drug poured into our cup—the institution of slavery and the importation of blacks from Africa. The bringing over of indentured apprentices, of convict laborers, and of "redemptioners" was a small evil, for in fifty years they were lost in the population. But when, in 1620, a Dutch vessel brought twenty negroes for sale into James River, a new element of race and population was introduced, which has had, and may yet have, a vast and disastrous influence on our history. This is not the place to pursue this gloomy subject to a great length. We simply remark that the separation in interests and traits of character between the Northern and Southern States was intensified by slavery far beyond the bounds of a healthy difference; that the uniformity of interests produced by it in States where it existed gave them the power of combination, made them the political masters of the country, and opened the way for burning jealousies; that the wearing out of the soil by the agriculture of slavery demanded new lands for its spread; that it tended to degrade the lower class of whites where it was predominant; and that it was destined to come inevitably into conflict with ideas of personal rights and with those religious feelings which demanded security for the sacredness of family ties in the negro race as well as for their mental and moral elevation. The conflict came, and was indeed awful.

Had there been less blindness and more trust in the final triumph of justice, it would have been earlier and less severe.

But that which more than all things else determined the future of this country was the number of colonies, together with their general similarity and their important differences. If there could have been one vast colony, under one government, extending along the whole line of coast from the French possessions to the Spanish settlements in Florida, it might have been strong and prosperous possibly, but the present United States would not have grown up on such a foundation. There was a necessity of just such a series of colonies as were actually planted, all animated by a common English feeling, and speaking the common English tongue, yet settled for different reasons, and, in a course of many years of self-government, developed into different entities, as well as having distinctive characteristics. The Northern and Southern groups of these colonies, alike among themselves, yet differing each from the other in their climates, industries, institutions, and religious peculiarities, might have formed the nucleus of two nations if English feeling, influences from the mother country, trade, and many common interests had not brought them together more than the causes of an opposite nature tended to keep them apart. The colonies lying between these extremes had no common likeness; indeed, before the cession of New Netherlands to the English they had no common bond of union, and afterward, although best situated for purposes of commerce, were more fitted for some time to follow than to lead. We will make the supposition that when the Southern colonies admitted slavery, New England had thought it a sin and a shame; even such an opinion could easily have prevented the two extremes from meeting. As it was, slavery existed every where, and not being regarded as a wrong or an evil until the Quakers began to teach a higher morality, no such cause of separation existed. We will make another supposition, that the colony of New Netherlands, lying like a wedge on the coast, with the best sea-port within its borders, settled originally by colonists not understanding the English tongue and not educated under English political institutions, could have retained its nationality until no power could have conquered it. In this case a most serious problem would have offered itself in the course of time—either the Eastern and Southern English colonies would have pursued their destinies apart, or, if they could have acted in conjunction with the Dutch colony, difficulties from language and institutions might have prevented a perfect union. Thus we see that the colonies were pointed toward confederation by their history, and were almost prevented from establishing any other kind of government throughout the course of centuries. One cluster of confederates, or more than one, seems to have been the only possible political alternative if they were ever to separate from the mother country. Two or more clusters, so far as we can interpret the probabilities of things, would have been most disastrous, as containing the seeds of strife, and sowing them for all the future.

Another point connected with our colonial history deserves notice. We were not only prepared by the circumstances of our history for a confederation or union of States, but were educated for it by our relations to the mother country. The colonies all had law-making assemblies formed somewhat after the pattern of the Houses of Parliament, and the larger part of them chief executive officers holding their places, without any popular election, by appointment of the king. At first, indeed, several colonies chose their own chief magistrates, but on various pretenses they were divested of this power, until at last two of the colonies subsisted under what was called a proprietary government, and two of the smaller alone retained their original free choice of all public officers. The royal Governors certainly did not tend to establish friendly relations between the crown and its American subjects: witness the strifes between these magistrates and the Legislatures in Massachusetts and Virginia. The proprietary government in Pennsylvania was perhaps less acceptable, as placing it in the hands of a private man by hereditary right to fill a kind of secondary throne, with the power of vetoing the acts of the Legislature. The two chartered colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island certainly had no occasion to find fault with their independence; but they were brought up by their very privileges to be on their guard against any invasion of them, and could see little use in their distant connection with the crown.

The exigencies of self-defense often called for common counsels on the part of neighboring colonies, so that the minds of the people were accustomed to congresses gathered for objects in which all shared alike. The great contest between England and France for supremacy in North America excited the liveliest interest through the colonies; they looked on the French not only with the eyes of Englishmen as hereditary foes, but as allies also of the red men, and as willing to incite them to any treacherous act against the frontier English settlements. The prelude to the seven years' war was marked by the unfortunate expeditions of the Virginians and of Braddock, in which Washington was schooled for his future post. The critical years 1757–1758 saw regiments from the Northern colonies joining Abercrombie and Lord Howe in their expedi-

tion against Ticonderoga and Crown Point, while large quotas were sent from New England to aid General Amherst in his attack on Louisbourg. There were thus scattered through the colonies numbers of officers and soldiers who had seen service. When the critical blow was struck, and Quebec became English—when, finally, by the peace of 1763, all the French territory in the North changed hands, and in the West the Mississippi nearly to its mouth became the boundary between the two nationalities, we may easily believe that the colonies felt an increase of security, and would be the more ready to resist aggressions from the mother country because they stood in no fear of the power of France.

Thus far we have seen historical causes preparing the colonies for self-government, on a certain plan, if ever the connection with the mother country should be broken. The declaration of independence and the war of the Revolution, after this preparation, were owing to faults and blunders of the mother country, and to the political doctrines of the eighteenth century. Of this breach we will forbear to speak. To say little of it would be to do injustice to events so supremely important in our history; to say much of it would turn us aside from our main subject. The colonists had as much loyalty to the mother country as could justly be expected from men who had chiefly protected themselves, who had been denied their privileges as Englishmen, and had been used rather as sources of commercial benefit for Great Britain than helped in their progress toward becoming self-sustaining parts of the empire. The war was undertaken soberly, regretfully, with no side issues in view, and with no rancor toward England in the hearts of the people. This want of rancor is shown by the fact that many of the best officers, Washington himself, Hamilton, Knox, and a host of others, remained English in their feelings, and were attached to the traditions of the mother country; and that the leading civilians who had urged on rebellion, and had been the counselors of the country in the war, were afterward charged with undue partialities toward England. Probably no revolution did its work with more conscientiousness, and fuller persuasion of its rightfulness on the part of the people, with less of a spirit of blood, with fewer bitter remembrances of the enemy, than this. It deserves to be noticed, as showing the sober temper of the war, that a regiment formed from volunteers in one part of a county took one of the parish ministers with them as their chaplain, as if it had been a church meeting adjourned to another place.

It was a blessing for which we can never be too thankful that an experiment at constitution-making was set on foot in the war, and was tried long enough to show its defects, and point the way toward something better. It was nothing but a league of States, with no Executive, with one House in Congress, without a Supreme Court, without the power of regulating commerce with foreign countries or between the States. This last defect especially it was that demanded a new instrument. This new instrument was made to remove difficulties which were felt; and, as Mr. Edward A. Freeman, in his history of confederations, justly remarks, was made in no conscious imitation of any other constitution. This learned and able historian of federal governments, writing in 1863, when he looked on the Union as permanently dissolved, says of it: "The American Union has actually secured for what is really a long period of time a greater amount of combined peace and freedom than was ever before enjoyed by so large a portion of the earth's surface. There have been and still are vaster despotic empires, but never before has so large an inhabited territory remained for more than seventy years in the enjoyment at once of internal freedom and of exemption from the scourge of war. Now this is the direct result of the federal system." If we have succeeded in making it clear that our present Constitution was almost an inevitable result of historical causes—that is, of Divine Providence—we shall be led to value it more than if we were to look on it as a product of successive workings of human wisdom.

It is impossible that any constitution should at all times be equal in its bearing upon all interests and all parts of a country, and equally impossible that it should not admit in some points two interpretations. The parts of the country which were more devoted to trade wanted a strong government; the parts where the people lived within themselves, in the pursuits of agriculture, felt in general less zeal for some improvement on the old Confederation. There grew up naturally a jealousy of powers conferred on the common government as restricting and opposing the powers of the separate States; with this the principle of strict construction of the Constitution of the United States was united; and thus two parties coeval with our present government arose—the Federal, and the Republican or Democratic. The former had a certain leaning toward England, and dreaded the principles of the French revolutionists; the other admired France and distrusted England. After twelve years of control over public affairs, during the Presidencies of Washington and the elder Adams, the very upright party of the Federalists was driven out of power, partly in consequence of blunders and dissensions within itself, partly be-

cause it did not fully understand the temper of the people, while a still greater blunder on the part of leading members of it in the Eastern States led to its final extinction.

The Democratic party, under Southern leaders, held the government from the beginning of the century for sixty years, not without internal differences and divisions, arising from sectional interests and other causes. As it often happens, the name rather than the essence of the original party was preserved; new issues had driven out the old ones from the field of politics. Tariffs were altered from time to time, the Southern States being almost unanimous for free trade, and the North preponderating toward protection. Through all the changes the country flourished by emigration, by the rise of manufactures, in its marine, in its wealth. The great West, growing vaster in its dimensions, from the time of the purchase of Louisiana until it reached the Pacific coast, began to give signs of grasping at the hegemony and controlling the policy of the country. But meanwhile a spiritual cause, without power at first—a cloud no bigger than a man's hand—arose above the horizon. Slavery had been preached against by a few, protested against by the noblest of the Quakers from the days of John Woodman, acknowledged by all to be unrighteous in itself, and yet was endured in the hope that emancipation at length would quietly dissolve a structure which ages had built up, and which could not fall without a reconstruction of society. The cotton-gin and the ample lands of the Gulf States, including the latest acquisition, Texas, offered it a boundless field to spread over, and opened the prospect, whenever a new State should be formed in which there was an appreciable infusion of the slave element, of new strength added to the Southern supremacy. In the extreme South this was a smooth path toward supremacy, but was not so easy on the borders, where slave and white labor came together. As early as 1820 the problems of the future developed themselves, at which time a dividing line was drawn by the Missouri Compromise between the two interests. Next appeared the doctrine of nullification, and the attempt of the leading Southern State, South Carolina, to establish a practical check on the action of the general government by that of one of the States. It was maintained at first that there resided a power in each State of the confederation to judge whether a law of the United States was constitutional, and to resist within its own territory the operation of such laws as were judged to be otherwise. In 1832 an ordinance was passed declaring the tariff law "null, void, and no law," and forbidding duties on imports to be paid within its jurisdiction after a certain day in the near future. It so happened that the President at this time was a Southern man of great popularity and of singular energy, who not only felt that such a doctrine of nullification, if carried out, would be a death-blow to any union, and was entirely unconstitutional, but had personal reasons for doing his utmost to oppose it. In his opposition he carried for the time the greater part of the South with him; it was understood that he was ready to use all the forces at his disposal in executing the law; and the message on nullification which was issued in his name in 1833 was a most valuable state paper in refutation of the doctrine that a State has a right to decide for itself that the Constitution has been violated, and so deciding, to secede from the Union or to declare a law void.

The storm thus raised was blown over by the help of a tariff compromise, but the opinions already spoken of spread through the Slave States more and more, in a greater ratio of increase, perhaps, than the principles of abolition and the political party founded upon them grew at the North and West. Here a controversy began which nothing—no prudence at the North, no denunciation, no interests of traffic—could put down. Every fugitive slave reclaimed added to the force of the feeling against slavery. Formerly it had been hoped that in time slavery would give way to serfdom, and in the end to full freedom; but as the abolitionists appealed to the conscience and to our American theory of human rights, it was necessary to construct moral defenses on the other side. Instead of confessing the wrong of the institution, and asking for time to prepare for its abolition, it was supported by the authority of Scripture; it was the redemption of men from heathenism in Africa; it brought with it relations most kindly and humane between an abject race and an enlightened one; it kept out much of the vice too easily discoverable in the cities of the Free States. This was the beginning, evidently, of the last phase of the controversy between the two parts and two interests in the country; for how could there be any compromise when such diametrically opposite sides were taken? And as the foes of slavery grew bolder, the apprehension of what might come to pass at some future day grew stronger among its friends. Perhaps, too, they must have been aware, and have half confessed to themselves, that whether their pleas on behalf of their institution were tenable or not, there was an inconsistency between the apologies and those fundamental notions which the whole Union once avowed. It was too evident also that there must be a division, affecting all questions of politics, and becoming more pronounced from year to year, growing out of this question of questions, which could be neither settled nor avoided.

We pass by transactions of great importance, such as the affairs in Kansas and the question of slavery in the Territories, and come down to the opening of the war. Why was it, when Southern men and Southern interests had controlled the country for generations, when the North and West were divided, and probably would always continue so, that the die was cast in 1860 for secession and dissolution? The Presidential election had been far from a decided expression of public will, and wise adjustments taken in time might at least have delayed a disruption. There were, as it seems to us, two leading causes. First, the progress of ideas, and the prospect of an increase in the future of the number of Free States, without any counterbalancing weights in the other scale, were sure to fix the policy of the country for the future. Secondly, the temper of the Northern States was not well understood, just as at the North the South was thought to be threatening rather than purposing. It was supposed that the North could not act as a unit nor by great majorities, and that a party against the war would paralyze the movements of the government. Even the North had some distrust of itself. This is not the first instance in which great masses of men have failed to comprehend each other or themselves, nor will it be the last. But it was found that the preservation of the Union, all over the North and West, had an importance attached to it in men's minds which had not been thought to exist. Nor was it the commercial value of the Union that seemed so precious, as if the navigation of the Mississippi, the free intercourse, as before, in every direction through the whole territory, needed to be maintained at all hazards, but it was the Union as an idea, and as involving the future peace of this land for generations. In the spring of 1862 the writer of these words was standing on the highlands above Cincinnati, and looking over toward the Kentucky side of the Ohio. Then first a deep impression was made on his mind of the terrible results likely to follow disruption, for the line of that great river would divide free soil from slavery for hundreds of miles. And when the boundary should be fixed, who would or could prevent fugitive slaves from crossing it? Who would not resist their pursuing masters? Who could prevent a thousand border difficulties which might give rise to war? Wherever the two republics met there would be desolation or chronic warfare, obstructing the prosperity of some of the fairest regions in the world; there would be bitterness and national hatred; a blight would come over vast tracts, unless, perhaps, by slow degrees, slavery should restrict its limits, and allow its antagonist to encroach on its domains. Nor were such evils in the future worse than the loss of a great Union over which one constitution reigned, where common principles of justice were supreme. Such feelings were found in multitudes of minds; but *they* could not partake of them who had clung to their State as the highest object of their pride and allegiance.

The war had its course. At its close the problems offering themselves for solution were nearly as grave as the problem with which it began, and more difficult. The Union had been saved at the cost of overthrowing society at the South, and now the question of reconstruction came before the country under conditions which demanded the highest wisdom and moderation. A new race was called into political existence: the slaves had been turned into freemen. What was to be their political status? If they should have no voice in public affairs—if they, while acquiring civil rights, should stand by and see the most ignorant of the whites voting and determining State politics and making constitutions, what would be their security for the future? If, on the other hand, political power were given to all indiscriminately, blacks and whites, the evil might be as great. What a strange state of things to bestow the franchise on immense multitudes who had not the knowledge requisite to vote intelligently for the lowest local magistrates, who could be combined into a party which black or white demagogues could mould and guide according to their will, and against whom it might be necessary for the whites to form an opposite combination in order to save themselves from ruin! Never, perhaps, since the world began was there such a dreadful alternative on so large a scale. Above all was this true in those States where the numbers of the races were nearly equal, or where the blacks were even in a majority. In the process of reconstruction it was managed that the suffrage should be granted to this race wherever States containing slaves had joined in the secession; and a new motive for conceding the suffrage was supplied by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which provides that representation in Congress shall depend on the number of active or fully qualified citizens. Thus suppose the number of male inhabitants of a State over twenty-one years of age to amount to 150,000, and one-third of them to be disfranchised by an amendment of its constitution on account of want of sufficient property—which disqualification would chiefly affect the negroes—the representative quota for Congress must be diminished by one-third. Few States would be willing to submit to this reduction of political power in the general government, and so, probably, it will never take place, if otherwise it were practicable. We regard the Fifteenth Article

of the Amendments as most just and desirable, namely, that rights shall not be abridged on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude;" but in the constitutions of the restored States, and by the Fourteenth Amendment, universal suffrage in its worst shape, with its worst consequences, is fastened, perhaps necessarily, but unfortunately, on these restored republics.

This condition of things is now one of the worst evils that we suffer. We concede that it may have been necessary, but that does not take from the dangers which attend upon it. We will look at some of these dangers, disclaiming most solemnly all party motives or wishes in what we are to say. The greatest of them all is that the two races, through the States where slavery formerly existed, will be separated by party lines, and will look on one another with reciprocal distrust. Sectional differences are bad enough, as we have found in our past history, even when able men managed the parties; but differences of race, intensified by the jealousies and distrusts of politics, are tenfold worse. In the present case they tend to increase in intensity and bitterness, because the ignorant mass that has just been rescued from slavery must fall under the influence of fear of what will happen if the management of State affairs passes over permanently into the hands of their adversaries. They feel their weakness; they have inferior power of combination; they have small means of self-protection. They are also to a considerable extent under the influence of cunning leaders who seem to have unlimited power of acting on their fears. Brawls will unavoidably break out in many neighborhoods, which will grow into feuds and local quarrels, and will in report be magnified or extenuated, as it may happen, in their importance, so that the country will not know what to believe or disbelieve in regard to them. As for the blame to be imputed to the one or the other side, that is a small matter. We do not believe that the colored race or their leaders of like origin would be or have been the first to encroach on the rights of the white race. And we wish that one could not believe that there has been a policy or understanding on the part of many leading whites in some of the States in question to the effect that the colored people must be prevented by terrorism from enjoying the benefits granted to them in the new amendments. But the evils to which we refer lie outside of the immediate occasions of strife between the races; it will reach beyond existing parties. How can there be harmony between them under any future division of parties, when, in addition to difference of race, distrust, suspicion, past feuds and antagonisms, will continually foment disquiet? If it be said that unprincipled whites are corrupting the blacks and poisoning their minds, it may be very true, but how is the nuisance to be abated? Will not the eagles be gathered together where the carcass is? In brief, the cause of all that has taken place or is to be apprehended lies not in particular or local provocations, nor in the leaders of today, nor in the imbittering of a most mild and inoffensive race by the war, but it is one that is likely to last as long as measures, now never to be set aside, shall have run their course and borne their fruits. "The end is not yet."

Until this state of things shall end, if end it can, this unhappy part of our Union, injured in its property, with its old landholders impoverished or driven from their homes, with its institutions shattered, must lag far behind the other parts in most of the essentials of prosperity. That section is full of undeveloped resources; its exhaustless beds of iron and coal, its soil yet unbroken, or capable of vastly increased production, its mild climate, must invite capital and labor, if those timid forces could be assured of safety and protection. Perhaps the solution of the problem for the South may come from this source, from a new emigration not compromised in old strifes, and able to act in the end as a mediating and a reconciling power.

We pass on to another source of danger which the late war has opened up, or at least made more apparent—to the increased power of the general government. We have already had occasion to speak of the subject of the powers given by the present Constitution to the United States as exciting alarm in many, and as giving occasion to the birth of the old Republican or Democratic party. But, as it often happens in politics, that party, when it came into power, was not faithful to its convictions or principles. Thus, when the purchase of Louisiana was opposed by the Federalists as being a stretch of the Constitution, this was not wholly denied by the Democrats, but justified by the circumstances of the case. Thus, too, in the war of 1812, when the Federal Governors of the New England coast States, while consenting to furnish the quotas of militia called for, claimed to judge when an actual invasion of their soil had taken place, and refused to put the troops under officers of the United States, pleading their unquestioned rights under the Constitution and the law, the anti-Federal party, then having the government in their hands, denounced this action as disloyal and unconstitutional. Further, the Hartford Convention—an innocent scheme with an ugly look —was taxed with treasonable or disloyal designs, although without good reason; and yet the secession in 1861 justified itself by this unwise measure of a party which the

States joining in the secession had for that very measure strongly denounced. But after the Peace of Ghent the parties returned to their original principles, or, rather—as one of them had nearly expired, and the other was divided within itself on questions of sectional interest—the parts of the country where they had respectively predominated went back to the old positions of a stricter and a freer interpretation of the Constitution, to the Federal and the States-rights theories. In the interval between that peace and the attack on Fort Sumter things ran commonly in the States-rights channel. The general government seemed to be weak; and foreigners, as they speculated on our government in those days, thought that the great danger was that State power weighed most in the balance. It is true that the Supreme Court put a curb on the acts of several of the States, and that General Jackson would undoubtedly have crushed nullification by armed force if necessary; but his vigorous measures only put off the operation of a theory which even then involved the power of a State to secede from the Union.

Yet even while the general government was regarded as weak in conflict with the State power, it showed an increase of strength of an indirect sort in the way of patronage and of influence on private persons. The appointments within the gift of the Executive grew in value and number, and already, if we mistake not, members of Congress had begun to regard it as their right to nominate to offices within their districts, to be the President's almoners, if we may give that name to their business. Still this accumulating power was rather political than governmental; it would not have excused the Executive of the United States from transcending the constitutional limits; it was strictly constitutional, although used for party purposes. If the framers of our instrument for uniting the country could have had a vivid impression of its vast extent, they would perhaps have put some check on the appointing power. But they built the house without dreaming how many servants the large family would require.

The appointing power is a means to an end, to the reward of partisans, and those the neediest generally and the most selfish. As such it is corrupting, and the interests involved in it are strong enough to resist all attempts at reformation. Its bad influences on party and on personal honor can not be removed without some change in the Constitution, and such change party feeling itself would resist. The ill success of civil service reform is mortifying enough, and disheartening for the future.

The strength of the government, looked at apart from its indirect influences, never appeared formidable until the war called it fully forth. Then first the Executive seemed to have a new quality, which might be compared with the dictatorial power conferred by the Senate of Rome on the consuls in the well-known formula that they do their best to prevent the republic from suffering any detriment. Then first the command of immense armies, the arrests of suspected persons, the control over vast sums of money, the arbitrary use of telegraphs, and, after the war was over, the government of the Southern States by military officers, and the reconstruction of those States, revealed an accumulation of authority which was unsuspected before, and pointed to a possible military despotism in the future. Then, too, the power that Congress authorized of suspending specie payments and issuing legal tenders showed that in emergencies financial measures could be set on foot which could involve the country in untold distress, and even in bankruptcy. Since the war, also, the disturbed condition of one of the Southern States has induced the President, on his own responsibility, to use military power in a case of very doubtful constitutionality, to say the least, and to interfere for the restoration of order in a way that can not be justified. The upright intentions of the Chief Magistrate we do not intend to question; the subject, interesting as it is, concerns us only because a very dangerous precedent may be set for the future. The question may be asked, and is asked, whether there is any danger of military despotism. And as this could not exist without consolidation, it can be asked, also, Is not consolidation, which, at the founding of the republic, one party dreaded, and would have prevented by constitutional limitations if the other had thought it more than a bare possibility—is not this to be the ultimate goal of our Union? This is what those who look at us with no sympathy for our institutions profess to regard as a future probability. Within a few days we have seen the following expression in a foreign paper commenting on affairs in Louisiana: "The President is exhibiting how easily a military despotism could be built on American institutions." Thus the same Constitution which a few years ago, as looked at through foreign spectacles, could not resist the weak power of the States, or bring back a recalcitrant Governor into his proper relations to the general government, is now allowing, it is said, the general government and the "one-man power" in it to trample on the rights of the States, and to threaten the extinction of liberty. Do these opposite charges, made at different times, refute one another, or is there a real and a new danger before us, and that, too, when the army of the United States does not contain one soldier for every thousand of the inhabitants of the country?

So great a change as that from our pres-

ent Constitution to an imperial despotism, or, in other words, to an absolute democracy under one man, may not seem to many worthy of serious apprehension; and we share this opinion so far as to think that, in itself considered, a revolution so great, so without precedent in the English race, is entirely improbable. Before it could be effected there would need to be a strong party in favor of it diffused through all quarters of the Union. No sectional dissatisfaction would be adequate to bring it about. To attempt it would involve the probability of two or more confederacies, and of a war between them with an uncertain issue. To effect it would require taxation on a vast scale, or the borrowing of money to such an extent as would involve speedy bankruptcy. There are now no questions on which the Union could be territorially divided without the uprising of a great majority against a small minority. Capital, in its connections all over the land, is a bond of union. The mouth and course of the Mississippi, the avenues to the Pacific, the communication with Europe by Atlantic ports, must be open to all. An empire on the coast seems equally impossible with a great interior empire. The only cause of essential change that seems deserving of being taken into account is a general loss of reverence on the part of thinking men for the institutions of the country, a wide-spread conviction that we have failed in our experiment. Whenever such a humiliating day shall arrive, the same conviction might lead toward peaceable reforms and modifications; but a military despotism, after the experience of France and Rome, and with the political leanings of our race, is not likely to be one of them.

It is, however, possible, we admit, that attempts may be made to substitute laws of the Union for State laws in some very important departments of legislation, and that in case of their success the prestige and efficiency of the general government would be greatly increased, to the detriment of State power. Some of us are old enough to remember the time when the Cumberland Road was a bone of contention between strict and free constructionists; but now the talk is to put all telegraphs and all railroads under the supervision of the United States, as, with far less constitutional objection, banks of issue sustain relations to the States no longer. It might also be highly advantageous if in the department of international (or, if such a word might be allowed, interstate) private law harmony could be introduced, which could be effected only by general agreement between the States, or by an alteration of the Constitution which should invest Congress with new law-making powers. The laws concerning marriage, legitimacy, divorce, bequests, guardianship, the rights of married women, and the rights of aliens ought rationally to be uniform through the Union. This is the direction, as we understand, that the constitution of Switzerland is taking. From a loose confederation it became a strict one, a "Bundesstaat," and now still newer powers in legislation are to be or have been conferred on the central government. But what we dread is that the Union is becoming so great a tree, with such thick foliage, that the States, like shrubs, will lose their healthy growth under its shade; that instead of being protected, they will wither. If we look at government patronage, already so vast a factor in all political calculations and bargains, and add the possible enlargement of the sphere of United States law, demanded with the more reason on account of the great number of the States, and then bring into account the sway of an ambitious man at the head of the government taking advantage of some local difficulty, we shall not regard the anti-Federalist dread of consolidation as wildly unreasonable. Washington and Hamilton, with their compeers, were right in wanting a stronger government in place of the shackling old Confederation. That was the only sound statesmanship at that time. But when a measure of Mr. Jefferson's enlarged our domain, and set the precedent for an immense further enlargement, the danger took another direction. The very party which felt the apprehension set causes at work which alone made it to be reasonably apprehended. There is now possibility enough of such enormous powers being accumulated at Washington as ought to make men look narrowly at that tendency. For our part, at the present, we should rather endure some inconveniences from hasty or ill-considered laws of some State or States than seek a cure which might itself be a source of ill. We would print E PLURIBUS in as large letters as UNUM.

At this point of our progress we pause a moment to make the remark that we owe our protection against the tendency to consolidation to our historical development. The settlement of the country in the first instance by separate colonies, which were kept apart long enough to form distinct characteristics and to feel their independence each of the rest—*this* is obviously the force that resists perfect fusion and compactness. The nice balance aimed at in the Constitution may not last through all changes in society and in public interests; the scale that holds the rights of the Union and that which holds State power may alternately outweigh each other; but the true lover of his country will aim to keep them as far as possible in equipoise. Meanwhile, if uniform legislation is demanded on points where all the States ought to have one policy, let it be reached by a common under-

standing. But surely the end of a war, when State power fell into the background, and the Union was, as it ought to have been, prominent before the eyes of all, is no time to carry the old Federal principle to an extreme which the venerated founders of the Union never contemplated.

The danger of consolidation, if there be any, is future, and must be the result of slowly moving causes, of long misgovernment, and of a demand for more energy and uniformity in our system. The dangers which many fear and have feared from the democratic cast of our institutions are, if real, more immediate, because universal suffrage is upon us, and can never be gotten rid of as long as the country shall endure. The history of the extension of the suffrage in this country since the independence is a very instructive one, if it could be set forth in detail. It is sufficient here to say that most, if not all, the older colonies had at that time in their laws a qualification for voting based on the possession of land, which continued in many of them long afterward. By degrees this became a form, that is, young men who wished to become qualified for voting received deeds of land, which were reconveyed soon after the election to the friend who had helped them. At length all native-born white males twenty-one years old could vote, on taking the freeman's oath, after a certain brief term of residence in a State or town. Then naturalized citizens received the same privilege. Meanwhile free blacks, who at one time could vote even in some of the slave-holding States, as North Carolina, were deprived of their privileges in some of those which held no slaves; such was the case in New York and Connecticut, in the latter of which States a colored man of great personal worth, the owner of a considerable property, was disfranchised by the constitution of 1817. Now at length every where, if we mistake not, colored persons are put on an equality with whites, and naturalized foreigners with persons native born. The single exception known to the writer is the limitation of suffrage in Connecticut to those who are able to read—a rule by which almost no one is excluded. So generally is it held that citizenship and the right of suffrage are co-extensive that the first now passes with the greater part of Americans as a natural right, like the right of property or of contract. There are very many who believe that the earlier state of things was far better, but very few who believe that the present state of things will ever be altered. We must carry it with us through all our national existence, and endeavor to educate all voters into the ability to judge what is best, and into the spirit of conscientious citizenship; meanwhile, accepting the situation, we may look at the evils which it brings with it. These are more apparent in large towns, while in the country a restriction of the suffrage would make little difference. They are increased by the habit of many substantial citizens of staying away from the polls, either owing to a kind of despair on account of the small influence of a single vote, or to the engrossing interests of business. And thus whatever be the bad results, the higher classes of society are in a good degree responsible for them. They are increased also by the number of foreign-born voters, who can be led in masses by their more intelligent countrymen, and who thus render possible a number of inferior demagogues ready to sell votes for offices, and able to make themselves necessary to their parties. In this way differences of nationality are perpetuated long after aliens have become naturalized; and even the divisions in their old homes across the water survive their changes of abode. It is surely a most unnatural thing that there should be in communities where rights are the same for men of every kind of nativity these political sects, depending on something renounced and abandoned. Nor could we find such parties within parties, carried down even to the second or third generation, unless the means of combination lay within the power of men who have their own ends in view. The voters themselves have no need to unite for self-protection against native-born Americans, either for relief in taxation or for securing their privileges in other respects. It is the interest of all that these foreign-born citizens should grow rich, that their children should be well educated, that all places of trust should be open to them, when they are found worthy of political or social honors.

Here, then, is one danger and source of peril, that while native Americans act politically as individuals, the naturalized citizens act in masses under demagogues as their leaders, as if they were invading armies rather than men seeking for homes and for quiet. Only in one instance have native-born citizens formed a political party, and the ignominious failure in this case showed that it was unnatural and outlandish. Of the religious factor in massing certain classes of men together we have a word to say soon; we add at present the single remark that these demagogical influences retard the assimilation of the new-comers to the old, and prevent the complete harmony of the people.

In this state of things, to which universal suffrage gives rise, one party, at any one given time, will naturally attract the demagogues more than the other; that is, one will be, or affect to be, more in sympathy with the foreigner or the poor, or with liberty and equal rights; the other, more in sympathy with the interests of property

and civil order. Both may be intensely selfish and equally one-sided. But they can not co-exist without acting on one another. They discover each the other's arts, means of success, and projects. Naturally they try to counteract plans by similar plans of a questionable character. They make platforms on which they do not intend to stand. They propose candidates who are ignorant or pliable, instead of those who are sturdy and experienced in legislation. There must be understandings that such and such persons of service to a party are to be rewarded in due time. These and many more of the obvious evils of parties, such as the caucus system, unanimity forced by the whip, as it were, discreditable compromises, are either owing to the universality of suffrage or are greatly increased by it; and there is no present prospect of their discontinuance. We make no complaint of parties as such; they are necessary and useful in a free state; they act as watchmen and as checks upon each other; but we maintain that the more ignorant the constituencies are, the greater is the tendency on their part to misplaced confidence in designing men, to jealousy and strife of classes, to the election of inferior politicians, to the turning of politics into a trade, to misgovernment, and, in our case at least, to the banding together of emigrants into factions founded on their nationalities. Nor do we mean to charge the mass of voters in the country with political corruption, which would be a slander. They want good government; they are ready for sacrifices, as we saw only a few years since; they have no direct interest in the results which they procure; they are in great measure far less open to bribes than the political leaders themselves. The great evil is that, without intending or foreseeing it, they raise up a crop of politicians who are strikingly unlike the mass of such as elect them, and who are fast bringing the name and work of a statesman into contempt.

But if the extent of the suffrage has so much to do with the degeneracy of political men, and if this can never be abridged, what remedy is there, and what need to talk of the evils? The remedies must be applied in detail, or they must be such as will grow out of a greater general intelligence, especially on subjects of political science, or there must be an increased moral and religious purity, which will work a cure of our evils in an indirect way. Of these general remedies we don't intend to speak. We simply remark that here and there a cure can be applied to some of the most glaring evils. If our Legislatures have been exposed to temptations by special legislation, a remedy can be applied, as has been done in the amended constitutions of several large States, by taking away to a great extent from these bodies the power of granting special incorporations; if the towns, as has been done, abuse their charters, and come under the control of venal, corrupt men, their powers can be abridged or controlled; if judges, as now elected in many States, are inferior men, for this too, it is to be hoped, a cure may be provided. The whole power of burdening States and towns with debt, as well as the taxing power, ought to have limits set for them in the States by public law.

We are reminded here of another danger which is thought to be threatened by an influx of foreigners. This land, once almost exclusively Protestant, is the refuge now of five millions of Catholics, more or less. It is odd enough that some of those very people who saw in four millions of slaves a providence bringing them within the influence of Christianity, now see a frowning providence providing these Catholics a home in a land founded and nourished by Protestant principles. There may be great hopes of converting this country to the mediæval religion. That religion will, of course, grow by natural increase, and causes new in our age may aid it, although what the Pope's newly developed infallibility will have to do with it we fail to see. Of this we are sure, that if any new vigor and spread of the Catholic faith, any aggressive action, should appear in this country, it would unite all Protestants of all hues more than any thing else could do, and would probably promote among them a *catholic* spirit far more than it would promote *Catholicism* outside of them.

Other evils which usher in this second century of our national existence arise from the late war and the financial measures of the government. The war was undertaken, we are proud to say, without bitterness, in a spirit of loyalty toward the Union, and with a deep sense of the immense evils of a permanent disruption. Never was a war marked to a greater degree by compassion for the wounded or by a more merciful treatment of prisoners than this of ours. And when did a nation, of its own accord, without the force of treaty, forgive the authors of a war more generously—we might say, with more dangerous forgetfulness of injuries? All classes who are not ordinarily roused to excitement by a sense of wrong joined in supporting it. The vast body of the religious people of the North and West felt its necessity and justice. Never did prayer for the country arise to the God of nations more unceasingly and more fervently; never did men, especially at the West, risk their lives with a fuller conviction of the rightfulness of the struggle. Such a war, like all wars, might have evils attending it. Some of the officers may have entered the service to better their political chances in the future; looseness of life and

of principle may have been learned by a few; the obligations of the citizen may have been unlearned by a few more. But it is certain, we think, that if the war had ended without leaving any other besides its own direct evils, its bearing on life and manners would have been, on the whole, good. Certainly the winning side, as it looks back on the morality of its cause and of the measures for making it victorious, has no reason for shame.

But war can not stand alone: Mars and Mercury must go together; and the contrivances of the latter to raise money are more than a counterbalance to the blunt honesty of the former. Whether the war could have been waged without a suspension of specie payments, whether there were not reasons which justified that measure, aside from the financial ones, we will not stop to ask. Our work is to look at facts and their issues. The fact is that irredeemable paper and a vast debt, beyond all power of payment for years to come, were introduced; and as the ease of carrying on the measures of government for the time banished anxiety, the ultimate difficulties were not duly weighed. At the beginning of the war there was a general settling of balances between debtor and creditor; the money so returned to its owners was lent to the government; and when the bonds of the public debt had increased in value, and the confidence of capitalists abroad in our securities was restored, these were sold at an advantage to parties across the water. Meanwhile, especially after the end of the war, new enterprises were begun, some of them immense in extent; new debts between individuals were contracted; private persons were eager to go into enterprises which promised large returns; banks were willing to lend to speculators and stockjobbers; every body wanted to get rich without labor or capital. Had there been no suspension of specie payments, but little of all this could have taken place; had there been an honest, intelligent attempt after the return of peace to resume specie payment at some future day, with the right machinery for it, instead of the puerile measures that were actually adopted, the country might now be rejoicing that the unavoidable crisis had passed over, and might look with rational confidence toward the future. But this was too great an effort for a speculating generation, too great for political leaders. Nearly the whole of our present evils, except those which arise from the reconstruction of the Southern States and the character of political adventurers in that uncertain field, are the direct or indirect results of the condition of the currency, of the fluctuations in the value of specie as measured by the legal tender. To this we must ascribe a large part of the speculations of recent years, the necessary reactions, failures, and shrinking of values, the depression of the mercantile community in consequence of greater economy on the part of consumers, and the dread of the future. To this are owing in a measure the vast fortunes acquired since the war began, the power of great houses to depress and drive out of the field smaller ones, the immense extravagance and show, the almost contempt for the virtues of thrift, moderation, and forethought—virtues so important and efficient as even in heathen lands or under bad governments to secure a happy, unaspiring middle class. To this, again, we must refer the uneasiness and strikes of laborers, at least in part, and the general feeling pervading the producers in one section of the country that they are oppressed by transporters, and can by legislation change the laws of profits. To this, too, in large part, we must attribute that intensely excited worldliness which appears on all sides; those frequent outbreaks of crime, especially of dishonesty, which will soon be regarded as matters of course; that venality, that want of honor, which are injuring our principles as well as our reputation.

These last vices call for more extended consideration, for just now they are imputed to the legislature of the nation. Formerly if there was a member of Congress who came there with "itching palms," he could do but little in the way of gratifying his propensity. There was nothing to steal; there was no chance for corrupt bargains, and there was little suspicion of corrupt practice. Our poverty was our integrity. The new state of things is mainly owing, not to a lower set of men brought into the service of the country as legislators, not to the unwillingness of Congress itself to ferret corruption out, but to the means held in the hands of great corporations to influence votes. These means, again, are owing mainly to the financial condition of the country; and if there be increased venality—that is, if Congressmen half a century ago would have resisted similar temptations—this, again, is mainly owing to the overstimulus of the covetous spirit which the last ten or twelve years have engendered.

The suspicions felt in regard to the honesty and honor of Congress have derived strength from what has become known and what has not been discovered. At first there seemed to be an unwillingness to probe an ulcer; then the facts that came to light, while revealing crime on the part of a few, involved many in suspicion; and finally the disclosures of the last winter made it seem as if the money paid to agents at Washington for a subsidy to a line of steamboats must have passed into many hands. Here, then, we have guilt charged

on a very few, suspicion resting on many: and this is just the worst state of things possible. If forty members of a political body were found to have taken bribes and were expelled, it would be better for the country or State than if five were detected and two hundred were under suspicion, although the suspicion might be wholly groundless; for a general distrust of men in public stations is most disheartening and demoralizing. Unjust doubt of human character in general destroys the motives to probity arising from example, if it be not already the fruit of a corrupt heart.

And here we can not refrain from saying a word on the conduct of public journals as it respects the charges against public men. Our leading journals contain men in their editorial corps who may compare advantageously with any members of Congress. But some of them, in their anxiety to give the first news, are not equally anxious to find out whether it be true or not; they trust too implicitly to the reports of correspondents; or they have, perhaps, grudges which make them unfair. To be fair would be to be moderate. It would not do to be gentlemanly, for strong words would need to be weighed. When we read the vilifications of Congress and other political bodies, one thing at least we are sure of, that the writers ought to be believers in the doctrine of total depravity, for seldom were such charges made even by stiff Calvinists against individual men as these journals, otherwise most respectable, sometimes make upon large bodies of leading politicians. It is much to be regretted that individual character should be attacked without the best reasons; for while it is of very little importance that this or that man keeps his hold on the public confidence, it is of immense importance that our representative system should be trusted in. When that is thought to be venal we lose the hope of good government, and our reverence for institutions, so much prized once, vanishes; we become ashamed of our country, make a feebler resistance to causes of disorganization, and fall into despair.

In asking ourselves what means lie within our reach that we may recover ourselves from evils partly temporary, partly arising out of our political system, we look first at the possibility that the sentiment of honor may be purified and quickened. It has been thought by De Tocqueville that for the growth of honor in a country there must be men of rank and birth, who are enabled by their position and traditions to know what is honorable, and who would sink into contempt within their own class if they fell below the standard. To the English idea of honor belong especially the virtues of courage, truth, and straightforwardness; or more generally honor consists in a nice sense of personal rights, of that which is due to others and owed by them to ourselves. Is it too much to hope that a noble and manly literature in the future may raise the standard of character through the whole people, so that a truckling, deceitful, dodging politician shall be thoroughly despised on all sides, and be obliged to renounce his political hopes on account of his meannesses? Is it too much to hope that such a principle of honor, without the pride that often goes with it, may be incorporated into our law of social morality; and that religion, which has a most intimate and inseparable connection with genuine morality, may take up this principle also, and may leaven society with it, so that a trick or a lie may be utterly abhorred by merchants, by politicians, by young men entering into life, by all who can corrupt others or be corrupted themselves? O for more men in public life with the character of him of whom the poet speaks:

> "Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
> Nor paltered with Eternal God for power;
> Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
> Through either babbling world of high or low;
> Who never spoke against a foe!"

And even if this sentiment should not always put on its most spiritual and ideal form, if reputation rather than character and reality of life should be its aim, if it should occasionally resort to that barbarous, revengeful, and unmeaning practice of dueling which has now happily become almost obsolete, could this be a worse evil than that truth and honesty should not be brought into greater respect than they seem to have now?

Of course, with the feeling that there must be a higher tone of character, in case our politics are to be redeemed from their degradation, must be united the removal of those demoralizing influences growing out of the war, of which we have already spoken at length. When the time will come for this reform is still uncertain. Such is the want of uprightness at present in making pledges that we can put no full confidence, either in the party heretofore dominant or in that which expects soon to be dominant, that opinions or platforms or declarations of Congress and of law in regard to specie payments will be respected. But a time for this must come, we know, first or last. When that time comes, and when the race difficulties shall be settled, much of our ground of fear for the future will be removed. The question then remaining, which can not be settled now with entire certainty, because we can not accurately separate temporary political evils from permanent ones, is no less a one than this, Is there such a poison in the political system that there is no cure for it? Must the Union, made less than a hundred years ago, go to pieces or run into

a degenerate form of polity within the next hundred years? The question depends upon the general good sense and uprightness of the people, whether, if evils arise that can be removed, they will remove them, or, if those evils are owing to some radical cause, they will be ready for a radical cure. All our future, then, hangs on the strength of the moral and religious causes at work or that can be used for the elevation of the American character. And in the prospect there is, aside from religious faith and hope, the consoling thought that the great mass of the people is not corrupt; so that, as a good constitution of body resists and overcomes disease, so a sound general character of the nation may contain in itself a self-reforming power. No one, we think, ought to doubt that there is a latent force that can resist political evils and preserve the system who thinks what was endured in the late war, and with what readiness the people bore their burdens. We are more afraid of the centres of wealth than we are of the scattered country population, of the temptation to be rich than of the middle and poorer class, of the half-cultivated and self-indulgent than of those whose advantages for education have been small, of morals imported from Europe than of emigrants from Europe. Dangers we have of our own, together with some of those that stand in the path of older communities, and seem to threaten the very existence of modern society. But we have hopes, too, of our own which the rest of the world does not share. God grant that these hopes may not be mere visions, and that no new darkness may cloud our future!

NEW HAVEN, CONN. T. D. WOOLSEY.

THE POPULAR IDOL.

I.

A FEW years ago a late autumn found me idly and discontentedly lounging about London. During the year I had worked with unwonted assiduity, and my labors had been rewarded with unwonted success. In that year it had arrived to me to make my "little hit." Of three pictures of mine which an overindulgent hanging committee had placed on the Royal Academy walls, one had hit the taste of the critics, and no one was more astonished than myself to discover from the admirable writings of these gentlemen what an amount of "genuine sentiment," "delicacy of touch," and "subtle analysis of human nature" my work displayed. The public, never slow to appreciate merit when it has been carefully indicated, indorsed the critical utterances, and the most cheerful result to me was that all my pictures sold well, and I had in my possession a larger sum of money than I ever had before. Months ago my companions had left town, betaking themselves to Wales, to Scotland, to Germany, to Jericho, while I, the "promising young artist" of the newspapers, remained behind, idle and disconsolate.

It was during the first month of the Academy exhibition that I had encountered the cause of my late sojourn in London. At the house of a friend I had met an Irish gentleman named Fitzgerald, at that time on a visit to the English metropolis. This Fitzgerald was a splendid specimen of his race and class. He was a tall, well-built, ruddy-cheeked man, with a quantity of white hair, an eye in a perpetual twinkle, and a mouth always ready with a joke, good, bad, or—as was generally the case—indifferent. He was accompanied by his only daughter, Kate, whom I have so often depicted on canvas that I shall not attempt an inventory of her charms on paper. I had many opportunities of paying attention to these visitors during their stay in town. Under my guidance they explored the British Museum and investigated the Tower. The scientific wonders of the Polytechnic and the historic horrors of Madame Tussaud's were thrown open to their astonished gaze. I accompanied them to the opera, and visited with them half the theatres. And, to cut a long story short, I fell desperately in love with Fitzgerald's daughter, having every reason to suppose that the amiable creature was not quite insensible to my merits. Under these circumstances it is not very surprising that I accepted with avidity the assurance of Mr. Fitzgerald that he would ask me to spend a month at his place in Ireland during the ensuing autumn. He would write to me, naming the day, and trusted that no other engagement would prevent my accepting the invitation. Just as if any possible train of circumstances *could* prevent me!

In due course the father and daughter returned to Ireland, and I sustained myself on the cheerful anticipation of hearing from them. This it was that kept me in town at a time when other artists were beginning to have thoughts of returning to it. And the non-arrival of intelligence from Ireland may account sufficiently for my dejection. I was becoming daily thinner in body and moodier in mind, and would no doubt have eventually fallen into a condition of mental and physical collapse had not a letter been placed upon my table one morning bearing the Ballymareen postmark. I tore it open and perused the expected invitation. Inclosed with the letter was half a sheet of note-paper containing road directions of a most elaborate character, written in a lady's hand. I folded the scrap. I dare say I kissed it. I know I preserved it carefully, and have it now.

Among other sources of income upon