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THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY.

A SERMON

DELIVERED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATE PROCLAMATION OF
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AUGUST 6, 1863,

IN THE PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ERIE, PA.,

BY THE PASTOR,

REV. W. M. BLACKBURN.

DISPATCH PRESSES: CORNER FIFTH AND STATE STREETS.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ERIE, AUG. 7, 1863.

REV. W. M. BLACKBURN—

DEAR SIR :

Desirous that the sentiments so happily presented in your Sermon yesterday should be diffused more generally, we respectfully request that you will furnish a copy for publication, on account of the morality, philanthropy, and loyalty therein expressed.

Very Respectfully Yours,

S. S. SPENCER,
P. METCALF,
JOSEPH ROUND,
M. SANFORD,
WM. HIMROD,
A. H. CAUGHEY,

WALTER CHESTER,
ELIHU MARVIN,
C. M. TIBBALS,
E. S. WARNER,
M. W. CAUGHEY,
W. C. CURRY.

ERIE, AUG. 10, 1863.

GENTLEMEN :

In compliance with your kind request, I have the honor to furnish you with the Sermon which has met with your favorable reception. In the hope of making it still more effective for good I have added a few appropriate quotations.

Yours Respectfully,

W. M. BLACKBURN.

Messrs. CHESTER, SPENCER, HIMROD, and others.

PROCLAMATION.

WASHINGTON, JULY 15, 1863.

It has pleased Almighty God to harken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people and to vouchsafe to the Army and the Navy of the United States victories on land and on the sea, so signal and so effective as to furnish reasonable grounds for augmented confidence that the Union of these States will be sustained, their Constitution preserved and their peace and prosperity permanently restored.

But these victories have been accorded not without sacrifices of life, limb, health and liberty, incurred by brave, loyal and patriotic citizens. Domestic afflictions, in every part of the country, follow in the train of these fearful bereavements. It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father and the power of His hand equally in these triumphs and these sorrows.

Now, therefore, be it known, That I do set apart Thursday, the 6th day of August next, to be observed as a day for national thanksgiving, praise and prayer; and I invite the people of the United States to assemble on that occasion in their customary place of worship, and in the forms approved by their own consciences, and render the homage due to the Divine Majesty for the wonderful things he has done in the nation's behalf, and invite the influence of His Holy Spirit to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a needless and cruel Rebellion; to change the heart of the insurgents; to guide the counsels of the Government with wisdom adequate to so great a national emergency, and to visit with tender care and consolation throughout the length and breadth of our land, all those who, through the vicissitudes of marches, voyages, battles and sieges, have been brought to suffer in mind, body or estate; and, finally, to lead the whole Nation, through the paths of repentance and submission to the Divine will, back to the perfect enjoyment of Union and fraternal peace.

Done at the City of Washington the 15th day of July, 1863,
of the Independence of the United States the eighty-eighth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

SERMON.

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw the sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?—EXODUS XV.: 9-11.

On what principle may we render thanks to Almighty God for victories over our enemies?

The gratitude which the Hebrews felt, at the shores of the Red Sea, on seeing their enemies utterly destroyed, could not be suppressed, nor has it been concealed by inspiration. We cannot disguise, nor deny, a feeling of satisfaction in the late victories over the foes that have risen up against our government. We could not suppress it on the day when the tidings of their defeat in some quarters, and their surrender in other quarters, reached our ears. It did not strike us as an absurdity, nor as a criminal exultation, to see the columns of intelligence headed "Glorious News!"—for "the Lord had triumphed gloriously"—and even those who trembled, lest, on the morrow, they should find in the list of the fallen, the name of friend, lover, or acquaintance, had less of fear than joy in the triumph.

I deny that this feeling of satisfaction rises from a

spirit of barbarism, or the indulgence of malice, or a delight in cruelty, or a disregard for human life. It rises from a delight in the highest Christian civilization, a sacred loyalty to a righteous government, a determination to defend its just principles, and a desire for peace upon righteous terms.

It is not the occasion for an inconsiderate rejoicing—but for a calm, solemn, and reverent thanksgiving. There is a manifest difference between rejoicing and thanksgiving. There is rejoicing when all the feelings are in full play and tuned to a music of stirring strains—when mirth is in the eye and merriment on the lip—when the feet have an elastic tread, and gladness overflows from a heart that knows no bitterness in its cup of joy, and when the thoughts are shadowed by no painful remembrances of sorrows by affliction, or losses by death. It is the summer-day of the soul when the sun is mild, the skies are bright, the fields are joyful, the trees clap their hands, and the world is full of song and exultant with life. Present mercies more than compensate for denied or departed blessings, and even the grave assumes a sacred beauty. Such would be our emotions over great victories, were there no homes made vacant by the fallen brave, and no hearts bereft of the objects of tender and enduring affection.

But there are calmer times when the soul is tuned to solemn and plaintive music, and the eye may be moist with tears, and the step that of one who goes softly. There are no raptures, no exultations, for memory dwells on calamities which have brought gloom to the bereaved home, and laid

heavy burdens on the broken heart. Visions of the wounded, of the slain, and of “garments rolled in blood” may linger before the imagination. There cannot be rejoicing with festive mirth. But there may be a sincere and devout thanksgiving. Through the terrible agencies and mournful events of war, “the Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad.” With pain we count the sacrifices, yet with gratitude we contemplate the victory. The cloud still hangs over us and drops of sorrow fall, yet the light of God’s countenance breaks through setting in the nation’s sky the bow of promise radiant with triumph and with hope.

Our recent victories have cost us great sacrifices, and hence our thanksgiving is tempered with a deep solemnity. But suppose we had lost nothing on our part—that not a wound had been received, not a life taken from our ranks, what would be our feelings? Would we not be more exultant? It would be like the triumph at the Red Sea, where on the side of Israel not a man was lost, and of the enemy not a man escaped. It would be but human to rejoice in the triumph over our enemies. Their losses would be our gain; and however we might pity their wounded and their weeping, yet we could not but count their fatalities as a righteous judgement upon rebellion, and a means of recovering the just power of our government, and restoring the boundaries of a rightful dominion.

Not in the spirit of revenge—nor of vindictive hatred toward our enemies—nor of delight in their sufferings and death; but in the spirit of deliberate justice, and of a righteous patriotism, and of a loyal obedience to a government which has a God-given right to defend her liberties, and to maintain her authority over all the children she has nurtured and over all the states she once established—would we, to-day, celebrate a thanksgiving for victories over the enemies

that long ago plotted and now desperately seek her overthrow.

Let us not give way to merely human feelings. Let us bring into our minds and hearts such principles as the Bible furnishes and justifies, that our thanksgiving may be ordered aright before the God of our victory, and tempered with the sober convictions of His justice and righteousness.

We go then to the Bible. We learn that war is often a tremendous necessity in order to secure national justice. Nations cannot maintain the rights and powers which God has delegated to them, on the simple grounds of mercy and non-resistance. Riots and rebellions cannot be put down by the simple pleas of compassion, and the tender cries for peace. "To display a peaceable, or as we might call it, a sheepish deportment in the presence of wolves, would stimulate wolfish appetite and exasperate unscrupulous ferocity, with evils immensely worse than those which result from sturdy and perpetual hostilities. Equally, or indeed much more, do we maintain, that for a rich, industrious nation like England"—and why not say the United States also—"to proclaim that she does not fight, however cruelly attacked, would involve to herself and to the morality of the world, mischiefs a hundred fold worse than those of our stubbornest wars."(*)

Every nation will have its enemies, and their encroachments cannot be stayed by appeals for mercy or proposals of arbitration. They will take up arms, and only by arms can they be met and resisted. Rebels are the last people on earth to accept of righteous compromises, return to loyalty and be at peace, until the weight of their opposition is broken by war. As individuals, acting personally we are to "resist not evil," and if injured we may have recourse to law, to courts and judges. But among

(*) F. W. NEWMAN, in the Westminster Review.

nations there is no authorized power of arbitration. An appeal to the "Laws of Nations" does not secure the ends of justice. The aggressors will not acknowledge the law by which the rights of both parties ought to be determined. And where a "Court of Nations" has been attempted the strongest power has generally insisted upon the lion's share of the spoils. Thus the unjust may triumph in a Court of Peace; the just are left to a jury of armies and to the judgment of the God of nations.

"The Most High has divided to the nations their inheritance." "He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to his people." He has ordained the powers that be, and given them the right to suppress and overthrow the powers that ought not to be. He has permitted nations to act chiefly upon principles of justice—a justice growing out of a love for true liberty, a sacred regard for human rights, and a determination to defend and maintain a righteous government.

When war becomes a tremendous necessity, and an injured people, in the name of God lift up their banners, and gather their hosts, and stand ready with the sword to defend or recover their rights, Jehovah does "terrible things in righteousness." God's chosen people must work their way by war to the land which He gave them for an inheritance. By war the injustice of Egypt must be overcome. By war the enemies who had taken possession of Canaan must be expelled or exterminated. By war the nation must defend itself and the Theocracy against the foes that rose up on every side. It was severe, but there was no other way. It was the method appointed by Jehovah. Justice, liberty and righteousness had no other powerful resort. By war the nation had her victories, and every triumph was ascribed to the Lord who had "triumphed gloriously."

The present rebellion, in our land, is not a thing of

words or we might have gone on employing words against it. It is an armed rebellion, and the only possible agency for us, is to set an armed government against it. Other methods were long ago employed. In the very infancy of this treasonable movement, arguments were tried, compromises were attempted, large concessions were offered—but all in vain. It is the boast of the disunionists that these were listened to, and temporarily entertained, so that by dallying with us and deluding us they might gain time and strength to execute the designs they had cherished for long years, and so dismember this Republic that the glory of its unity and its peace should be forever extinguished. War was forced upon us as our last resort.

Certain proclamations called forth an army—the military power of the nation. Other proclamations called forth the Church—the praying power of the nation. For it was felt that an army cannot regenerate nor purify the nation—cannot reform the mistaken policies of the past—cannot bring back and re-establish the principles of morality and justice with which we started upon our national career—cannot remove the sins which are a disgrace to any people, nor institute again that righteousness which exalteth a nation. It may conquer and disarm our foes. It may recover the lost sovereignty of the government. It may plant again our standard in the high places of rebellion. It may re-establish there the Constitution, the national law and the Supreme Courts. But it alone cannot secure a reformation of our policies, nor deliver us from the sins that have provoked heaven to permit these calamities to fall in judgment upon us. The Christian Churches of this loyal land responded to the call. They presented to the Almighty Ruler the consolidated might of the Churches' faith and prayers. Thus the Army and the Church co-operated, and God has granted victories.

And now when another proclamation calls for our thanksgiving, we ask, what right have we to give thanks?

On what principle can we indulge the feelings of gratitude? Are we justified in the observances of to-day? To solve such questions, we ask again, what were the just and righteous feelings of patriotic and godly men, in Bible-times, toward their enemies?

The Bible does not glory in war. The most splendid campaigns of Joshua and David are sketched in the fewest words—often a single verse is crowded with facts that would have made long chapters in Spartan or in Latin history. The very silence about these daring expeditions and dazzling victories is a small proof of the inspiration of the Bible. Human nature could not have resisted the temptation to describe great battles, and thus illustrate the glory of the nation's patriots and the valor of her defenders.

But the Bible is not so silent concerning the feelings of godly and patriotic men toward the enemies who attempted the nation's overthrow. It is not silent concerning the justice that moved them to enter the conflict, nor the thanksgivings to the "God of Battles" after their triumph had been won. We could not understand these feelings, nor these thanksgivings, if we had no experience of war, nor of victory. We could not rightly judge of them, had not this government been fiercely attacked by desperate foes. We now know what enemies are. We now know what rebellion is in all its gigantic opposition. We now know what war is when forced upon us as our only resort for the defence of all that we love, and the recovery of all that we have lost. And through the mercy of God who hath been "pleased to hearken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people," and through the courage of our noble army and navy, we now know something of what victory is—victory that has saved from pillage and from fire our wealthiest cities and our very capitol, and has regained for us a large part of the territory on which the blight of disunion had fallen.

There are, in the Bible, things which we are now prepared to understand more fully than in the days of peace. If certain feelings of men were wrong, we need to know their error and avoid it, and hush our thanksgivings to-day. If they were right—if in their severity they were just, we need to appreciate the reason.

You have found in David's Psalms "some things hard to be understood." David was a man of mercy. He was no cruel, revengeful, and unrelenting despot. But as a king he was a man of justice. There was a righteousness that filled his soul with judgment upon the enemies of the government of which he was the administrator. He did not stand forth, and with boasting declare his vengeance against them. He submitted his case to God. He breathed his severest thoughts through prayer, and implored Jehovah to execute justice.

"Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.—Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavors: give them after the work of their own hands; render to them their desert.—Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast thou them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee."(*)

Dr. Duff, the celebrated Scottish Missionary in Calcutta, said that he could not understand how these deprecatory prayers were consistent with the teachings of the New Testament, until the Sepoy rebellion broke out with such terrific fury, and foes rose up filling the land with violence, shaking the foundations of government, threatening towns and cities with fire and sword, murdering the innocent, persecuting christians with especial cruelty, making resistless missionaries a sacrifice to brutal lust and deathly torture, and rolling back

(*) Psalms VII. XXVIII. V. Also, Psalms LXIX.

the tide of christian civilization, that iniquity might come in again like a flood, and heathenism be re-established with all the horrors of barbarism and idolatry. Only then could it be known that there are times in the out-breaking of human enmity when the pleadings of mercy are in vain, and Justice must draw the sword for a vigorous war of self-defence.

These expressions of David, when rightly understood, have never excited or encouraged the spirit of revenge.—They are no more fitted to have such an effect than the severe sentence of justice pronounced by a judge, or the act of an officer who executes the penalties of death.—Even these denunciations are not absolute. They are submitted to a righteous God, and are suspended on the enemy's persistence in opposition, or his repentance and his cessation from deeds of injustice.

Yet why these feelings toward enemies? The fact of their being natural to human nature might condemn them. The reason is plain. They were not simply David's enemies, nor were their opposition and injustice merely a personal matter with him. If so, he was the very man to have prayed for their pardon and to have forgiven them. For mercy and forgiveness, toward his personal foes, were distinguishing traits of his character. But these foes were the enemies of God. They were "the haters of the Lord." They had risen up against the government which Jehovah had established. They sought to break the union of the tribes and states of Israel. To war against the Theocracy was to fight against God. And hence he could consistently say in his appeal to Jehovah—

"Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.—For they intended mischief against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform. There-

fore thou shalt make them turn ^{their} ~~thine~~ back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them."(*)

And on this principle of Divine justice, why may not we carry our cause before Jehovah, and simply changing the ancient title of Israel to that of our own nation, thus appeal to Heaven.

"Keep not thou silence, O God; hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For lo, thine enemies make a tumult; and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of the United States may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee.—As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek thy name, O Lord—that men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth."(†)

And why could David render thanksgiving to God for the defeat or death of his enemies? On what principle could he exalt in a tone of solemn triumph, saying, "thou hast smitten all mine enemies; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.—I have pursued mine enemies, and have overtaken them; neither did I turn again until they were consumed. I beat them small as the dust before the wind?"

No doubt the language has often startled us. It does not seem, at first, quite like the gospel spirit of "peace on earth, and good will to men." But remember, David was seeking peace and righteousness. Only by war could they be gained. They who had taken the sword must perish by the sword. They who would acknowledge no

(*) Psalm XXI.

(†) Psalm LXXXIII.

principle but justice upon themselves, must be subdued by judgments. And remember that God had anticipated the fact that these enemies would be submissive to nothing but the power of military justice. On account of their sins, He had declared against them a war of subjugation, and if that were not enough, a war of extermination. David therefore, thought it his duty to sweep them away as unsparingly and as thoroughly as a benevolent man would clear away the elements of a pestilence.

Unless we recognize the right principle of rigid justice in the overthrow of those who wage war upon us, we cannot consistently celebrate a victory with thanksgiving. Recognizing it we may say, "*Thou hast saved us from our enemies, thou hast put to shame them that hated us. And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing praises unto my God.*"

Again: There is another reason for such thanksgiving. It is the moral effect of a victory of right over wrong—of loyalty over rebellion, and of liberty over oppression. This effect is seen in three ways.

I.—A moral effect on the victors.

It encourages the loyal. It silences the opposition of those who are glad to enjoy undisturbed the privileges and protection of the government, and yet are not awake to the danger of losing these privileges. It defeats the schemes of those who may secretly sympathize with treason. It gives a new glow to the fires of patriotism. It gives the people renewed confidence in their government. It strengthens the national credit. It adds a new zest to industry and trade. It sends a light to break through the gloom of many a bereft home, and affords some consolation to those who weep for the wounded and the dead, for precious lives have not been sacrificed in vain.

Gettysburg is written in many an house. Vicksburg is written on many a bleeding heart. A father has taken

down the family Bible, and on the family record has written opposite the name of his brave son, "*Died in the battle that saved Pennsylvania.*" And yet that father, today, is giving thanks to Almighty God for His mercy toward this State and this nation. Many a mother and sister went but yesterday and wept over a fresh grave, or, denied even that privilege, they gazed upon and pressed some relic of one buried on the field of martial glory in a southern clime, and yet as their tears fell, the thought of victory—victory for a nation won by the wounds and the death of the brave—brought a consolation which none but patriotic souls can appreciate and cherish.

Look at the moral effect of the utter overthrow of the Egyptian army, upon the people of Israel. They began to believe that God was upon their side and that they were to have a national existence. They began to see that their government was safe under the administration of Moses. It greatly checked their tendency to distrust and unbelief. It became the one prominent event in their history, like Bunker Hill on our national record. It was celebrated for centuries in the "songs of their poets and the glowing words of their orators."

And see how they rejoiced at their deliverance! Moses was not vindictive, nor disposed to exult with revengeful feelings over the death of his oppressors, and yet he caused the shores to ring with the new song of a new-born liberty and the very waves took up the strain. Where in all history was a great national deliverance more appropriately acknowledged? Let those who intimate that these "Hebrews were a horde of semi-savages," tell us what great public outburst of Greek patriotism or Roman valor will bear comparison with this devout and grateful act of these Israelites? It was righteousness prompting the songs of deliverance. It was justice rejoicing in the triumph of human liberty over despotic oppression.

II. There is in victory, a moral effect upon the vanquished. They are demoralized. True they, in their wrath will collect again their broken forces, but thousands of them will fight with fainter hearts, and their leaders may wrangle in confusion. Already their boastings are silenced and their defiance hushed. If these victories continue the effect must be, in time, to bring them to repentance and to terms of peace.

The foes of Israel crouched and were quiet forty years after the triumph which inspired the heroic Deborah with a song—a noble song of thanksgiving to God for the burst of patriotism which had made the nation brave to redress their wrongs, and also a keen rebuke upon those of the people who had refused to sustain the administration in the prosecution of the war, and a curse upon Meroz for an apparent sympathy with the nation's enemies. How unutterably ashamed must the inhabitants of Meroz, and of certain Hebrew States, have felt, after they saw that the administration they had despised and had clogged with their quibbles and partizan prejudices, had really succeeded in putting down the enemies of the nation, by such a victory that the vanquished were dismayed, and filled with fears that kept them in peace for almost half a century! Washington had his opposers, even in the colonies. The Congress of his day was beset with every sort of annoying opposition, and how meanly must these Meroz-imitators have felt after the war ended with glory to all true patriots and independence for the nation.—Who now honors the opposers and vilifiers of Washington? "A word to the wise is sufficient." Deborah had her opposers, Washington his conspirators, and let the men of our times profit by their example.

III. There is, in victory, a moral effect upon other nations. The triumph at the Red Sea cast a terror among the enemies of Israel. Their hearts melted—their courage drooped—their boastings ceased. Their neutrality

no longer meant sympathy for Egypt and underhanded opposition to Israel. They no longer meditated schemes of meddling intervention, and three hundred years afterward, the Philistines had a terrifying remembrance of this event and cried in dismay, "Woe unto us! for who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness?" And by a slight change of terms in Moses' song we may say of our national victories, "the people shall hear and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of the West Indies. Then shall the dukes of England be amazed: the mighty men of France, trembling shall take hold upon them. Fear and dread shall fall upon them. By the greatness of thine arm they shall be held in silence until thy people have passed through these waters of adversity, and are again established in their inheritance."

Another reason for thanksgiving is—"this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Rarely have men, coming safe through the scathing terrors of a battle with victory in their hands, been so infidel as not to acknowledge that it was God who had defeated or destroyed their foes. After the celebrated victory of Agincourt, Henry V., of England, directed the hundred and fifteenth Psalm to be sung; and then prostrating himself on the ground, and causing his whole army to imitate his touching example, the solemn words rose to Heaven—"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." After the remarkable defeat of the Spanish Armada, Queen Elizabeth had these words struck upon the commemorative medals—"The Lord blew with his winds, and they were scattered." Wellington said of Waterloo, "The finger of God was upon me." Washington, in his victories, acknowledged "the astounding interposition of Providence." Gen. Meade thanks the army of the Potomac, and most deservedly—but with profounder gratitude he

renders "thanks to the Almighty disposer of events, that, in the goodness of His providence, He has thought fit to give victory to the cause of the just." Our President, in his proclamation, ascribes and would have us all ascribe the recent triumphs to the "presence of the Almighty Father and the power of His hand."

Thus I have spoken of Justice as the source of the satisfaction which we feel in a triumph over our enemies. It is a principle about which there is sometimes a feeble sentimentalism that makes even mercy unmeaning, and deprives law of its penalties, and dares to go so far as to deny its power in God's government, and its place among his attributes. Without its proper exercise in our families, our schools, our courts, our government, we shall inevitably come to wreck. It is but another name for an exalted and all-comprehending Love. It is love for all holy truth, for righteousness, for liberty, for just government, and for God who has ordained the powers that exist for the highest national welfare of men. It is a love for order, for peace—a peace that must sometimes be purchased with the sword—a love for union and for brotherhood. The Nation chastises her rebellious sons because she would have them be at peace, and would deliver them from anarchy, and would save herself from being despised—made a hissing and a bye-word in the earth, and swept into a gulf of interminable woes.

Were anarchy to become the order of the day—were rioting to become general, and rebellion rampant whenever it chose to lift its brazen head—were the lawless propensities of men to stalk abroad throughout the land in wild extravagance—were the fiercest passions to rush forth in derision of all law and trample down the constituted authorities—were the just and the innocent, the harmless and the helpless to be at the merciless will of a riotous mob or a rebellious force—doing every man of them just what the "rude and random ebulli-

tions" of his fury prompted him to do—not only plundering what honesty had acquired, and burning what patient industry had collected, and tearing down what wealth had built up, but despising the plea which the lamb makes to the ravaging wolf, violating the laws, and denouncing the administrators of government; clutching at the constitution written by the unstained hands of our fathers and sealed with their sacred blood; pulling down the national structures which have been rearing in times of quietness for the purpose of preserving peace, and demolishing the very foundations of government in our communities, cities and states—were all this to be, it would only be the terrible result of what has been already set on foot by those whom every loyal man, and every man of peace, and every lover of righteousness, must regard as the enemies of our national institutions, and the foes of our chartered liberties.

Justice demands that such a work of horror and woe be speedily stayed. Love to all that we hold sacred demands that, by force, we suppress this monstrous wickedness, and we must have some feeling of relief and glow of satisfaction, when we see a brighter light of hope gleam through the smoke of clouded war, "that the union of the States will be maintained, their Constitution preserved and their peace and prosperity permanently secured."

And now while the Bible instills this love for principles of national righteousness—while it furnishes approved examples of devout thanksgiving for victories over enemies—while it teaches us "to give thanks unto the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever: He overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, for his mercy endureth forever: He smote great kings and slew famous kings, for his mercy endureth forever:"—while it teaches us to "say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall all thine enemies submit themselves unto thee:"—while it tells us that

in the holiest heavens, the angels and the saints are looking down upon the wars that desolate wicked nations and by which just people gain their rightful liberties, and after the just visitations of woes and the pouring out of the "vials of the wrath of God upon the earth," and the downfall of great evil powers, there is "heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia, salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgements"—while the Bible reveals all this to show us in what spirit of justice and love we may give thanks to God for national triumphs, it also teaches us to love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitely use us. (*)

But this is not a love that repeals law, cancels the rights of a government and obliterates justice. God loves all men with an infinite benevolence, and compassion, but this does not prevent the infliction of all the severities of just punishment. He loves all holy principles more than he loves those who violate them. When you read His utterances against His enemies, "let it not be imagined that the Being from whom they come is without pity and without love; never would He utter them if a milder course could serve the ends of true benevolence and com-

(*) "Christian love is of two kinds—the love of approving complacency, and the love of benevolence. Every human being is entitled to our love of benevolence, or wishing him well, whatever be his character; but it is only those whose character is amiable, who are entitled to our love of approbation and complacency. Applying this distinction to our enemies, we ought to love them with benevolence, or wish them well, though their general character be bad."—*Footnote on Luke.*

"We may love our enemy, and yet have resentment against him for his injurious behavior toward us. But when this resentment entirely destroys our natural benevolence towards him, it is excessive, and becomes malice or revenge."—*Bp. Butler.*

prehensive compassion. It is because He sees them to be truly indispensable that He resolves on such dismal severities; but once resolved on, He executes them without shrinking or sign of fear."

We may imitate the Divine love, and still imitate also the Divine justice. We may love the guiltiest criminals according to law, still inflicting upon them, only in a legal manner, the severe penalties they have incurred. Pity for rebels is very far from sympathy with them, and is consistent with an intense hatred of rebellion, and a determination to crush it. The sturdiest warrior may weep for his foes, and yet fight them to the death.

We love justice and therefore must punish injustice. We love good government, and therefore must wage war against those who would destroy it. We love free institutions and would have our foes to return and share with us in the privileges they confer upon us. We love our Union of States and all that is involved in the federal compact, and in a generous benevolence toward our enemies, we would have them submit to a government which they once took oath to sustain, and be once more united with us in state-fellowship, in social brotherhood, under one flag, under one Constitution, under one administrative power, and in one combined effort to make this nation as free, as happy, as righteous, as prosperous, and as powerful as is possible in the most liberal designs of God. In the spirit of benevolence toward our nation's foes, we would have them to return and be brethren of one family, with the same Bible, the same religion, the same churches, the same liberty and the same social equality. If they despise sentiments like these, we must wait until national justice and Divine judgment bring them to repentance.

It is not their personal destruction that we desire—not the wasting of their homes, nor the overthrow of their cities—not the doom of their society, nor the desolation

of their land; but it is the destruction of their wrong principles, the wiping out of their enormous wickedness, and ours with it, for we do not plead exemption from all guilt. It is the eternal suppression of their monstrous rebellion, and the uprooting of all the political evils by which it was begotten; the pulling down of that banner under which those who once called us brethren have leagued themselves, and the disbanding of their forces; the defeat of their treasonable schemes and the complete overthrow of their pretended government—this we desire, and for this we send armies to compass them by land and by sea; for this we wage a war of self-defence and self-recovery, and for this we pray in our homes and by public altars. If a principle of justice runs through all our thanksgiving, it melts into a principle of love for the just government which we have so long enjoyed together, and which in compassion warmed in her bosom the viper that now strikes its fang at the national heart.

It is a justice of which one has written—"Truth is her handmaid, freedom is her child, peace her companion, safety walks in her steps, victory follows in her train. It is the highest emanation from the gospel; it is the greatest attribute of God. She warns with a loud voice and rules with a strong hand, and carries order and discipline into a world, which, but for her, would be a wild waste of passions."

And while she prompts us to "render the homage due to the Divine majesty for the wonderful things He has done in the nation's behalf," she unites with love in urging us to "invoke the influence of His Holy Spirit to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a needless and cruel rebellion; to change the hearts of the insurgents; to guide the counsels of the government with wisdom adequate to so great a national emergency, and to visit with tender care and consolation throughout the length and breadth of our land all those

who, through the vicissitudes of marches, voyages, battles, and sieges, have been brought to suffer in mind, body, or estate ; and finally, to lead the whole nation, through the paths of repentance and submission to the divine will, back to the perfect enjoyment of union and fraternal peace."