

THE GREAT DELIVERANCE AND THE
NEW CAREER.

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GENTLEMEN OF THE PHI BETA KAPPA
SOCIETY OF UNION COLLEGE.

THERE is that in the service which is required of me to-day which is so far peculiar as to have induced me to attempt it, and as to decide what its own substance and end should be. For I am beyond the time of life when such services are expected of men, for whom realities alone have much charm or special significance. That distinguished Association, so long connected with our chief seats of liberal education, and whose members everywhere were chosen, even in youth, for the high promise they already gave, has made this unusual requisition on me, who was not a member of it, for reasons which it was impossible for me to misunderstand. Not for services or attainments, either literary or scientific, has this duty fallen on me; for it has not been the chief aim of my life to cultivate either literature or science. Nor is it for any special distinction I had acquired or sought in any walk of life; for it has been my lot to labour in so many ways, that I have willingly accepted the unbounded liberty of toil, in place of every other reward of toil. But I am called to this service, because they who called me loved their country and their race, and following the instincts of that love, would do honour, after their manner, to such as with a love not less fervent than their own, and amidst dangers and trials somewhat more severe, they supposed had kept the faith, and fought a good fight. How, then, can I avoid here to-day dealing with those vast realities which cover the broad, bloody track behind us, which rise to the very heavens all around us—which stand in solemn grandeur directly in the new and sublime career set before us? Here,

where, long years ago, the steps of my youth were trained by that illustrious man, to whose venerable presence I might justly bring so large a tribute out of all my life has produced—here, where for the third time in six and forty years, and surely for the last time, my loved and loving Alma Mater bids her child speak the living truth, as it looks to him—what, besides these great realities, which are of the very essence of our people's life, is there or can there be, for me to speak of now? This is the day of visitation for this mighty land. That people is already lost who hide their face from God in such a day!

We have seen this great Republic hurled, apparently as in one moment, and by one blow, from the highest, the happiest, and the strongest position to which any people had ever attained. At one blow—a blow which could be struck only by traitors—its sublime career seemed to be cut short. Over half the land the shout and scoff of innumerable rebels in arms defied the nation they had torn in pieces; while, over the other half, their organized abettors rejoiced over their bloody and frantic revels. The eager sympathy of the ruling classes in most foreign nations, and most flagrantly in the great maritime nations, caught up across the seas the wild sounds of havoc, as of falling States and slaughtered peoples; for they seemed, to their longing hearts, to mean the wreck of the great free nation, and the swift destruction of republican liberty throughout the earth. The wise—so called of this world—are accustomed to distil, through apothegms, their futile wisdom; and the world, so called, is accustomed to accept this wisdom as its gospel. Amongst the most mischievous of the apothegms of this futile wisdom—one uttered constantly by ten thousand tongues, prodigal of all folly that means harm—is that which declares that "Revolutions never go backwards." Whereas, if we reject mere insurrections, rebellions, and revolts—which, in one sense or other, always go backward—there have been, in effect, but few great revolutions, and but the fewest of these have ever gone forward in any other sense than in their own atrocity, and

in destroying, along with much that was good, sometimes also the special evils which produced them. Added to all preceding refutations of this fatal lie, it has, by God's mercy, just received a deadly one at our hands, in the face of all who rejoiced in the hope that the atrocious insurrection we have suppressed was one of those pretended revolutions that never go backwards. There was no possible sense in which the futile wisdom, and the lying apothegms, even if both had been founded in truth, with respect to cruel and oppressive institutions, could have had any place or any application amidst such institutions as ours. And so this generation of our people, wise in its day, clearly understood; and strong in the instinct of its grand mission on earth, gave the effectual answer which has saved us, and which, rightly taught, will save the human race. The cost has been frightful, but cheap in comparison with what it secures, what it establishes, what it prevents, what it punishes. Henceforth all past obligations are made sacred, and all past titles have become a portion of our existence; and new obligations and titles, hardly inferior to the old, have been accumulated, binding and obliging us to fulfil the glorious destiny we have vindicated, to transmit the boundless inheritance we have redeemed, to maintain the sublime fitness we have achieved for whatever God gives us to do. The rage of traitors is quenched: the yells for our blood are silenced: the unexampled hate and calumny have become mute: our unhappy prisoners are no longer murdered by exposure and starvation: conspirators no longer openly pollute the land: assassins have ceased to ply their hellish trade: and foreign accomplices and instigators of all the miseries and crimes which we have endured are as prompt in tendering their sympathy, their counsel, and their friendship, as if they were innocent of the ruin of eleven States, and the purpose to destroy all the rest. Instead of the vision of a great people staggering as if smitten with the bolt of destiny, what we behold is universal triumph, the insurrection crushed, its whole theatre desolate, and every survivor of those who took open part in it dependent on the clemency of the nation, or waiting its justice, or an exile and outcast from it. Now it is for us to understand — *First*, That it is God that has saved us, and not we ourselves: but that he has saved us, not by miracle, but through obvious human means, chiefly the wisdom, skill, and heroism of the American people, faithfully directed in the right way

to the right end. *Secondly*, That God having thus saved us, exacts of us, if we would retain his favour, that our consummate triumph shall be diligently improved, always righteously toward him, and justly toward all men; and, in every way, with such clemency as the public safety will allow.

It is in the hour of triumph that the country can most effectually provide that no such perils as we have now survived, no such crimes as have filled us with horror, shall recur again. In doing that, we must cherish no thought of vengeance. Vengeance belongs to God, and he will repay. But we must not trifle with our destiny; we must not forget that the result we have reached is one of pure force. We must perfectly comprehend that we are not standing on the threshold of a political millennium, which must necessarily emerge from the pest, and which opens of itself upon our advancing footsteps; but that we are standing in the midst of hundreds of thousands of slain men, whose blood is to be answered for to God; victims of the most unprovoked example of the most ferocious kind of war, waged with the most desperate purpose, and designed to produce the most terrible results. The very completeness of the conquest, when it came, is a fearful proof of the relentless ferocity with which the triumph was resisted; and so is a perpetual warning, that to make the fruits of it sure and lasting, is only less important, and may be only less difficult, than to have won the triumph itself. The fruits I speak of are not peculiar to the conquering, more than to the conquered portion of the inhabitants of the United States. They are fruits which must be secure, as the grand results of the war, to the whole restored nation. They are the principles and the objects for which we fought; the imperishable truths for which we risked everything, and won; won for ourselves, for our latest posterity, for our whole country, and, in God's good time, for the human race. We will have no more treason: satisfy us, then, that no more is to come. We will endure no more revolt; make us sure no more is meditated. We will permit no more insurrection; convince us there will be no more. As we will answer to God, we must redress these hellish conspiracies; these torturing and starving of prisoners to death; these burning of cities, and murdering travellers, poisoning communities, and spreading mortal infectious diseases; these horrible assassinations; unnatural crimes, which they who overlook and pass by when they might punish them,

thereby assume before God the guilt of them. It is not for me to say, nor would this be the proper occasion, what are the righteous and needful remedies, nor what are the appropriate securities against future attempts. If the nation be not blind, time and events, under the providence of God, will reveal all that may now be thought obscure. Let not our impatient folly hurry us to acts which we cannot recall, no matter how much we may deplore them. Enough is fully manifest already, to enable the public authorities to begin the great work of restoration, and every step taken will reveal the time, the manner, and the nature of the step to be taken next. The nation will protect the innocent and the oppressed. The President has already provided for the pardon of the great majority of the less guilty, upon a plain and necessary act of loyalty on their part. The invincible power of the nation is thrown over and around the whole. Now let it punish with rectitude, repress with steadfast justice, heal with divine clemency, execute with patient and wise energy its constitutional duties in the great contingency, and embrace every one fit to be trusted, in every blessing they are competent to enjoy.

Let it not be supposed that such utterances as these are prompted by needless and unjust distrust, or that they lead to undue severity. Undoubtedly, a broad distinction exists between the great mass of the insurgents who are guilty of the single, but enormous offence of waging civil war against their country, with the purpose of destroying it; and that portion of them, who, in addition to this, attempted the blackest and most unnatural crimes, and succeeded to a frightful extent in their perpetration. What has been done, considered as sin, relates more immediately to God, and the civil power may not take direct note thereof in that respect. I say in that respect; for the same God who will judge the world, is he by whose will the State exists; and crime, which the civil power must punish if that power would live, is no longer capable of proper punishment, nor even of repression, than its heinousness is measured by its relation to sin and to God. The moral sense of those insurgents, who have been immediately implicated in the frightful crimes which have marked the course and end of the insurrection, is the most utterly deprived, as their crimes are the very blackest that stain the history of mankind. Think of multitudes of men crying out continually, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and proving their sincerity, after every pos-

sible breach of the duty of the citizen, required either by God or man, by deliberate attempts to subvert all public authority, and to kill those who exercise it, and by the actual assassination of their own lawful Chief Magistrate, the purest among supreme magistrates on the face of the earth! Think of these multitudes crying out continually, "Render unto God the things that are his," and illustrating their ideas of God, of duty, and of sin, by starving to death prisoners enough to make an immense army, and by conspiracies to rob, to burn, to poison, to spread mortal diseases, and to assassinate outright! Is distrust weak — is it cruel in such a case? Rather, is not the absence of horror against such crimes and sins, and of righteous and manly distrust of all willing partakers in them, proof of sympathy with those sins and crimes? And, moreover, even if the government should overlook these horrors, and the nation, by its indifference, prove itself unfit and incompetent for the new and glorious career set before it; does that justify us, or absolve us from the necessity of testifying, before God and the human race, our own horror of the sins and crimes by which we have have openly triumphed, and with which we will have no fellowship?

We are not allowed to believe that these horrible acts were merely personal and disconnected outrages, of which the insurrection itself was guiltless. Far otherwise. The seeds, the elements, the logical foundation, the moral essence of every one of them lay in the bosom of the great common crime and spirit of the revolt; and they who conceived them were the true expounders of the treason, and they who favoured and executed them were their true disciples. At the bar of morality, of history, and of every impartial human tribunal that patiently investigates the terrible cases, this will be the judgment rendered. I do not doubt, and I rejoice to be able to say so, that multitudes who took part in the revolt, had no participation in such crimes, nor any knowledge of them until they had been committed; indeed, multitudes of such have no belief, even now, of their great extent, and many appear to discredit even the existence of some of the most heinous of them. To the whole extent of those engaged in the insurrection, and yet free from all participation in the dreadful and unnatural crimes which it produced, the nation has the means of exhibiting a noble moderation or a divine clemency, as the public safety may allow, and the relatives claims of individuals and classes may require. They who, by a happy incon-

sequence, escaped the crimes to which others devoted themselves, and who, on that account, should be favourably considered when the question is about dealing with guilty and subdued people by the million, stand, nevertheless, towards the nation, and towards the great principles on which its existence depends, in such an attitude that indiscriminate acts of pardon and oblivion, and immediate participation by them afterwards, in all the rights and duties of citizens, would probably result in nothing so certainly as extreme embarrassment to the Federal Government in the execution of its constitutional duties in the revolted States. In any event, great risks must be run, and great difficulties must be encountered, in restoring society in those States. Greater risks and greater difficulties, under free government, perhaps, than under others; and greater under ours than under other forms of free government, unless the principles of our complex system are clearly understood, and are faithfully enforced against those upon which the confederate system was based. It may be proper, therefore, for me to enter somewhat into this great topic, which is of supreme importance to our country at the present moment, and decisive, if rightly applied, of all the future.

In the family of nations there can be no assured protection of the weak against the strong. The advantages of situation, the skill of rulers, and the high qualities of peoples, may achieve great results. But it is by being powerful, instead of weak, that nations preserve their independence and perpetuate their existence. To weaken one's country, therefore, is a crime against nature. To do this with arms in our hands, is the highest crime against society. To do it in a free country, is to betray both civilization and liberty. And with all this the insurrection now suppressed is deeply stained. The problem which free nations have found to be the most difficult of all, is to establish personal freedom in an adequate manner, and at the same time to acquire national force competent to maintain the national independence, and to organize that force at once safely and effectually. The mode in which this great double achievement has been ordinarily attempted, has been by leagues instead of governments, concerted by free communities, for a very few and very limited objects. And the universal result has been insignificance in the central organization in time of tranquillity, and anarchy or despotism in time of peril. The people of the United States have been more fortunate. As-

serting and conquering their independence, as one people made up of united colonies, and not by colonies afterwards leagued together; the institutions they finally established, and under which personal freedom and national independence have been perfectly secured, are constructed and maintained upon the clear and perfect facts of their condition. They constitute a nation absolutely, but not otherwise than a nation constituted of States; while these States, the elemental constituents of this nation, are States not otherwise than as portions of this nation. The people alone are sovereign; and the governments they have created, and which they have expressly reserved the right to change, are the ordinary means by which so much of their sovereign power is put forth as seemed to them best. As regards the nation, the national and paramount sovereignty necessarily resides in the people of the whole nation — and is exhibited, as far as it has been organized for practical use, in the paramount national government. In each State, the people of that State are paramount, exclusive, and sovereign, as regards every other separate State; and as regards the nation, are limited and bound by the common national will and paramount sovereignty, as expressed now in the Federal Constitution and laws — and as expressed, from time to time, nationally. And the national will has expressed itself as clearly and as constantly, that these States shall exist, as that a common nationality shall be maintained, and shall be exhibited through a common government, always paramount, and often exclusive, with regard to all powers and duties declared and vested by the national Constitution. The people created all — God alone created them. They are before, and are above, all existing, all conceivable institutions. They are a nation, not a league of communities; a nation with a government, not a confederacy with a compact; a nation competent and resolute to perform, in peace and in war, every function of a great, free nation. The fundamental elements of these great truths lie at the foundation of every American constitution. The sovereignty of the people, and their right to exercise that sovereignty in creating, changing, and abolishing government, has been expressly translated from the obscure code of natural law into the code of written law, and laid at the foundation of our constitutional liberty. And we may confidently assert, that while the conception of the double governments, State and National, secured for ever the possible union of complete individual freedom

and boundless public strength; the conception of legalizing the natural sovereignty of the people, and regulating the manner of its exercise, secured for ever the possibility of the peaceful control of all governments and institutions, by society itself, as the actual and true sovereign. Henceforward, it is no longer the sword, but it is public sentiment manifested by suffrage, that creates and abolishes constitutions — that establishes and subverts governments. Thenceforward, “the natural right of revolution,” as men call the natural right of the community to be righteously governed, becomes the mere cry of factions — pretext for sedition, protest against free institutions, and against the only permanent security for them, the sovereignty of society. We have seen all these grand truths violently set aside, and the land drenched in blood that they might be destroyed. We have seen them all vindicated and re-established — and at what cost! What behoves us now, is to take care that their recognition and utterance shall be so distinct, and their enforcement so just and complete, that the fruits they shall yield to us and to all mankind, in time to come, shall exceed even those they have already produced.

It is in this light, as much, perhaps, as in any other, that this generation deserves the grateful recognition of the oppressed nations, and that it will receive a great commemoration from the ages to come. If this insurrection could have succeeded, it is impossible for the human understanding to grasp the whole extent of the disorder and ruin to which it would have given birth. We can, however, see far enough into the obscure light which surrounds all things that are not realized, to distinguish the most palpable calamities with which this treason was pregnant. Its success directly involved the destruction of this great nation; the creation out of its fragments of two or more nations; and the establishment in all the fragments of the empire, of principles and tendencies under which weakness, mutual distrust, and anarchy, would take the place of all we now enjoy and hope for. The great free nation, whose continued existence and enduring strength is the one condition of the future deliverance of the human race, would have been blotted out of the family of nations. In achieving this destruction, all mankind must have been taught — part with infinite joy, the rest with utter brokenness of heart — that our glorious mode of liberty with independence was as futile as all the modes which had failed and perished throughout the ages; our sover-

eignty of the people, the palladium of our personal freedom, meaning only sedition and anarchy; our double government, the palladium of our public strength and safety, meaning only a sovereign method of mutual annihilation. As far as the wild clamour of the insurgents can be translated into an intelligible account of the motives and objects of their conduct, new grounds of rejoicing in their overthrow must be recognized by every generous mind; and as far as their conduct explains their motives and objects, a still deeper shade is thrown into the abyss they had prepared. Hatred, groundless, malignant, unquenchable hate of the free people and States of America, seemed to consume them. Lust of gold, of power, and of office, seemed to have unfitted them for the common duties of citizens. And disgust at the simple, equal, and just institutions of the nation deprived them of peace, till they could tear down everything above them, and trample on everything beneath them. Reckless of the claims of human nature, when they stood in the way of their avarice, as of the claims of country and government, when they stood in the way of their ambition, the avowed and immediate purpose of the leading classes in the revolt was to erect the whole slave States into a slave Confederacy, based upon the two principles of absolute independence of the United States, and absolute sovereignty in each particular State. The first pressing dangers of the war destroyed both privileges; and when the war closed, the Confederate government had become a relentless military despotism, and no colony could be more effectually reduced to the control of any government, than the revolted States were reduced to the control of the government at Richmond. It is not quite obvious whether it was the pressure of stern necessity, or the absence of fixed principles, that gave birth to such fatal contradictions. The primeval source of all the misery and wickedness which have been witnessed, was connected in its origin, long ago, with attempts to secure the existence, extension, and perpetuity of negro slavery in the United States; and with regard to this we behold another of those violent and humiliating contradictions which disclose the absence of fixed principles and of ordinary foresight. For after a sustained political conspiracy in the interests of slavery, for a whole generation preceding the revolt; after organizing the whole South, and convulsing the whole nation, creating and annihilating parties, making and unmaking presidents and cabinets, debauching the highest

judicial tribunals, controlling the legislation of Congress, creating armed seditions in the territories, and forcing constitutions upon them by fraud and violence, after re-opening the foreign slave trade, and finally commencing war against the United States, we find these same people, with a fatuity which is marvellous, signaling the last months of their resistance to the Federal arms by concessions, after all is lost, that even a chance of respite is worth more than slavery! And this is the end and the moral of this cruel, flagitious, and desolating civil war! Set on foot for the creation of a great empire, in which capital should own labour; an oligarchic empire, based on hereditary slavery — retrogressive; indeed, monarchical in its tendencies — its projectors already claimed one of the finest regions of the earth, and aimed at the possession of the whole cotton, rice, and sugar producing country on the North American continent. Extending above the line of the products I have named, about to the 40th degree of north latitude, and southward indefinitely towards the equator, embracing on the east the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic ocean, and on the west those of the Pacific; possessed of the richest mines of the precious metals, the widest variety, and the greatest abundance of productions of the earth, and the finest and most salubrious climates; who can reflect, without consternation, upon the consequences of the successful establishment of such an empire, upon such principles, by such people? That it was a chimera from the first, may be truly said; and the heroic people of the United States resolved that it should be a chimera in the end; and the wisdom of our rulers, the skill of our military leaders, especially of the great Lieutenant-General; the courage of our fighting men, and the grand endurance of the loyal population, with God's blessing, proved that it was, indeed, a chimera. But it was a chimera that could bring upon the field of battle a million of armed men, that had reason to believe it had the guarantee of the two greatest maritime nations, that it should not fail, and that actually received from foreign nations such vast aid, that it withstood, during four years, the whole power of a martial people, second in no respect to any nation in the world. It is well, while we thank God for its destruction, that we be careful to prevent all future occasion for any similar necessity.

Let us understand, therefore, what the present condition of this great ruin of so many fine States, this mighty wreck of the

projected oligarchic slave empire, actually is; and what our sacred obligations and supreme interests alike oblige us to do with it and for it. First of all, the whole of it, with which we have to deal, is neither more nor less than eleven integral parts of the thirty-three which composed the nation before the pretended secession of the first State. I pass by the territories — the vast public domain — the fate of which, by itself, was worth the war. There is no longer any question as to them or their inhabitants. Great and needless difficulties have been conjured up, as to the aggregate effect of the secession, independent organization, and conquest of the revolted States. If the two former acts had even been legally potential, the conquest is the judgment of that tribunal from which there can be no appeal — that all their potency is ended. If they were legal nullities, except as war might maintain them, and make them real, the conquest is the unappealable decree of their nullity in fact as well as in law. The sole potential fact that remains is their conquest; and the rule of legal action towards them afterwards is contained in the Constitution and laws of the United States. By that great rule, war is as distinctly provided for as peace is; and all the exigencies, duties, and results of war, as settled by the law of nature and nations, and practised in civilized ages, are as really accepted and legalized — except where they may be distinctly rejected by it — as if they had been specially repeated and enacted. When there shall be war, and when war shall cease, belongs only to the Congress of the United States, as to the former, and only to the President and Senate, as to the latter, to determine with regard to all external war. No such war as that we have now extinguished is recognized by the Constitution and laws, as anything more than insurrection, revolt, which can end only by suppression; and the recognition and treatment of those engaged in it as belligerents, was a mere act of clemency. While the insurrection continues, or any danger of its renewal exists, in the former case, war, in the latter case, conquest, continues to be the sole potential fact. As soon as conquest is complete, and all danger over, and both facts legally ascertained and declared, whether in whole or in part, as to its theatre, a new state of the case arises; but not necessarily, much less immediately, a state of complete order and peace. Our Constitution and laws guarantee security, public order, and peace in each State; and guarantee, moreover, the maintenance of republican govern-

ment in each. In the whole area of the eleven conquered States, so long and so lately the theatre of a bloody civil war, it is manifestly perilous, if not impossible, to pass rapidly, far less directly, from a state of universal bloodshed to one of universal quiet and confidence. Conquest is not merely a vast fact, it is also a complicated condition; and as such, is a stage — especially in this extraordinary case — to be patiently, carefully, and firmly passed through; much depending on the conduct of the conquered, both during and after the war. In like manner, following this state of conquest, that condition of things arises in which the special guarantees I have stated are to be faithfully executed; and so it becomes another stage in the transit to complete restoration — a stage much depending on the condition of each community.

There is much disloyal clamour still in the land — the half subdued continuance of the “tyrant, usurper, oppressor” outcry, which became more boisterous as the crimes of the insurgents became more heinous. They who find themselves restrained or repressed more or longer than is agreeable to them, must learn that the ruin of a country is much easier than its recovery; the destruction of society much more simple than its restoration; the commission of crime much less irksome than its punishment. And the country may thus far rest in tranquil confidence that the Constitution of the United States, while it limited the range of subjects committed by the nation to the General Government, took care to invest that government with the amplest power to do whatever was required of it; making it, indeed, unto its due ends, the strongest government in the world.

In the execution of these great and difficult duties much embarrassment may arise, much difficulty may be created, much delay may occur. By a steady adherence to the grand object in view, by a just and sincere maintenance of our principles, and performance of our duties, we will finally obliterate the ravages of the insurrection and purge out its poison. Or if these things prove, for the present, beyond our endeavours, so much, at least, may be made sure, that every new attempt shall be less destructive to us, and more fatal to such as resort to it. The American people do not intend to permit the dismemberment of the nation. The present population of the subjugated States amounts only to a small fraction of what those States are capable of sustaining; and if every discontented person in

every one of them could go into perpetual exile, their places would probably be supplied from foreign nations more readily than they could find new homes, and by numbers exceeding their own, and more loyal than themselves. The actual state of the population of those States, at this time, is not known with sufficient accuracy to speak of, except in general terms. A very large proportion of it is of African descent — the whole of which may be considered loyal: of it I will speak more fully afterwards. It is probable that the majority of the white population, in most of those States, and also the majority of the aggregate in all the States, was averse to secession and to the civil war when it began; and it is apparently certain that the great majority of the whole, thoroughly exhausted and subdued, gave up the contest as hopeless, and willingly closed the war on the terms dictated by the nation. It is also probable that many persons, to whom only the last of those statements applies, and some to whom neither of them applies, have nevertheless, now that the cause they espoused is lost, accepted in good faith the clemency of the government, and will discharge with sincerity the new obligations they have assumed. In the progress of the war, most of those who had at first opposed it, were gradually drawn into it: many voluntarily, many more by the reckless application of public force, and the pitiless cruelty of private fanaticism. Of this last class, most perhaps rejoiced to be restored to the national protection. And, amidst all dangers and tribulations, many adhered to their loyal convictions; some driven into exile, some languishing in prisons, some hunted like wild beasts, some spoiled of all they had, some under perpetual menace, and not a few delivered up to death. Taken all together, the picture is most deplorable. The whole theatre of the war impoverished, wasted, and desolated: the white population — except those harpies who fatten on the ruins of society — reduced in every way from their former condition — the wealthy class especially, ruined, scattered, and to a great extent destroyed; the black race discharged from involuntary labour, demoralized, and wholly uncertain of its future; the resources of the country and the people paralyzed; and everything showing that — even if they had been driven by their own desperation, or the madness of those who had led them to destruction, to refuse the terms generously granted to them — they were no longer capable of making any serious resistance. What is now required of us is to restore and reinstate this chaos

into eleven loyal States, with republican constitutions, as once more trustworthy portions of the delivered nation. A mighty work! — but capable of being well performed.

We confuse ourselves by accepting the jargon of extreme and hostile parties, touching the legal status of these unhappy States, as if the jargon of one party or the other must necessarily contain an exhaustive statement and sum of all the facts and principles applicable to the case. These States, we are told, must be in the Union, or out of it. If out of the Union, then so and so; and a scheme is built which accepts the validity of State secession, merely for the purpose of getting them into the condition of Territories, in order to establish extreme and fatal principles, in the process of their new creation as States. On the other hand, if in the Union, then so and so; and a scheme is built which denies the validity of State secession, merely for the purpose of keeping the insurgent State governments in the Union during the war, in order to establish the control of the restored States in disloyal hands. Upon one scheme and the other, widely as their respective adherents differ in their principles and objects, the great result reached by both is the overthrow, both dogmatic and practical, of all we have gained by the realization of our grand system of double governments — the one subordinate but real, for the State; the other paramount but limited in the range of its objects, for the nation. By one scheme, the idea of State perishes when it is most needed; by the other, the idea of nation is excluded when its powerful presence is most indispensable. We have as yet escaped any ratification of either of these schemes by the Federal Government, as well as any recognition by it of the fundamental principle of both; namely, that absolutely in the Union, or absolutely out of the Union, is the complete and only possible alternative and status. The principle is utterly false, and would be utterly destructive, if it were true. In some respects, the revolted States were never out of the Union, and could not be, by any known process, much less by acts of treason and rebellion on their part. Their territory embraces eleven integral and inseparable parts of the nation, and their inhabitants constituted many millions of the population of the United States, not one of whom could, by any known act, much less by crime, remain on its soil, and throw off its authority. The land and its inhabitants have always been, and continue to be, both by their territorial circumscriptions and by their civil divisions,

parts of the United States; and the nation never did, and without judicial blindness, never could, refuse to maintain these palpable and vital facts, or agree to accept as true anything contradictory of them. In point of fact, these States have been involved in a great insurrection, which we have suppressed. In the progress of affairs, the insurgents in each of those States, by force and fraud, suppressed the lawful State government — set up hostile governments, local and general — revolutionized society, and tyrannized over it, and waged war during four years against the United States. None of these rebel governments were ever related to the United States, or recognized by us, otherwise than as mere insurgents; nor was any acknowledgment ever made by us, of any territorial rights of any sort, in the rebellion. When we conquered the whole, we found no lawful authority anywhere existing. We found the smouldering remains of rebellion everywhere; we found the country and its inhabitants; and we undertook to execute, firmly and righteously, the guarantees of the Federal Constitution — in favour of *States*, in such cases — for there are no such guarantees for them otherwise. This is the whole case, as to these eleven States, in or out of the Union. As to the land and its inhabitants, yes; as to rebel authorities and governments, no. Naturally, necessarily, and as far as intermediate acts render it possible — the *status ante bellum*. For the rest, the constitutional authority of the paramount government of the nation on one hand, and on the other the local sovereignty of the loyal people, are the elements by means of which public order and regulated liberty must be made to supplant anarchy in these desolated communities. If the existing condition of any of these communities should render this, for the present, impossible in itself, or highly perilous to the general safety, such communities must learn to endure the necessary delay as one of the misfortunes which their own conduct has produced.

It undoubtedly belongs to the authorities of the United States to determine who have rendered themselves, by their treason, unfit to be trusted with any share in the loyal reconstruction of society throughout the revolted States; who, that is, of all those citizens who, according to the ancient and perpetual laws and liberties of those States, were always and exclusively possessed, in them respectively, of this sovereign right. And it belongs to the President, by his pardon, to restore, in these disorganized communities, any, once qualified, now dis-

qualified by late treason, whom he may, in his sound discretion, consider fit to be restored to their former rights; restored, that is, so far as to partake in any proceedings the United States are competent to enforce. But nothing can be more fatal and absurd than to contend that this power to discriminate and exclude, to discriminate and restore by pardon—always amongst those once lawfully qualified—under overwhelming public necessity, is identical with power in the President to confer sovereign rights, by proclamation, at his discretion, upon individuals and classes in the subjugated States, who have been for ever excluded by law, from their exercise in such States. I speak now merely of the naked principle and power—without considering whether it may be unnaturalized foreigners, white boys, white women, black men, or black women and children—in whose behalf it is proposed to give them practical effect. If the revolted States, by the method of their restoration, shall be made the means of subverting, by a terrible example, both the principle of popular sovereignty and the principle of double governments, on which, as I have shown, both our personal liberties and our national independence repose, and in which the nature and foundation of our civilization are disclosed, posterity will hesitate greatly in attempting to decide whether the insurrection or the restoration had inflicted the more fatal injury. The principles, on the one hand and the other, which I see to be constantly and vehemently asserted, and attempted to be forced upon the administration at Washington, concerning the relation of the subjugated States to the nation, and their restoration to full and equal standing in the Union, together with the obvious and intended effects of those principles, seem to me to be so repugnant to the sober sense of the American people, that their utter repudiation, or the total overthrow of the great party which twice elected Mr. Lincoln, and closed the great war with glory, is the only alternative the perilous case presents.

I do not care to say much that seems to relate to parties or their fate. Something briefly here, in two respects, is necessary in closing this general aspect of the subject. The first relates to the Southern people and their future; the second, to the hostile element in the States which have been classed as loyal. The revolt was made by the cotton States; but the war was fought out, essentially, by the remaining rebel States, with great accessions of strength

from the border States that did not secede, and smaller from most of the other loyal States. The people of the cotton States, left to themselves, would probably have been subdued in one campaign—were whipped, as it was, long before the war was over, and surrendered without a struggle at last. It should be remembered, however, that the ruling classes in the cotton States, especially in the younger of them, were not, in any proper sense, Southern people, but were mostly adventurers themselves, or the children of adventurers to those States. Many of their more prominent leaders were hardly acclimated; and few of them belonged to the second generation born on the soil. There is, however, throughout all the revolted States, a really Southern population; but everywhere, especially in the cotton States, this population is generally to be sought in the middle and humbler walks of life. It made itself manifest chiefly in the ranks in the rebel armies. What course it will adopt in the new condition of affairs now begun, and in the vast changes which are impending, is matter of infinite importance not yet clearly discernible. They cannot emigrate, except in comparatively small numbers; and would, probably, prefer not to do so if treated wisely and generously. Their relation to the rebellion was, at first, more that of a people averse to, or systematically deluded, and following erroneous convictions passionately embraced, than that of a people consciously embarking in an infinitely wicked and desperate revolt; and to whom, after the first steps were taken, or allowed to be taken by others, there was no return. Their relation to slavery too, even when they owned no slaves themselves, was widely different from what seems to be generally supposed. For they who, in slave countries, own the slaves, own also every thing else, and are the arbiters of society and of public opinion. In an ordinary oligarchy, created by birth, they who are excluded by birth can have small interest in maintaining it. But in an oligarchy created by accidental caste, the case is wholly different. Every free white man, in a land of black slaves, is already distinguished by birth; and the ordinary chances of fortune may endow him with all that distinguishes the most envied of his race. In all the slave States the mass of non-slaveholders have always been virulent supporters of slavery, and movements towards emancipation have always received their impulse from hereditary slaveholders. The subjugation of the South, the destruc-

tion of the class of adventurers among its slave oligarchy, the overthrow of that deplorable form of servitude which makes oligarchy the natural social state, the bringing into far greater prominence the real Southern population, and, added to all, a new and real education, in its best sense, of this population, begun by the result of the civil war, and rapidly perfected by firm, candid, just, and magnanimous treatment on our part; all put together, may beget, in generous minds, noble hopes for a people whom we sincerely desire to be allowed to trust and to cherish. Comparing this remarkable state of affairs with that existing amongst the implacable enemies of the government, organized throughout the loyal States, who have resisted its efforts to suppress the insurrection, and who now denounce its endeavours to restore society in the subjugated States, there appears to be less hope of allaying this malignant disloyalty, and less ground for trusting it, than for relying on the future good faith of the Southern people. The domestic enemies of the country differed, during the war, from those who took arms against it, in very little that gave them any advantage in the sight of God or man. And now that the war is over, the difference is by no means to their advantage. If I should attempt to forecast the future, it would be that danger to the country, if it arises from within, may be expected from the quarter of these domestic enemies. And if I should attempt to suggest the remedy, it would be, that the great Union party which has saved the country must, above all things, prevent the restoration to power, under whatever name or pretext, of the party which is responsible for all we have endured, and all we still dread.

I have spoken of the extraordinary contradictions in opinion which the insurrection has manifested on so many occasions during its progress. Astonishing changes have also been exhibited amongst ourselves. With the insurgents, however, and with those amongst ourselves who sympathized with them, those changes were constantly of a character to cast distrust upon their principles and their convictions; while, with the American people, such as occurred were in the direction to inspire greater confidence in their unalterable steadfastness of purpose. With the rebels the war was, avowedly, but a means to certain ends, so important, as they said, as to justify insurrection; yet, first or last, nearly every one of the ends avowed was ready to be abandoned in order to continue the war. With us, preser-

vation of the national life, by extinguishing the revolt, was throughout the grand end, and the means only were changed as seemed necessary to its attainment. However this may be, there was one change on our part astonishing in itself, and marvellous in its consequences. After the first election, and just before the first inauguration of that great magistrate and illustrious martyr, Abraham Lincoln, and after a certain number of States had not only seceded, but had committed other acts of war, the Congress of the United States, by a majority of two-thirds of each House, submitted to the people for their adoption an amendment to the Federal Constitution, by which the nation was to deprive itself, for ever, of all power to abolish slavery, by any new amendment, without the consent of any State in which it might exist; that is, slavery, as it then existed, was to exist for ever, so far as the power and will of the nation were concerned — and this by no means of an exceptional and fatal limitation upon the national, sovereignty, already distinctly asserted and legalized in the Constitution itself. The fate of this incalculable sacrifice, offered for peace and union, is every way instructive. Not one of the slave States, I believe, except Kentucky, ratified the proposed amendment; certainly not one of the disloyal States. Thus contemptuously passed over by those who would have eagerly embraced it, if their concealed objects had not been different from those they avowed, the free States, with a common consent, allowed the monstrous proposal to pass away with the occasion which it was utterly futile to control. Four years after this event, and after the second election of Mr. Lincoln but before his second installation, the civil war raging during these four years and disclosing the perils to the nation arising out of the institution of slavery, the Congress of the United States submitted to the people another amendment to the Federal Constitution. This also was adopted by a majority of two-thirds of each House; but O! how different from the first. By this amendment it is proposed, in the national exercise of the sovereign power legalized in the Constitution, to abolish for ever the slavery which it was before proposed to make everlasting, by means of a similar act of sovereignty guaranteeing the eternal continuance and imbecility of the nation. And now the nation, State by State, is in the act of ratifying or rejecting this proposal. And the aspirations of every free, wise, and loving soul ought to ascend to God for his favour on the great attempt. And has he

not signally shown what it is he would have us do? At the end of four years, succeeding the first proposal, the triumph of the nation seemed to most foreign governments to be impossible; the timid and time-serving among ourselves had ceased to expect success with any confidence; the disloyal throughout every loyal State had combined, and to a large extent had armed, and, uniting in the interests of the insurrection, their great party had made the basis of their organization to defeat Mr. Lincoln and sacrifice the nation, deliberate avowals that the war was a failure, that our own rights and liberties were ruthlessly invaded, and that the only hope of the country lay in immediate peace, on such terms as the victorious rebels would accept.

In such a condition, as judged of by all who wished us ill, or cared little for our success, Congress proposed the constitutional abolition of slavery. You may count by weeks, even by days, the brief interval between this enactment and the complete overthrow of every rebel government, the surrender of every rebel army, and the close of the war so far as the suppression of the insurrection could suddenly close it. If there be such a thing as Divine Providence, I know not where we can look for a more signal manifestation of it. If that Providence can ever be a rule of judgment and conduct to mortals, I know of no more illustrious occasion or example in human affairs. No period of similar duration in the affairs of nations is crowded with events more sudden, more astonishing, more glorious and complete on one hand, or more fatal on the other. In the very crisis of them there falls upon us a blow awful by its unexampled atrocity, without which the concrete of the spirit and teachings of the insurrection could never have been realized to the common apprehension of mankind; nor the force of martyrdom, added to the boundless force of living effort, been conferred on the principles which saved the country, and will guide its future career. No public life more pure; no labours more arduous and nobly directed; no magistracy more fit, more grand, more beautiful; no death more deeply affecting, ever sanctified a human cause, or secured for it a right to triumph, than fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln! Posterity shall judge between us and them on this simple plea: *This is the man on whom they heaped incessant obloquy to justify their crimes: this is the man their coward vengeance slew when their crimes had failed!*

Widely as the two proposed amendments of the Federal Constitution differ from each

other, in the general mind of the loyal people, the chief object of both was identical; namely, the perpetual preservation of the Union, in its integrity and in peace. And the great length to which the first one went in one direction, as clearly proves the strong desire to prevent the threatened secession and war, as the thorough work which the second one makes in the opposite direction, proves the steadfast purpose to remove every danger that cannot be safely endured. It is a great error, diligently propagated, that the final resolution of the great party which triumphed in the second election of Mr. Lincoln, to abolish domestic, hereditary slavery in the United States, by an amendment of the Federal Constitution, was the result of a special change in public opinion in favour of those extreme doctrines, many of whose leading advocates would have superseded Mr. Lincoln as our candidate in 1864, if they could, and some of whom are already menacing his successor. The change occurred altogether in another manner, and was the product of altogether different views. During the progress of the war the loyal people became convinced not only that slavery was the chief cause of the attempted disruption of the Union, but that it was capable of being made, and was made, a great support of the rebel cause. They became equally convinced that as long as it was allowed to exist in considerable strength it would be, more seriously than before, perilous to the public peace and safety. Add to this the idea that the liberation of the slaves might greatly strengthen the national cause; and, in the minds of men bent upon their great work, the conclusion they reached, after three years of war, seems obvious enough. They resolve to destroy it, that it might not destroy them; and to prohibit it for ever, that it might never embroil or endanger their posterity. Whatever might be their ideas concerning vested rights of property in slaves, they well understood that the perversion of those rights, to purposes at once criminal and fatal, may make the destruction of them both a duty and a necessity. No doubt, if they had approved the terrible institution, they would have still taken the course they did, perhaps reluctantly. No doubt utterly disapproving it as being in its mildest aspect the most dreadful form of servitude, they did for this reason the more promptly undertake what they found themselves obliged to do. But they insisted on its being done, by a sovereign act on the part of the people, in the terms of the Constitution, and according to its forms. The country is full of clamour against

the execution of this great purpose, and everything will be attempted to defeat its just and complete execution. And yet, if there can be conceived to be any foundation in nature for what human laws mean by property, then, assuredly, the first and highest of all is the property which every rational being has in himself. If human laws pass beyond the mild restraint, and limited property, which nature and the preservation of society demands in certain relations of life; society is before and above, both the slavery it creates, and the laws by which it allows that monstrous claim of one rational being upon another; and it not only may, but should, redress the wrongs it has perpetrated against the weak, in the abused name of rights claimed by the strong. In a free government, and under a written Constitution, where the supremacy of society is expressly made legal, and the mode of exercising this supremacy is explicitly defined, nothing short of the highest necessity can excuse society for any hesitation or delay, in obliging the claims of property to respect the sacred rights of human nature and the dictates of eternal justice. In the case before us, there is added to all this the demands of the broadest political wisdom, and the most enduring national interests. And to make the case unprecedented in its clearness, no occasion can ever arise when such an act could be performed, with less suffering to those who may be the chief losers by it, or less ground of complaint on their part, or when every sentiment of honour and gratitude on our part, could more imperatively bind us to redress the down-trodden race, whose fidelity to our cause has been exceeded only by their misfortunes. And the great occasion has come, without any seeking on our part. It has been made by enormous crimes perpetrated against the country, and by the demands of national serenity. It has been realized by a heroism never exceeded — by a triumph never surpassed. Let it now be improved, in a spirit worthy of what God has done for us.

The loss which this insurrection will probably entail upon the slaveholding population of the United States, merely in the value of their liberated slaves, will exceed in amount the whole war debt of the nation. This tremendous loss will fall chiefly on the shareholders of the revolted States. Considered as a confiscation, it is relatively vast, beyond all precedent. Considered as a revolution in a social system, it is seen to be most prodigious by those who understand it best. Considered as a security against future insurrection, it must be allowed to be

complete against this cause of it, and probably against most others. We must not overlook these great realities. And in whatever light we view them, we must accept their just influence upon us. Here is a people smitten by the hand of God. As far as we dare, and their conduct will allow, we must accept this divine retribution, and beware how we insult the majesty of God, by hardness of heart towards those already smarting under his rod. Once they were our brethren; now they are reaping the bitter harvest they have sown; hereafter, do we not desire that they shall be unto us as in former days? The bruised reed God does not break; nor does he quench the smoking flax. First of all things, and above all, these people must accept the overthrow of their insurrection as an everlasting finality; and the next is that they must enable us to confide in their having done so. If they will not do these things, then we must take care that their smothered hatred shall work us no ill, and that the malignant poison they may have instilled into their children shall be heedfully looked after. If they will do them, then our part is neither to wound, to exasperate, to afflict, nor even to punish, so much as to accept their restoration as fully and completely as we require them to renounce their hostility. I speak, of course, of that great population to which no guilt attaches, but the guilt of their great common crime; and as I understand the late amnesty Proclamation of President Johnson, general pardon and oblivion are already tendered to the great mass of these, and special pardon is held forth to such excepted classes amongst them as may be found worthy of it. Whatever the safety of the future, the righteous horror of human nature against unnatural crimes, the irresistible necessity of example upon the utterly depraved, the retribution for torture ruthlessly inflicted upon thousands unto death, and of conspiracies and assassinations in unheard of forms, may demand against the most guilty of the excepted classes, the people of the United States must either execute in the fear of God, or they must assume before God the guilt of the horrible crimes they refuse to punish. God's infinite mercy to the suffering, and his infinite grace to the sinning, are not so exercised as to encourage and increase the sin and misery of mankind, or to make him partaker of the guilt for which the finally obdurate perish. There are criminals whom human society cannot tolerate and exist. There are crimes whose endurance by any people proves that they have

passed their climax, and will finally perish by those crimes.

Touching the great problem of the black race in this country, and especially in the revolted States, I trust we may consider the first step in its solution in effect attained; its release, namely, from hereditary slavery. After that, every additional step is full of difficulty; and chiefly for the reason that no other step would be necessary on the part of the nation, or the national government, after the bestowment of freedom, if the slaves were of the same race with their former masters, and with the American people. Race, I mean, not in the sense of original creation, but of those immense personal and national differences, whose origin is more remote than the dawn of profane history, and whose influence has always been more potent than any civilization yet attained, or any human interests or institutions yet exhibited. In the order of Providence, and in the course of nature, as disclosed by all the past, and as declared by God, we must accept, as incontestibly certain, these following facts, namely: *First*, That these differences between the few chief races, for example, the white and the black races, are permanent, and their effects, whatever they may be, incapable of being suppressed or evaded. *Secondly*, That if they could be absolutely and universally abolished, they would, upon supposition of the unchangeableness of God, or the steadfastness of the course of nature, re-establish themselves. *Thirdly*, That so far as we know, no advantage to the human race would result from the destruction of all of them, and all their effects, in our present state of being, beyond what is already attainable. Most assuredly it does not become us so to delude ourselves on this great occasion, as to esteem as insignificant the force of that spirit of race, and its immediate product the spirit of nationality, which has just borne us in triumph through a struggle so gigantic, and upon which we rely for the complete restoration of the brotherhood of the whole nation. Nor ought we to shut our eyes to so many other remarkable events in our own country, and to innumerable phenomena in the current history of our times, all pointing in the same direction. The original enslavement of the African race on this continent is otherwise inexplicable; the whole fatal history of the native inhabitants of this western hemisphere, from its discovery to this day, attests the same pregnant truths; and their contemporary manifestation, in this country and all others, in the treatment of Asiatic coloured races,

show how broad and durable they are. Indeed, no historic age has more distinctly or widely exhibited the influences I am illustrating, and their profound relation to human nature, than the one we live in. The basis of difference in race, nationality, and tendencies, now so deeply agitating European populations, are not comparable to those which distinguish the great races in America; yet those European populations become more agitated by those differences, such as they are, not in proportion as they are enslaved, but in proportion as they are enfranchised; and the hope of liberty there, as everywhere, has no foundation more secure than this profound and enduring spirit of race. If, as I suppose, it is the involuntary recognition of these everlasting realities, which makes us feel that something more than even the great gift of freedom may be needful for this unfortunate black race amongst us, let us at the same time be fully aware that any thing attempted to be done for them, even in a perfectly lawful way, in disregard of the fundamental and decisive fact that *they are a black race*, and of the peculiar tendencies and instincts of that race as compared with ours, is infinitely certain to work them no good, and may work, both them and us, incalculable harm. And it will be all the worse, if what is done or attempted, outrages the tendencies, the instincts, the feelings, or even the long descended prejudices of this incomparably superior white race, amongst whom their lot is cast. For myself, I desire for every race of men every blessing that man can enjoy, and for every country all that is possible of good: but my own country is unspeakably dear to me above all others, and I prefer my own race, out of all comparison with every other race. I cannot tell but that it may be the will of God, seeing he has used first the Asiatic dark races, and then the European white races, as repositories of his infinite gifts and mercies to mankind, to use, finally, the African black races, in a similar glorious way. But to suppose, that in doing this, he will make the black race and the white race essentially one, or essentially alike, or will strip either of them of its essential peculiarities, which are the very basis of its destiny, high or low, is to reverse, absolutely, every lesson we can draw from all that he has hitherto said and done.

There has been for some years a party in this country, which was understood to demand the absolute enfranchisement of the black race, and its political and social equality with the white race amongst ourselves. I have pointed out the great mis-

take of supposing it was the teaching of this party, which produced the national attempt to abolish slavery by an amendment of the Constitution. The present endeavour, on their part, is to realize the equality originally demanded for the black race, by securing it as a condition of restoration in each of the revolted States; in particular that the right of suffrage shall be given to the liberated slaves by the President, as a preliminary in the reconstruction of society in the subjugated States, and shall be secured in the State Constitutions, as a condition without which they shall not be recognized as States or admitted into the Union. It is to be remembered that nothing of this sort is contained in the proposed amendment to the Constitution. Nothing like it is found in the platform of the party which elected Mr. Lincoln the first time, or that which elected him the second time. Nothing in any act of Congress. Nothing in any one of the numerous proclamations lately issued by Mr. Johnson, for the creation of provisional governments, and the formation of republican constitutions and governments under them in the subjugated States. The power assumed in the demand, as existing in the President, and which he wisely refused to exercise, does not belong to his office, nor to any office whatever; nor to the Congress of the United States, unless these States be first despotically reduced to mere territories; nor to the whole people of the United States, until they shall be first considered competent to make for themselves a despotism — and shall actually make it — in which both the States and the existing form of the nation would be extinguished, and all suffrage become a farce. The power to make a local constitution for a free State — much more the power to amend an existing constitution in an existing free State — is by our system, and by the Federal Constitution, a power locally sovereign — an attribute of the citizens of that particular State — paramount and uncontrollable, except by the Constitution of the United States. And it is only under the provisions and guarantees of that national Constitution, that a citizen of one State has the rights that he possesses in another State, and that the President can interfere, either in war or peace, with the common affairs, much less with the reserved rights, and least of all with those great rights of every State, without which liberty is impossible. The claims I am controverting do, in effect, subvert both of our grand principles of double governments and popular sovereignty, without which our whole system of freedom and

greatness is futile and impossible. Moreover, if the power claimed belonged to the President, he could hardly perform an act more ruinous to the interests of the emancipated slaves, than to exact it, as has been demanded of him; nor one more fatal to all hopes of cordial union among the American people, or more destructive to any party that should sustain him in it. Its political effects would be incalculable, both upon local and national parties, by the sudden creation of four or five hundred thousand new voters of a different race, the great mass of whom are wholly unfit for such a trust, and would be certain to constitute an element of vital and perpetual disturbance, and to fall under the habitual direction of whatever party was most interested, most active, and most unscrupulous. When it is considered that the slaveholders have everywhere controlled the non-slaveholding white vote, many times more numerous than their own, the notion that the local white vote cannot control a black vote, over the whole South, not equal to itself in numbers, may turn out to be as futile as the control of that vote by a non-resident party of extreme opinions would be disastrous. In white communities, where the number of free persons of African descent is comparatively very small, and very superior to the average of their race, it is not surprising, though it is far from general, that they should be invested with this great privilege, now demanded for all of them, everywhere. (Nor if any State sees fit, of its own accord, to offer this inducement to the settlement of the black race in its bodies, can any thing be said against its legal rights to do so. That any State, left to itself, will ever bestow suffrage on a mass of slaves of a different race, suddenly set free by a paramount authority, and nearly equal in number to the rest of its inhabitants, is an event that will hardly be witnessed in this world. That in any State where slavery never existed, or where it has long ceased to exist, a white race, both cultivated and predominant, will ever give suffrage of its own accord, to a black race resident with it, equal to itself in number, and greatly beneath it in civilization, is an event contrary to the common judgment of mankind, and wholly improbable in itself. Nor if the relative position of the parties was exactly reversed, would the result be different. Because the instincts of mankind are more permanent by far than the caprices of enthusiasm; and wiser by far than the extreme conclusions of delusive theories or of party spirit. Secured in the great gift of freedom, protected in the rights of person and

the rights of property, four millions of slaves of a different race will have received — if God continues to smile on our endeavours — an instalment of blessings infinitely rich. Let these blessings be enjoyed and improved, not wasted and risked in the agitation of demands which have no foundation in reason, in experience, or in public necessity, and which are attended with many perils and no hope of true success.

There are, as I have said before, considerations founded upon the universal loyalty of this unfortunate race, and their uniform kindness to our people when in trouble and danger during the war, which, added to their helplessness, appeal to the American people most powerfully in their behalf. And certainly there has been no shortcoming, on the part of the people or the public authorities, in attempting all that seemed to promise them advantage, with how much wisdom and success in most instances, or with how much to be deplored, condemned, or even punished in others, I shall not now inquire. The great danger of this people is, that they will gradually waste away in the struggle they have now to make in competition with the stronger race, for the means of existence; a danger, in the face of which exorbitant and unprecedented claims on their behalf are as melancholy as they are preposterous. There are, however, alleviations of this danger, possibly effectual securities against it. The most obvious one is to secure for them the sympathy and compassion of the stronger race, especially in the region where most of them dwell. Another is their proper education, not for a futile contest for equal participation with the white race in the ultimate sovereignty, but for securing the means of comfortable existence, and acquiring the habits, advantages, and virtues of a free, well-ordered, and steadily-advancing civilization. If, by any means, the whole black race could be thinly distributed over the United States, in the ratio of its whole aggregate to that of the white race; that is, about one black to seven or eight whites, a third alleviation of the most threatening difficulty might be considered well secured; wherefore anything tending in that direction is important. On the other hand, if these two races could be separated territorially from each other, and each be enabled to develop itself freely, without disturbance from the pressure of the other, a solution the most beneficent of all would be obtained. In this light, as well as many others, the American colonies of free blacks on the west coast of Africa deserve to be ranked among the highest enterprises of modern times. And

I may be allowed, on this occasion, to reiterate what I have taught so long, that a powerful and civilized State within the tropics has been the one crying necessity of the human race from the dawn of history; and that for us, and for the black race, the creation of such a State from the American descendants of that race is the highest form in which that great necessity can be supplied. Out of these various suggestions, looking in all directions, we may hopefully conclude that the difficulties of the case will not be found to exceed its resources, if we will address ourselves to whatever duties lie before us, with candour, and patience, and wisdom, and zeal, trusting in God. The oldest living opponents of the terrible system of hereditary slavery, which once prevailed everywhere amongst us, after their best hopes had been often defeated, and the system of slavery had been apparently established without present remedy over so many States, have at last, from an unexpected quarter and in an unexpected way, seen its sudden and total overthrow, and now rejoice in the hope of its early and complete legal extinction. Confusion, disorder, and misery must not be the final result of this sublime retribution. Extravagance, anarchy, and violence cannot be the method by which its blessings are to be secured.

Solemnity — profound solemnity — is the feeling which becomes us, as we look back over the perils, the struggles, the devastation, the slaughter of the past four years, and around us on the consummate triumph, whose monuments, mournful as they are glorious, cover the whole land. That has been done which will never be forgotten, and can never be undone. Blood, human blood, shed like water — the blood of patriots and of traitors — but heroes all — has baptized the great free land, and cemented its glorious free institutions, making both sacred for evermore. The whole earth may rejoice that one of her continents abides in freedom, mightier than ever; and the inhabitants of the earth who sigh for deliverance, may exult as they turn their longing eyes towards the invincible land where the free dwell and are safe. We, as our delivered country starts in her new career, wiser, firmer, more powerful than before — we, fearing God, and fearing nothing else, must consecrate ourselves afresh to our higher destiny. Peace, and not force, is the true instrument of our mission in the world; instruction, not oppression; example, not violence and conquest, our way to bless the human race. But force, and violence, and conquest, are

words which the nations must not utter to us any more; are things which they must learn to use at all with great moderation; and wrongfully, no more at all, in the track where our duties make us responsible, for conniving at their crimes. We must accept our destiny in all its fulness; and run our great career with perfect rectitude and majestic strength. It is God who calls us to be great, in all that distinguishes the race which he has made in his own image. It is God who requires us to do great things for a world which he so loved, that he gave his only begotten Son that it might not perish.

We reprint Dr. Breckenridge's Oration partly from the reasons which he supposes to have moved those who called upon him for it: "Because they who called me loved their country and their race, and, following the instincts of that love, would do honour, after their manner, to such as with a love not less fervent than their own, and amidst dangers and trials somewhat more severe, they supposed had kept the faith, and fought a good fight." How much we owe to this venerable and noble man for preventing the formal treason of Kentucky, it is impossible to estimate.

Dr. Breckenridge is uncle to the traitor of that name, one of the Democratic candidates for the Presidency against Lincoln in 1860. In No. 895 of the *Living Age*, 27th July, 1861, our readers will remember, or may find, an article by him, copied from the *Danville Quarterly Review*, entitled *State of the Country*. And in No. 920, 15th January, 1862, another, entitled "*The Civil War: its Nature and End.*"

Another reason for copying this Oration may be found in the desire that the reasons and the reasoning of all true patriots may be spread before the country — so that out of the whole a course may be taken which will have the hearty concurrence of all patriots, — (we mean of all who were patriots at the above dates, excluding all other). And if such a course cannot now be found, let us in the spirit of the meeting at the Boston Board of Trade — in the address written by Professor Parsons, be willing to stand still, till that Divine Providence, which has so far led us by ways which we knew not, shall clear the path to our sight. If ever people had visible and palpable proofs of Divine guidance, surely this nation has had enough to say,

"We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

There is no danger in the feeling of the loyal North of undue severity to the Southern people. We are so anxious for their complete restoration, that the greatest calamities appear likely to arise rather from their too early release from military domination. Mr. Sumner hardly goes beyond anybody in his willingness to forego vengeance entirely, if we can have security for the future.

Why should we *not* wait till we get it?

The best proof which our late brethren can give us of the sincerity of their renunciation of the rebellion, will be going to work honestly in their present circumstances. They ought to find employment for all their own energies in putting their plantations, and railroads, and houses, and cities in order, with the Northern capital and labor which would be enlisted in the work, — and put off to a future period the luxury of making laws and administering government.

For our own part we hold that the first and chief qualification of a voter is that he shall be with all his heart in favor of the government which he is to help carry on. We would rather have the votes of the five blackest men in the country, than those of Davis, Lee, Benjamin, Mason, and Slidell. We do not forget that the new citizens "are a black race," but think that *rotting* is a matter which is not affected thereby; and when we see how great changes have been brought about in a short time, do not despair of seeing the end of "the long descended prejudices," — which as yet deny to the loyal people of the Southern States, black and white, their only security (so far as we can now see) from the fierce hatred of unconverted rebels. Without this, what are professions and oaths to people who have been taught by legal authority to take an oath without intent to keep it?

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The Great Lakes
and the New Coast
—
Baltimore —