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ART. I.—THE BIBLE IDEA OF TRUTH, AS INSEPARABLE FROM  
THE DIVINE PERSONALITY.

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“His truth, thy shield and buckler.”—Psalms xci. 4.

It is a most important thought that in the Scriptures the idea of *truth* is ever regarded as inseparable from that of *personality*. Abstracted from this, or in the abstract, as we say, it is not recognized as existing, though such existence is not expressly denied. Of the more usual Hebrew word *emeth*, it may be safely affirmed that it is never used for *truth* intellectually, or for any abstract truth or nature of *things*, but ever as an attribute of some *person* human or divine, finite or infinite, temporal or eternal. It does not denote even moral truth viewed abstractly, or simply intellectually, as a system of ideas, according to the more modern usage. It is not, therefore, as Gesenius defines it, *vera doctrina et religio*,—for which he refers to Psalm xxv. 5, “Cause me to walk in thy truth” (*ba-amitteka*), Psalm xxvi. 3, “I have walked in thy truth,” Psalm lxxxvi. 11, etc. It is no “congruity of ideas” merely, as perceived in the thoughts or thinking, according to Locke’s

“Is it not so? when thou art right, then thou art friendly, (towards God and thy brother: meaning this—so is an uplifted countenance in contrast with the gloomy discontent expressed by the ‘fallen countenance’); but if thou art not right (in act and thought), sin lurks before the door (of the heart), and his (the lurker’s) desire is towards thee (to take full possession of thee), but do thou rule over it!”

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ART. VII.—THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

By GEORGE L. PRENTISS, D. D., New York.

1. *The Question before the Country.*

The history of society has rarely presented a political problem so important and difficult as that which now occupies the thoughts and is puzzling the will of the American people. Nearly a year has elapsed since the conquest and surrender of the rebel armies; Congress has been almost four months in session; but the great problem seems still far from being solved. Nor is this a matter for special wonder or discouragement. It is what was to be expected. It is the very thing for which the teaching of history and the principles of human nature ought to have prepared us. If at the end of even two or three years, the country shall be thoroughly pacified, the questions raised by the rebellion settled in the right way, and the Union restored on the basis and in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, the result will be not less honorable to the political wisdom, prudence and energy of the American people, than that of the war itself to their military skill and prowess. And such a result, achieved in so short a time, would have scarcely a parallel in the annals of the race. While the national struggle went on, we were constantly saying that the world had seldom, if ever, looked upon

a civil war so stupendous and to which Heaven had joined such

“Great issues, good or bad for human kind.”

Nor upon a calm review of the contest, are we disposed to retract this opinion. How, then, can we wonder, if it require much time, much earnest thought and discussion, and long patience also to secure the “great issues” so full of blessing to us and to mankind, *by incorporating them with the Constitution and laws and ruling policy of the Country?* For in this way alone, so it appears to us, can the inestimable fruits of the loyal victory be wrought into the nation’s life and made part of its heritage forever.

2. *The Question to be settled by Legislation.*

In saying this we do not forget or lightly esteem the need and value of other agencies in helping on the work of a genuine and perfect restoration. We believe in the importance and good effects of argument, discussion and public opinion, as well as in the efficacy of an enlightened self-interest; so, too, in the healing influence of time, reflection, and the “sober second thought.” And our faith is unbounded in the renovating power of American and Christian ideas. Without the aid and co-operation of these moral forces, it would be, indeed, a hopeless task to solve successfully the problem of national restoration. But it seems to us equally clear, that without wise and effective legislation these moral forces are likely to prove altogether inadequate to the crisis. On this point we ought to learn something from our own history, especially during the last half century. If that history teaches one lesson more impressive than any other, it is the prodigious power of an anti-republican principle, when embodied in the fundamental law, and combined with ambitious passions and lust of place, to resist the principles of liberty and the force of truth, to corrupt the noblest parties, and, in the very name and garb of democracy, to organize oppression, social wrong, treason and rebellion. In spite of all the mild and persuasive agencies of freedom and Christianity, the cham-

pions of slavery not only gained complete possession of political power and opinion at the South, but they succeeded in spreading their servile and fatal doctrines broadcast over the North, infusing them into much of the popular thinking and belief, and engrafting them upon the whole policy of the nation. And had they been able and willing to use the weapons of party management, intrigue, and propagandism with the same skill and energy a few years longer; had they not made haste to turn traitors and rebels in furtherance of their dark schemes, they might probably have retained control of the government for another generation, and in the end, perhaps, have succeeded in destroying it.

While heartily acknowledging, then, the necessity and beneficent office of other agencies in the grand work of restoration, it seems to us hardly possible to overestimate the importance of wise, comprehensive and effective legislation to the same end. Without the friendly and strong arm of National law to uphold and protect it, nothing short of a miracle can save the genuine loyalty of the South, whether of blacks or whites, from being put to shame and trampled under foot. Unless they are made part and parcel of the organic law, the political surrender of the Rebellion, and the guarantees which the triumphant loyalty of the nation justly demands as the terms of that surrender, are almost certain to prove a snare and a delusion. It was in perjured defiance and violation of the Constitution and laws of the land that the Rebellion started and was carried on. It was by the offended majesty and resistless energy of the Constitution, and of the laws made in pursuance thereof, that the Rebellion was crushed out; and is it not both a logical and a righteous conclusion that the blood-bought fruits of the transcendent victory should be rendered sure and permanent by solemn constitutional and legal sanction?

### 3. *Legislation and the War.*

We have just said that the Rebellion was overthrown by the power of the Constitution and of the laws made in pursuance thereof. None will admit this more readily, or with a deeper con-

viction, than the patriotic soldiers and sailors of the Union, who fought and vanquished the armies of treason; none know so well as they that the secret of their moral, yea, of no small part of their physical strength and courage, and the sign by which they conquered, were the imperiled Constitution and laws of their country. How many of these laws were made for the very purpose of summoning them to the field, of arming, clothing, feeding and sustaining them there, of taking care of them when sick, and wounded, and disabled, and of providing for the mothers, widows and orphans of their companions slain in battle. The patriotic and bold legislation of Congress was no less essential to the triumph of the righteous cause than the firmness, sagacity and energy of President Lincoln and his Cabinet, or, than the Union armies and navy, under Grant, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Farragut and their other famous leaders. Without this legislation, the nation would have been compelled to give up the struggle at the very outset. It was Congress that not only advised but ordained,

“.....How war might, best upheld,  
Move by her two main nerves—iron and gold,  
In all her equipage.....”

So long as the annals of the Slaveholders' Rebellion last, the fame of Congress in the work of subduing it, and of destroying its guilty cause by the Great Amendment, will be indissolubly linked to that of our martyred President and his trusty ministers, to that of our living and departed heroes, and to that of their common and mighty Leader—the American people.

#### 4. *Congress and Restoration.*

And if Congress have, as we trust it has, the wisdom, firmness and foresight to perform aright the work now assigned to it by Divine Providence and the National will, the fame of its patriotism will become still more resplendent, and it will endear itself, as never before, to the heart of the loyal people, to good men over all the earth, and to coming ages. The political problem, as we said before, is one of the most difficult

and important ever presented to the judgment and decision of any nation. It demands for its solution the highest style of practical American statesmanship. If our canonized forefathers, the founders and master-builders of the Government, along with the most renowned statesmen and expounders of the Constitution and the laws, who succeeded them, were to come back again to earth and address themselves to the immense task, they would find it not unworthy of their united wisdom. We cannot summon them back to earth, but, fortunately, the clear light of their example, and experience, and noble principles, still shines about those to whose hands the task is actually entrusted. Congress has only to follow on the line, and act in the spirit of the greatest and best statesmen of the Republic in the past, in order to solve the problem in the right way.

And here we approach a question about which, unhappily, very serious differences of opinion have arisen among loyal men. We mean, of course, the question *whether it belongs of right to the President or to Congress to fix the terms upon which the States lately in rebellion shall be allowed to occupy their old places in the Union, to resume their normal relations with the Government, and to share equally, as aforetime, in the National legislation.* Had Congress been in session, or been specially assembled, as we cannot but think it should have been, upon the surrender of the rebel armies, perhaps the question would never have been raised; for nothing is plainer than that every consideration of public duty and policy required the hearty coöperation of Congress and the President in the work of reconstruction. By such coöperation the Ship of State had been piloted safely through the tremendous storms of war; and now, when the perfect triumph of the country's arms was to be crowned and perpetuated by the triumph and peaceful reign of the country's principles, how natural that the executive and legislative branches of the Government should draw still nearer to each other, should take intimate counsel together, and frown indignantly upon the bare suggestion of a rupture between them! This is what the people demanded and ex-

pected—this is what they demand and expect now; and we do not envy any man, whatever his position or his motives, who undertakes to thwart them in this matter. Not in the highest stress and pressure of the war was the loyalty of the country more in earnest, more vigilant, or less disposed to be trifled with than it is to-day; never, since the attack upon Fort Sumter, was it less wise or less safe for any servant of the American people, who desires to stand well in their confidence and affection, to set up his own will against theirs, or to tamper with the sacred principles upon which they have set the seal of their supreme approval, of their word of honor, and of their most precious blood. If it must needs be that offences come, woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

We could have wished, we repeat, that the President and Congress might have had the opportunity for mutual consultation and interchange of views at the earliest practicable moment after the overthrow of the military power of the rebellion. That great event, so full of national joy and triumph, falling in with the assassination of President Lincoln, an event so heavy laden with national grief and agony, filled the public mind with religious thoughts, hushed the voice of faction, and knit all true hearts together in patriotic and awe-struck feeling. The hour would seem to have been singularly auspicious for harmony and a good understanding between the President, unexpectedly called to his exalted station in a way so fearful, and the National Legislature. But the golden hour passed away unused. Perhaps Providence so allowed it for the nation's good. A special meeting of Congress was deemed unadvisable; and as more than half a year would elapse before its regular session, only two courses remained open to the President; one to postpone the whole question of reconstruction until winter, and in the meanwhile hold the rebel States still in the unrelaxed grasp of war; the other, to adopt at once and begin to carry out a reconstruction policy of his own.

5. *The Course adopted by the President.*

He chose the latter course. We do not blame him for it.

We are ready to believe that he did so from deliberate conviction, and with the best motives. No candid person can read his varied utterances during the six weeks succeeding his accession to the Presidency, without feeling that he was profoundly impressed with the greatness of his responsibility to the country, and that he earnestly desired to discharge it in such a way as to vindicate and establish the principles for which the nation had been fighting. In spite of the painful scene in the Senate Chamber, on the 4th of March, his serious, modest deportment, and the manly tone of his brief speeches and responses, at once opened his way to the heart and confidence of the people. The chief fear was, lest his strong opinions respecting the crime of treason, and the duty of punishing and confiscating the property of the authors of rebellion, coupled with the remembrance of his own wrongs and suffering, might impel him to a policy of undue severity. Such was the public sentiment towards him in the earlier stages of his administration—a sentiment deepened by sincere admiration for his sturdy and truly heroic patriotism in resisting the counsels of the conspirators in the Senate Chamber during the dreadful winter of 1860–61; when, Abdiel-like,

“ Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal.”

It cannot be denied that a very different feeling towards the President is now pervading the minds of a vast majority of his countrymen, to whose favor and suffrage he owes his great office; nor can it be denied that a change still more marked and universal has taken place in the sentiment entertained towards him by his countrymen, who did what they could to defeat his election. It is a strange political phenomenon, and we will attempt a brief explanation of it. In doing so we shall try to express ourselves in the spirit of Christian moderation, without passion and without malice.

By adopting an independent plan of his own for bringing the insurrectionary states back to their normal relations with the Gov-



ernment, Mr. Johnson was obliged to settle in advance some of the most difficult and delicate questions growing out of the rebellion. He was obliged, also, to carry out his plan by an exercise of the war-power more summary and sweeping, in several respects, than even its exercise while the war was flagrant. This was the twofold disadvantage and danger of his course; for it was a path from which, once entered upon, it was not easy to turn back. But, on the other hand, we freely admit that while the course adopted rendered any radical mistake peculiarly perilous, it afforded no small advantages for the execution of the right policy. Certainly, it was a most desirable thing to hasten by more than half a year the blessed work of peace and national restoration.

6. *The President and Restoration.*

Did the President devise the right policy? Was his plan of reconstruction in full accordance with the principles which the country had asserted by force of arms, had embodied in the immortal Proclamation of Emancipation, and the great Amendment, and had pledged its solemn word to maintain? In order to answer these questions, we must consider the Executive plan, both in its inception and in its practical development. That in its inception it was intended to do full justice to the principles asserted in the war, we do not deny; nor can we doubt, that in its later development it involved the virtual abandonment of several of those principles. From the Proclamation of Amnesty, and that of the same date appointing Mr. Holden Provisional Governor of North Carolina (which two Proclamations contained the first official announcement of the Executive plan of reconstruction), to the assembling of Congress, there was an interval of more than six months; it was a pregnant period, equal to as many years of ordinary political existence; and during this long space the President's policy was in rapid process of development. Points in it which were at first obscure, became distinct and unmistakable. Its positive application to State after State demonstrated more and more clearly exactly what it was, how it operated, and what changes it was undergoing; for not only were new features

added to it, and old features dropped, but another *animus*, a new soul, as it were, seemed gradually to get possession of it. In response to the anxious inquiries of the loyal people, it was at first said, that the whole plan was tentative; that it was only a grand experiment; and if not successful, could be reconsidered and changed when Congress met. But when Congress met, the representatives of the loyal States and people, instead of being asked to examine and express their opinion of the evidence respecting the success of the momentous experiment, were told that the whole matter was *res adjudicata*, and that it only remained for *them* to judge of the qualifications and returns of persons claiming seats from the late rebel States. The President's Message, however, did not fully reveal to the public eye the mature form and pressure, or the ultimate drift, of his policy. This revelation was completed, though the speeches of its special friends, and of the old political enemies of Mr. Johnson and President Lincoln on the floors of Congress, by the proclamation of the Secretary of State, announcing the adoption of the Great Amendment (and thereby assuming that the Secession States, enumerated in the proclamation, were in the full possession and exercise of the Constitutional powers belonging to them before the revolt) by the "Conversation with a distinguished senator," on further amending the Constitution, Negro Suffrage in the District of Columbia, and other important matters then pending in Congress—a conversation immediately telegraphed over the country in a semi-official form, by the message vetoing the Freedmen's Bureau bill, and the exultations it elicited from the bitter opponents of the war in the North, and the whole disloyal press of the South; and, above all, by the deplorable scene and speech in front of the White House, on the anniversary of Washington's birth-day. It pains us exceedingly even to allude to this speech; and we will only add, that if it was a death-blow to the budding hopes of some aspiring politicians, or of some veteran political managers, it was none the less a loud alarm to the people to stand up for their faithful Senators and Representatives. It is no part of our object to

attempt an exposition of the motive and influences which governed the Executive in the adoption and carrying out of his policy, or which led to the changes in its character and in the tone of its advocates already referred to. We believe such an exposition would be by no means difficult, and would tend to relieve the President of some unfriendly suspicions. But it would involve statements, personal allusions, and reflections upon the operation of human infirmities and prejudice, which would be here out of place and not in keeping with the conciliatory and pacific aim of this discussion.

Let us go back a moment to the earlier stages of the President's plan. We have no space, nor need we, to dwell upon all its details. Its general character is easily described. Its fundamental postulate was that the revolted States were in the Union and had never been out. The Amnesty Proclamation and oath formed an essential part of it; as did also, apparently, the pardon of a large portion of the persons excepted from the benefits of that Proclamation. It contemplated the formation of new State constitutions, and the election of new State governments, and members of Congress, though the action of the old voting masses of the white population, irrespective of their loyalty, or disloyalty, during the war. It excluded the colored race from participating in the choice of members of the Constitutional Conventions, on the ground that they formed no part of the people, in the legal sense of the term, and were not entitled to vote by the constitution and laws of the States in force immediately before the passage of their ordinances of secession.

In the selection of his provisional governors, the President may not in every case have been fortunate, but some of his appointments were admirable, and we believe he took especial pains to find out the right men. No restriction was laid upon the electors in choosing members of the conventions, or State officers, and members of Congress under the new Constitutions; and accordingly a large proportion of the successful candidates in almost every State were from the ranks of old fire-eaters, secessionists, and officers in the rebel armies. Gen-

eral Wade Hampton, instead of emigrating to Brazil, was run for governor of South Carolina, and was only defeated by a few votes. In Mississippi General Humphreys had to receive a special pardon in order to be qualified for the Gubernatorial chair, to which he had been elected over Judge Fisher, a leading opponent of secession. Mr. Holden, one of the ablest and most outspoken enemies of the Richmond despotism in all the South, and a favorite of the President, was defeated in North Carolina. Indeed, the well-known wishes of the President were constantly and openly disregarded in the choice of both Governors and Members of Congress; but very few of the latter could take the test-oath; and some of them defiantly boasted that they could not and would not take it, arguing coolly that it was in violation of their constitutional rights, and consequently null and void! In a word, had General Sherman's arrangement with General Joe Johnston been so far approved by the authorities at Washington as to allow the then existing Rebel State Governments to take the oath of allegiance and go right on, they would, probably, have proved to be about as loyal and quite as ready to comply with the other terms of the President's policy as those chosen under the new constitutions. They were essentially the same body, under different names. In allowing these things the President certainly departed very far from the doctrines laid down in his speech "defining the grounds on which he accepted the nomination" for the Vice-Presidency on the ticket with Mr. Lincoln. In that speech, delivered at Nashville, June 9, 1864, he said:

"In calling a convention to restore the State, who shall restore and re-establish it? Shall the man who gave his influence and his means to destroy the Government? Is he to participate in the great work of re-organization? Shall he, who brought this misery upon the State, be permitted to control its destinies? If this be so, then all this precious blood of our brave soldiers and officers so freely poured out will have been wantonly spilled. All the glorious victories won by our noble armies will go for nought, and all the battle-fields which have been sown with dead heroes during the rebellion will have been made memorable in vain. Why all this carnage and devastation? It was that treason might be put down and traitors punished. *Therefore, I say that traitors should take a back seat in the work of restoration. If there be but five thousand men in Tennessee loyal to the constitution, loyal to freedom, loyal to justice, these true and faithful men should control the work of re-organization and reformation absolutely.*"

We are not aware that any definite and full public statement of the Executive terms was made to the Constitutional Convention and Legislature of North Carolina, or to those of any other State subsequently assembled in pursuance of successive Proclamations from Washington. In the process of reconstruction these terms seem to have been communicated in a manner more or less peremptory, as occasion required. The principal ones were the prohibition of slavery—an abandonment of the doctrine of State sovereignty by declaring the ordinances of secession null and void from the beginning, repudiation of the Rebel debts, protection of the freedmen by granting them certain civil rights, and a ratification of the Great Amendment. In prescribing these terms, the President had so far the emphatic consent and approval of the nation. They were regarded as eminently just and reasonable; but there was a good deal of popular dissatisfaction on account of the halting and partial way in which some of them were accepted; and also with the stubborn temper in which several of them were, in repeated instances, allowed to be rejected. There was, too, a wide-spread feeling that the refusal of the conventions (there may have been one or two exceptions) to submit the new Constitutions, embodying a portion of the Executive terms, to the popular approval, besides being un-American and anti-republican, indicated a clear consciousness of having complied with those terms under coercion; and there was, furthermore, a strong suspicion that their non-ratification by the people might hereafter be alleged as a valid reason for changing them in order to annul and repudiate the obnoxious provisions.

When the correspondence between the President and the Secretary of State on the one hand, and the leaders of the Reconstruction movement in the South on the other, shall see the light, this matter will possibly become more plain. But the varied evidence already before the public demonstrates, we are constrained to say, that most, if not all, of the Rebel States did what they did to carry out the Executive policy, under silent protest, and against their own will; that they acted mainly upon a conviction—not of the justice of the policy

and the reasonableness and duty of accepting it, but of the absolute necessity of accepting it in order to get back their old rights and privileges and powers in the Government. But even if the evidence afforded at the time had been equivocal, the mass of evidence, public and private, official and non-official, which has been accumulating since, leaves ground for hardly a shadow of reasonable doubt on the subject. There is, to be sure, some conflict of testimony; as, unquestionably, there is a good deal of diversity of sentiment in different parts of the South and in different circles or *strata* of Southern society; there are, we rejoice to know, noble exceptions both individual and in the case of whole communities; but still, we repeat it, the current of evidence is overwhelmingly in the direction of a dominant spirit still disloyal, anti-Republican and inimical at heart and in purpose to the Government and to the Union—so long at least as the Union shall stand, and the Government be conducted, upon the principles of justice and freedom asserted in the war—and yet only a small portion of the testimony, taken before the Committee on Reconstruction, has been made public.

7. *The Temper of the South and the Rightful Terms of Restoration.*

The bearing of this temper and state of affairs upon the political situation is too obvious to require long comment. It explains much of the difference between the President and Congress. If there was sufficient reason to believe that the Secession States were perfectly sincere in abandoning the principles which impelled them to attempt the destruction of the Government; that they see and acknowledge the error of their ways; that they accept and intend to carry out in good faith the abolition of slavery, the concession of all their rights to the freedmen, and the repudiation of the debts contracted in the interest of rebellion; that they mean in their hearts henceforth to stand up for the Flag of our Country, "keep step to the music of the Union," and deport themselves in all things as becometh loyal members of the great democratic household and commonwealth of American liberty; we say,

if there were ample evidence for believing this concerning them, the problem would be speedily solved, and they would be welcomed back with delight to the ancestral hearth-stone, and to the confidence, love, privileges, and all the honors of the National family! Congress, we are sure, would soon be prepared to open wide its doors and bid their Senators and Representatives come in and take part in the councils of the regenerated Republic. Let them thus come with frank and manly acknowledgment of error upon their lips; let them return to their Country—that benignant Parent who nourished and brought them up as children, and against whose august Majesty they lifted up their unfilial hands—in the temper of the prodigal son, when he said—*Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee!*—and we are persuaded that the hardest “Radicals,” even Mr. Sumner and Mr. Garrison, would not be a whit behind Mr. Seward and Mr. Beecher, or the President himself, in willingness to forget the past and restore them to the full communion and enjoyment of the National life and patrimony. And if treason and rebellion be what Mr. Johnson has so often and so impressively declared them to be—great and terrible crimes against society—if the revolt against the Government of the United States was the most causeless and wicked, as well as one of the most gigantic recorded in history, then why should not the States which have been so deep in both treason and rebellion, while seeking pardon and restoration, thus frankly and practically acknowledge that they have done wrong? Had the prodigal son, whose case is so often cited in favor of instant restoration, said to his father, that he felt no regret for having wasted his substance in riotous living, that he only regretted not having been able to “succeed” in such a course, that he was conscious of no sin against Heaven, and of no violation of filial duty; that, in a word, he had come home simply because hunger forced him to do so, and that now he claimed at once and of right a full share in the old homestead;—had the prodigal son, we say, returned in this temper, and with such words upon his lips, would his father have been so likely to have had compassion on him, and to have said to his servants, “*Bring forth*

*the best robe and put it on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet ; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry ; for this my son was dead and is alive again ; he was lost and is found !" ?*

In his memorable speech, accepting the Baltimore nomination, Mr. Johnson expressed his sentiments on this subject very strongly :

"I say that the traitor has ceased to be a citizen, and in joining the rebellion, has become a public enemy. He forfeited the right to vote with loyal men when he renounced his citizenship, and sought to destroy our Government. We say to the most honest and industrious foreigner who comes from England or Germany to dwell among us, to add to the wealth of the country: 'Before you can be a citizen, you must stop here for five years.' If we are so cautious about foreigners, who voluntarily renounce their homes to live with us, what should we say to the traitor who, although born and reared among us, has raised a parricidal hand against the Government which always protected him? My judgment is that he should be subjected to a severe ordeal before he is restored to citizenship. A fellow who takes the oath merely to save his property, and denies the validity of the oath, is a perjured man, and not to be trusted. Before these repenting rebels can be trusted, let them bring forth the fruits of repentance. He who helped to make all these widows and orphans, who draped the streets of Nashville in mourning, should suffer for his great crime. \* \* \* Ah! these rebel leaders have a strong personal reason for holding out, to save their necks from the halter; and these leaders must feel the power of the Government. Treason must be made odious, and traitors must be punished and impoverished; their great plantations must be seized, and divided into small farms, and sold to honest, industrious men."

Now, whatever difference of opinion there may be about the repentant temper of the Secession States, or about the necessity and expediency of requiring any confession of repentance at all, we do not see how loyal men can well differ as to the expediency and necessity of making certain "fruits meet for repentance;" that is, certain positive, irrevocable acts and stipulations, answerable to a genuine political *metanoia*, the conditions of their restoration. If they are sincere in abandoning the principles of the rebellion and returning to their allegiance, they will uncomplainingly accept these conditions; if they are insincere, the safety, not to say the honor, of the nation renders such conditions all the more needful.

We have already mentioned the terms prescribed by the



President and complied with, in part, by the Southern conventions and legislatures ; one of these, at least—that repudiating the Rebel debt—should be inserted in the Federal Constitution. It is one of vital importance, was very unwillingly accepted, and can be annulled at pleasure after the restoration is completed, unless rendered perpetual by special compact or by constitutional provision. We are astonished that any loyal man who knows the history of Mississippi Repudiation, holds sacred the National debt, and is tolerably well acquainted with human nature, should hesitate an instant in requiring the revolted States to test their sincerity in repudiating the Rebel debt, by ratifying the act *as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States* ; and we do not think it would be out of place or unstatesmanlike to make part of the same amendment a pledge binding all the people of the United States and their posterity to pay in full the debt contracted by the nation in defence of its life.

There is another condition of restoration which ought to be absolutely insisted on, in the shape of an amendment to the Constitution ; we mean a change in the basis of Southern representation. It is most unjust, and would be a monstrous anomaly, as well as folly, to allow the South to gain a large addition to its power in Congress and in the Electoral college in consequence of rebellion, and that too by the disfranchisement of a third of its population, all of them now free citizens of the United States. The *Conkling* Amendment seems to many to be open to grave objections, and we earnestly hope, if it should fail, that by the harmonious and united counsels of all true friends of Liberty and Union in Congress, another and still better one, if possible, may be framed and adopted. We do not quite see the propriety of some things that have recently been said and written on the subject of amending the Constitution. "A free government," says Machiavelli, "in order to maintain itself free, hath need, every day, of some new provision in favor of liberty." Especially is this true in an agitated transitional period like the present, when society, having passed successfully through great convulsions and strife of arms, is just crystalizing into fresh

forms of life and polity. How easy at such a critical moment, by some vital error of omission or commission, to jeopardize the advantages gained, and mar for ages the strength and beauty of the New Era? No rash, irreverent hand should, indeed, be laid upon the Constitution—that ark of our political covenant. But what more fitting, what more just and reasonable, than that having already seized the wonderful Providential opportunity to cleanse the sacred instrument of the Nation's life from the poison and pollution of Slavery, we should not let the incomparable season slip away without also placing under its strong protection such guarantees of Southern allegiance, and of the country's future peace, solvency and safety, as can be so well assured, if assured at all, in no other way? And in *such legislation the Secession States are justly entitled to have no other voice, than that of assenting to it as a condition of their restoration.* And the same thing may be said of such legislation as the Civil Rights bill, designed to enforce the principles of the Great Amendment. As to amendments affecting the general interests of the whole country alike, North and South, irrespective of the rebellion, we would not think it expedient to press any such now. Let us wait until all sections and all the people can freely participate in the work. We might fortify these views by the opinion of President Johnson, so forcibly expressed in his speech, already twice referred to, accepting the Baltimore nomination :

“ I hold, with Jefferson, that government was made for the convenience of man, and not man for government. The laws and constitutions were designed as instruments to promote his welfare ; and hence, from this principle, I conclude that governments can and ought to be changed and amended to conform to the wants, to the requirements and progress of the people, and the enlightened spirit of the age. \* \* \* And let me say that now is the time to secure these fundamental principles, while the land is rent with anarchy and upheaves with the throes of a mighty revolution. . While society is in this disordered state, and *we are seeking SECURITY, let us fix the foundations of the Government on principles of eternal Justice, which will endure for all time.*”

To the terms of settlement already mentioned we are aware that many of the wisest and best statesmen and Christian

patriots in the land add one more as indispensable, viz., negro suffrage.

8. *Restoration and Negro Suffrage.*

Without the ballot in the hands of the colored man, and secured to him by legal and constitutional provision, they do not believe in the practicability of peaceful and permanent restoration; and the reasons which they adduce in support of this opinion are certainly entitled to the most candid and deliberate consideration. Their argument may be stated in a few words: "What the nation wants, is genuine pacification and security; both are indispensable, and we cannot have one of them without the other. But unless the principles and passions of human nature are wholly different in this country from what they have been in any other, how is it possible to have either security or genuine pacification, so long as the *slave-holding aristocracy* is still in complete possession of its old political power, and there is nothing but the strong arm of Federal authority to protect the four millions of negroes from the selfishness, the pride, and the cruel spirit of *caste* by which it has always been distinguished? What childish simplicity to suppose that the real character of this unscrupulous, crafty, and determined oligarchy is essentially changed, because it has been defeated in its treason and rebellion; because its ambitious schemes have been foiled, and its poor slaves, instead of serving as the corner-stone of a grand slave empire, have been wrested from its grasp, and made free citizens of the United States! Is it usual in this world for ruling classes, organized in social wrong and oppression, to be converted to justice and humanity by such a process as this? And yet, this is what seems to be expected. It is proposed to install the two or three hundred thousand great planters of the South, who brought all this mischief and misery upon us, in their former "pride of place," both in their own States and in the Federal Government; and you hope that, having been taught by the nation such sharp lessons on the perils of treason and rebellion, they will henceforth demean them-

selves as good and loyal citizens. *Credat Judæus Appella!* On the other hand, as a further means of pacification and security, it is proposed to leave the four millions of freedmen to perfect themselves, under the care and instruction of their old masters, in the truly republican principles of taxation without representation, and free citizenship without the ballot! In the same way, it is proposed to teach them how the Government of the United States punishes its enemies, and rewards its faithful, but humble, despised friends! Perhaps this is the right method, but we cannot see it. Without denying that there are serious difficulties in any and every plan of settlement that human wisdom can devise, it is our profound conviction that the method of IMPARTIAL JUSTICE is most simple, most safe, and will most quickly and effectually gain the object. Enfranchise the negro, now that he is a free citizen of the United States, put into his hands the ballot—that most approved weapon of American Law and Liberty—and with this trusty weapon he can not only protect himself, but render even better service to the cause of the Union than he rendered it with the bullet in time of war. Grant he is unlettered, ignorant and credulous; are there not also millions of *white* people in the land who are very imperfectly instructed in the knowledge of political truth and duty, and who are enthralled to most bitter and dangerous prejudices? Grant that the intelligence of the negro is coarse, plebeian bran, and that of the Anglo-Saxon the finest patrician flour; yet the deepest of political thinkers—"the Master of them who know"—illustrates the wisdom of admitting the many to share in the power of government, on this very ground.\* If the negro is below the Anglo-Saxon

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\* The whole passage is remarkable, and seems to have been written for our instruction:

*τὸ δὲ μὴ μεταδιδόναι μηδὲ μετέχειν, φοβερόν· ὅταν γὰρ ἄγριοι πολλοὶ καὶ κύνητες ὑπάρχωσι, πολεμίων ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι πλήρη τὴν πόλιν ταύτην. Λείπεται δὲ τοῦ βουλευέσθαι καὶ κρίνειν μετέχειν αὐτούς. Διόπερ καὶ Σόλων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τινὲς νομοθετῶν τάττουσιν ἐπὶ τε τὰς ἀρχαιρεσίας καὶ τὰς εὐθύναις τῶν ἀρχόντων,*

of the South in mental strength and development, is he not far above his late master and a large majority of the Southern people in all the instincts of sincere loyalty and devotion to liberty? And is not righteous instinct, however rude and undeveloped, better and safer than the most highly cultivated understanding, when perverted by bitter prejudices and error? Negro enfranchisement may be a very revolutionary measure, yet, not half as revolutionary as the Proclamation of Emancipation and the great Amendment of which it is the natural, as well as logical sequence, and conclusion; nor is it half so startling to the great majority of cautious, conservative minds as was the proposal of universal emancipation, in the winter of 1861-2. What dismal things were then foretold about a war of races, social horrors and disaster to the Union cause, should the general Government venture to lay its destroying hand upon "the peculiar institution!" At all events, there is, we contend, no help for universal suffrage, without respect of color. That is our American principle, and we must now fearlessly apply it to "preserve the precious jewel liberty in the family of freedom." The negro must be clothed with the elective franchise, or both the white Unionist of the South, and the Government itself, will have nothing but trouble and agitation before them. With the ballot in the

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ἄρχειν δὲ καταμόνας οὐκ ἐῴσι. Πάντες μὲν γὰρ ἔχουσι δυναστάτους ἰκανὴν αἰσθῆσιν, καὶ μινύμενοι τοῖς βελτίοσι τὰς πόλεις ὠφελοῦσι, καθάπερ ἢ μὴ καθαρὰ τροφή μετὰ τῆς καθαρᾶς τὴν πᾶσαν ποιῇ θρησκευτέραν τῆς ὀλίγης· χωρὶς δ' ἕκαστος ἀτέλης περὶ τὸ κρίνειν ἐστίν.

"It is fearful to allow them (that is, 'the freemen and the multitude of the citizens') no share in the government; for when the many and the poor are excluded from power, such a state must of necessity be full of enemies. It remains, then, that they should have a place in the public assemblies, and in determining causes. And for this reason, Solon and some other legislators give them power of electing the officers of the state, and of inquiring into their conduct after their term of office, but do not allow them to act as magistrates themselves; for All, each of whom is individually deficient in judgment, have sense enough collectively, and by being mingled with their superiors, become profitable to the State; just as experience teaches that *fine flour, when mixed with the coarse, renders the whole more wholesome and nutritious.*"—Aristotle's Politics, Book III. chap. vi. Sec. vii.

hands of the negro, the Union will have at once a majority of its friends and of friends of its principles in South Carolina and Mississippi, and, ere long, in every Southern State. There will be a great loyal party in the South, led by such true men as General Hamilton, of Texas, Governor Brownlow, of Tennessee, Governor Marvin, of Florida, Joshua Hill, of Georgia, and hundreds more like them—a party in full sympathy with the Government and the free North. Sooner or later, the principles of this party will gain the ascendancy throughout the South; and, what is best of all and the principal thing, this ascendancy will be only another name for the triumph of truth and justice; it will mean genuine peace and security for the South and the whole nation alike. Give us UNIVERSAL ENFRANCHISEMENT, and we go, with all our hearts, for UNIVERSAL AMNESTY." Such is the ground occupied by the advocates of negro suffrage, as the best solution of our troubles; and among these advocates, we repeat, are some of the weightiest statesmen and Christian patriots of the country, and some of its most influential religious bodies. It is the ground taken by the undivided and emphatic voice of our own church, at the meeting of its General Assembly in the city of Brooklyn, last May. It is well known, too, that, soon after the close of the war, some of the most discerning men of the South looked with favor upon negro suffrage as the safest and quickest solution of the question of reconstruction. But, notwithstanding the great force of the argument, we must frankly confess that we have, as yet, not been able to view the subject exactly in this light. We have rather inclined to the opinion that if the basis of Southern representation were changed, and the *principle* of colored and impartial suffrage were adopted, by putting the ballot into the hand of the negro, on certain conditions, *to be hereafter applied to blacks and whites alike*, the main object would be reached, if not as speedily, yet, perhaps, more safely and happily. Other things being satisfactory, we could, for ourselves, be content at present with substantially the plan of the President, in his remarkable letter to Governor Sharkey, of Mississippi, believing that all the rest would

certainly follow in due time. Had the President made the sentiments of this letter a part of his policy of reconstruction—and under the wholly abnormal and extraordinary circumstances of the case, he had, in our opinion, the same power and as good a right to do so as to annul the existing State governments, appoint provisional-governors, order new constitutional conventions to be chosen, prescribe the qualifications of their electors, and require of the conventions, when assembled, what he did require of them;—had such a limited negro suffrage, we say, been made one of the terms of the Executive plan of reconstruction, the country would be now much nearer the end of its troubles than, we fear, it is.

The letter deserves to be quoted entire. It is as follows :

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., August 15, 1865. }

Gov. WM. L. SHARKEY, *Jackson, Miss.* :

I am gratified to see that you have organized your convention without difficulty. I hope that, without delay, your convention will amend your State constitution, abolishing slavery, and denying to all future legislatures the power to legislate that there is property in man; also that they will adopt the Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, abolishing slavery. If you could extend the elective franchise to all persons of color who can read the Constitution of the United States in English, and write their names; and to all persons of color who own real estate, valued at not less than \$250, and pay taxes thereon, you could completely disarm the adversary, and set an example which other States will follow. **THIS YOU CAN DO WITH PERFECT SAFETY,** and you thus place the Southern States, in reference to free persons of color, upon the same basis with the Free States. I hope and trust your convention will do this, and as a consequence, the Radicals, who are wild upon negro franchise, will be completely foiled in their attempts to keep the Southern States from renewing their relations to the Union, by not accepting their Senators and Representatives.

ANDREW JOHNSON, President United States.

Let such wise and true counsel as this be followed; abolish the distinction of color in the exercise of the elective franchise in the District of Columbia, and then might we not confidently expect that reflection, discussion and experience, the good conduct of the negro, the dying out of inveterate prejudices, the logic of events, and the spirit of the Gospel, would do the rest? But, while saying this, we say also, that the genius of our free institutions, as expressed in the Decla-

ration of Independence, in the preamble to the Constitution, and in the humane code of the New Testament, points unerringly to the abolition of all limitation of the elective franchise, on account of color; and that, if it should be found impracticable to make a just settlement of our national troubles in any other way, we have little doubt but that the popular and Christian sentiment of the country would demand and sustain this. The doctrine of equal and exact justice to all men, which is the moral basis and tap-root of our political system, leads to this result by an irresistible logic. It is vain, in the long run, to oppose the triumph of a fundamental principle, except by revolution and an abandonment of the system which embodies that principle. Great principles are infinitely stronger and wiser, as well as more patient, persevering and long-lived than any generation of individual men, or the opinions and parties of an age. Sooner or later, all things in the United States, all forms of life and polity, all classes and conditions of men, must consent to be assimilated to the creative and governing Idea of the nation.

#### 9. *The President and Congress.*

We have spoken of the policy of the President, and have briefly stated the points wherein we think it was wrong or defective, and has proved a failure. But what is past is past. The practical question is, how past error may be remedied, and what remains to do, be done in the best way. It was a sad mistake for anybody to take the ground that the legislative sovereignty of the country was to have no other voice in the work of restoration than that of judging of the elections, qualifications, and returns of claimants for seats in Congress from the revolted States. The pretension was, in truth, an indignity to the political intelligence and self-respect of the American people. It involved doctrines of Executive prerogative abhorrent to the whole genius of our democratic system of representative government, in conflict with the teaching of our most eminent constitutional jurists and statesmen, and in striking contrast, we may add, to the



shrinking from the possession of too much power and responsibility expressed by the President in his veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill. We dare say the London *Times* will be vociferous in applauding the attitude of the Executive in his conflict with Congress: and yet under circumstances at all similar, the British Crown would not have dreamed of taking such ground; or if it had, the voice of the House of Commons, echoed by the loud voice of the nation, would, we doubt not, have rebuked the usurpation in tones of thunder. We shall be greatly surprised if the pending elections in New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, do not give plain indications of what clear-headed New England, at least, thinks on the subject. "It rests with Congress (we quote the language of Chief Justice Taney respecting the fourth section of the fourth article of the Constitution) to decide what government is the established one in a State. For, as the United States guarantee to each state a Republican government, *Congress* must necessarily decide what government is established in the State before it can determine whether it is Republican or not." And by parity of reasoning it rests with Congress to decide, not only whether the newly established governments in the secession States are republican in character, but also, *a fortiori*, whether the political communities, which control and carry them on, are sufficiently loyal, purged of treason, and obedient to the victorious sovereign will embodied in the amended Constitution and laws of the land, as to render it proper and safe to admit them, in the persons of their senators and representatives, to full and equal participation in the National Government. The peace and well-being of the country for ages to come, are involved in the right decision of these points; and shall the supreme legislative power and intelligence of the American people have no original, determining voice in deciding them? The doctrine seems to us a most dangerous one, and the height of unreason. It requires but a moment's reflection to see that, so far as concerns the future safety of the nation, the primary and all-important question relates to the state and temper of the great South-

ern constituencies ; that of the loyalty of the individuals whom they have chosen to represent them at Washington being of secondary interest. Congress can keep out disloyal men, or even expel them if admitted by mistake ; but let the secession States themselves be prematurely, and without sufficient guarantee, restored to their old places in the government ; and even if they do not resort again to overt acts of treason, what proper security would there be against their forming dangerous schemes and combinations inimical to the Union, to the national debt, to the pension laws, to the rights of the freedmen, and to the whole system of measures adopted for the defence and salvation of the country, and now forming an essential part of its legislation and policy ? Considerations of this sort led to the appointment of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction ; and we have never been able to see why the two Houses of Congress had not the perfect right, or should have been so severely censured for agreeing, to appoint that committee ; nor why the committee itself should have been called by such hard names. Some of its members are surpassed by no men in the country for the reputation of patriotic devotion, intelligence, weight of character, and prudent statesmanship. Why should such a mountain of odium have been heaped upon them ? Our explanation of the whole matter is very simple. The Joint Committee on Reconstruction raised a high, if not insuperable, barrier against the success of the theory that the insurrectionary States were already "reconstructed" by the Executive policy, were actually occupying their old places in the Union, and had an unquestionable right to the instant admission into Congress of all their senators and representatives who would take the prescribed oath. To break down this powerful barrier it was deemed needful to assail the Committee on Reconstruction with the weapons of wrath and evil speaking ; and it has been done most energetically by high and low. It remains to be seen whether the attempt will succeed. Our decided impression is that it will not, either in Congress, or before the people ; at all events, it is too late now to destroy the mass of evidence respecting

the state and temper of the secession States, procured by the diligence of the committee and just beginning to reach the eye of the country.\*

We have no time to discuss, as it merits, the question of jurisdiction between Congress and the President. We may recur to it in a subsequent number. Whether considered theoretically, or in its immediate practical bearings, it is one of overshadowing importance. The only possible ground, as it appears to us, on which the position implied in the President's Message, and boldly asserted by some of his special friends in Congress, by the whole of the late rebel press of the South, and by the whole anti-war press of the North, is that in deciding upon the plan, in fixing the terms and prescribing the methods by which the political surrender and rehabilitation of the insurrectionary States might be effected, as also in actually making and announcing the fact of the restoration, there was no need and no exercise, direct or indirect, of any *law-making* power whatever; for "ALL legislative powers," belonging to the Government of the United States, in time of war or peace, are expressly vested by the Constitution in Congress alone. Now, is this tenable ground? Is it reasonable? Is it sound American doctrine? If Congress was entitled to no primary and controlling voice in this great political Settlement—one of the greatest in all history and in some of its most important points, almost wholly without precedent or example,—then it follows that, except in the exercise of the pardoning power, the President acted solely in virtue of his power as Commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the

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\*The Joint Committee on Reconstruction was appointed, as is well known, at the opening of Congress, to inquire into the condition of the late so-called Confederate States, and report whether they or any of them are entitled to representation in Congress, with leave to report at any time by bill or otherwise. Our readers will find a very clear and cogent vindication of the right of the two Houses of Congress to appoint such a joint committee in senator Fessenden's speech made in the Senate, February 23d; they will also find in the same speech, an impressive comment upon the opinion intimated by the President in his veto message, that until the Senators and Representatives from the late rebel States are admitted to take part in the national legislation, Congress has no Constitutional right to pass laws affecting the interests of those States.

United States; for in what clause of the written Constitution did he find authority to annul State governments, appoint Provisional governors, prescribe the qualifications of electors, require State conventions to put certain articles into their constitutions, or State legislatures to pass certain laws? These things were, assuredly, a very high and summary exercise of even the war-power, after actual war had ceased; but the people would probably have acquiesced in it, without complaint, as they did in the exercise of the same power while war was flagrant, on the ground of military necessity, and in the interest of Liberty and Union; had it only been distinctly declared that the whole matter was to be submitted to the National Legislature for revision and approval. The notion that such a settlement, involving the most momentous legal, constitutional, and political issues, could be rightly made, and made absolute and final, too, without the exercise of a particle of *LAW-making* power, may be a very good *idée Napoléonienne*, but it is a strange specimen of the Washingtonian idea of government as embodied in the Constitution of the United States, and expounded by Chief Justice Marshall and Daniel Webster!

The President cannot conclude a treaty of peace with a tribe of Western Indians without the consent and approval of the Senate; nor can he appoint any United States officer from a member of his own cabinet down to a village post-master, without that consent and approval; nor could he, in the full flush and exercise of the war-power, appoint a general, a captain, or lieutenant in the army, without the same authorization; and yet he can fix the terms of settlement of the most formidable civil war in history—involving, not only the emancipation and destiny of 4,000,000 of blacks, but the safety and welfare of 30,000,000 of white men and their posterity—without asking, or needing thereto, the consent and approval of the Senate, the appointing and treaty-making branch, or the House of Representatives, the popular branch, of the National Legislature!

We say again, it seems to us a most dangerous doctrine, as unconstitutional, as it is irrational and anti-republican. We

do not believe that a solitary maxim of political prudence and the science of liberty, as taught by the greatest philosophers and statesmen, from Aristotle and Demosthenes down to our own day, can be cited in justification of such a doctrine. It is exceedingly questionable, indeed, whether it is at all in harmony with the letter and spirit of the Constitution, or of our political system, that the Executive should have used the power of pardon on such a tremendous scale, without first asking counsel of the National Legislature, in which the Constitution expressly vests the "power to declare the punishment of treason." (Art. iii. Sect. 3d.) If it is the prerogative of Congress "to declare the punishment of treason," is it quite in keeping with this important provision that the laws of Congress passed in pursuance of it, e. g. the law declaring *death* to be the penalty of treason, should be rendered practically void and of none effect by the wholesale exercise of the power of pardoning? If out of millions of persons guilty of treason as it is defined in the Constitution—some of them, at least, deliberate, black-hearted, and bloody traitors—not one is punished, or tried, then what a mockery to have such clauses about treason and its punishment in the Constitution, or any such law on the National statute-book!

It is well known that strong objection was made to vesting the power of pardoning in the President in relation to the crime of treason. This, it was urged, ought to have depended upon the assent of one, or both of the branches of the legislative body. "I shall not deny (we quote *The Federalist*, No. 74, written by Hamilton) that there are strong reasons for requiring in this particular the concurrence of that body, or of a part of it. As treason is a crime leveled at the immediate being of the society, when the laws have once ascertained the guilt of the offender, there seems a fitness in referring the expediency of an act of mercy towards him to the judgment of the Legislature. And this ought the rather to be the case, as the supposition of the connivance of the Chief Magistrate ought not to be entirely excluded." After stating the objections to this plan, the writer proceeds:

“ But the principal argument for reposing the power of pardoning, in this case, in the Chief Magistrate, is this: In seasons of insurrection or rebellion, there are often critical moments, when a well-timed offer of pardon to the insurgents or rebels, may restore the tranquility of the commonwealth; and which, if offered to pass unimproved, it may never be possible afterwards to recall. The dilatory process of convening the Legislature, or one of its branches, for the purpose of obtaining its sanction, would frequently occasion the letting slip the golden opportunity. The loss of a week, a day, or hour, may sometimes be fatal. If it should be observed that a discretionary power, with a view to such contingencies, might be occasionally conferred upon the President; it may be answered in the first place, that it is questionable whether, in a limited constitution, that power could be delegated by law; and in the second place, that it would generally be impolitic to take any step which might hold out the prospect of impunity. A proceeding of this kind, out of the usual course, would be likely to be construed into an argument of timidity or of weakness, and would have a tendency to embolden guilt.”

This is the language of the consummate wisdom and patriotic statesmanship that formed the Constitution, then explained it to the people, and persuaded them to adopt it. Has the exercise of the power of pardoning in relation to the crime of treason been used in the spirit of these weighty and impressive sayings? But what would the writer and his compatriots, Madison and Jay, have said, had it been the power of settling, once for all, the terms upon which, after having been engaged for four years and a half in privy conspiracy, bloody treason, and rebellion, ten whole States, containing a white population twice as large as the Old Thirteen, and a population of 4,000,000 blacks, most of them slaves emancipated by the national authority and entirely dependent upon the nation's promised protection, might be forgiven and restored to their old place and power in the Government;—what, we ask, would the authors of *The Federalist*, that immortal triumvirate of the age of Independence, have said, had they been discussing before the tribunal of popular opinion, the question whether such more than imperial power as *this* should be vested exclusively in the Executive, leaving the National Legislature wholly out of the account!

But we have no desire to pursue the subject further at present. We dismiss it with the expression of our most fervent hope and prayer that Congress and the President may soon

come to see eye to eye, and agree upon a joint policy which shall be, like the wisdom from above, first pure, then peaceable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Only let the sacred claims of freedom, humanity, national security, and universal, Christian justice, be satisfied; and we think we speak the sentiment of all loyal hearts; we are sure we utter the profound sentiment of the loyal piety of the country, in adding that the more magnanimous, conciliatory and generous the policy is, so much the better; so much the more will it raise the President, his Cabinet, and Congress in the grateful affections of the country, and in the respect of mankind. We cannot admit that such a policy is impracticable, or that, with God's blessing, it would not gradually heal the wounds of the nation. The American people, if we read their sentiments aright, are still most placable. In spite of Andersonville, and Salisbury, and Belle Isle, and all other names of past horror and woe, they are in no vindictive or unreasonable mood; they desire no extreme measures, no sweeping confiscations, and no punishment beyond what is needful to render treason forever "odious and infamous," as one of the greatest and most dangerous of crimes. They care comparatively little for the elaborate theories and nice, subtle distinctions about the *status* of the revolted States; in general they, probably, hold with Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Johnson, that lamented statesman and patriot, Henry Winter Davis, and, as we suppose, a large majority of Congress, that the Southern States themselves were never out of the Union in law, or in fact; although the secession State governments did cease to exist both in fact and in law. But while assuming that the revolted States were never really out of the Union, the sure-footed political instinct, and quick, sagacious common sense of the people tell them, that by treason and rebellion those States fell from their high estate in the Union, forfeited their legal and constitutional rights, sundered their practical relations with the Federal government, cut themselves off from the fellowship and sacraments of the National life, and can be restored from their great apostacy only by favor of the injured

Nation and on terms prescribed by its sovereign wisdom, in view of its own future safety and welfare, the satisfaction of public justice, and a full redemption of all its pledges, made in the day of distress, to its friends and defenders, and especially to the oppressed millions of negroes emancipated by its power, and now wholly dependent upon its protection. No argument and no sophistry however plausible, can shake the clear and steadfast convictions of the popular mind and conscience on this matter. The people have studied and pondered the subject for themselves; hundreds of thousands of them in the camp, on the battle-field, in the hospital and by the hurried burial of their dead comrades; hundreds of thousands more of them by the dying beds, and at the open graves of their precious sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers. Myriads of them have studied it with their Bible open before them, on their knees, and in the sanctuary of God. They understand the whole matter full well: as well as the ablest politicians in the land; and *their* understanding of it is pretty sure to prevail, and in due time be transferred to the pages of American history.

10. *The Popular and Religious Sentiment of the North on the  
● Claims of the Freedmen.*

And here let us say, that on no point is the loyal sentiment of the country deeper, or more unanimous, than on the duty of protecting the Freedmen in their newly-acquired liberty, and in all their rights as citizens of the United States. The veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill was not the occasion of so much surprise and grief because the people had set their heart upon that particular measure; they were quite willing to believe that it might have defects; and they did not question the President's right to return it to the Senate with his objections. What excited their strong feeling of regret and disappointment was the impression made by the tone and reasoning of the veto message, and by the manner in which it was greeted and interpreted by the enemies of emancipation North and South, that the negro was going to be abandoned by the President and handed over, before long, to the unchecked control of his former masters. This may have been altogether a wrong im-



pression ; but it was a real one ; nor do we see how any candid person can read the speech of Senator Trumbull in review of the veto message, without admitting that it was quite a natural impression. And if there is one thing more than any other that the people, who saved the Union, at the cost of so much toil, and blood, and agony, and with so many solemn vows and prayers to Heaven, have made up their mind to resist to the utmost, it is a violation of the pledge made by ABRAHAM LINCOLN, in their name, to the 4,000,000 of negroes, when he proclaimed them, henceforth and forever, American freemen. Language can scarcely do justice to the depth and intensity of their feelings on this subject. Especially is this true of the free Christian churches of the North. They look with unfeigned horror upon every suggestion to violate this pledge ; and they believe it were better for any man in the land, no matter how high he stands, or what his past services, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea, than that he should do, or consent to be the instrument of doing, such a thing ! Montesquieu, in his "Considerations on the Grandeur of the Romans," says : "There cannot be a more cruel tyranny than that practiced under the shadow of the laws and with the color of justice, when men go to work to *drown the wretched on the very plank on which they were saved.*"

Myriads of the faithful Christian people of the North have resolved, upon their knees, to do their part in preventing such a Heaven-defying crime, and a catastrophe so shameful and ruinous to the nation. They have resolved that by no connivance, or inaction of theirs, shall this land of the Pilgrims and of Washington be cursed and defiled by a vast Pariah class of immortal beings, for whom the Son of God died upon the cross, and whose despised nature He is still wearing in glory everlasting ! They mean to stand up for exact, equal and gospel-like justice to the negro ; such justice as the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ enjoins, and the Declaration of Independence declares to be all men's birth-right. They mean, also, to stand up for their public servants,

who demand and do such justice to the negro. And the loyal churches of the North form a large army and wield a good deal of political influence—to say nothing now of their influence with the High and Mighty Ruler of the Universe. There are the *Congregationalists*, worthy heirs of the ancestral principles and Puritan churches of New England. They now stretch across the Continent; and the spirit of Plymouth Rock, of Bunker Hill, and '76, accompanies them wherever they go. There are the *Methodists*; the fearless and hard-working pioneer wing of this “sacramental host;”—stationed not only all along the frontiers, but in force in every city and village of the land. They were only ten years old when the Declaration of Independence was made; only twenty-one when the Constitution of the United States was formed; they are just a hundred years old now; but they are a million strong; and if they were a thousand years old, they could not be better champions of Christian justice and freedom. Then there are the *Baptists*, also potential in numbers, and character, and zeal; full, too, of the same lofty, and generous spirit. The names, which represent their principles and history to the world, such names as John Bunyan, Roger Williams, Robert Hall, and Francis Wayland, are symbols of whatever is most earnest, exalted and faithful, in devotion to the rights and liberty of each individual man, whatever his condition or the color of his skin. Then, there is our own branch of the renowned *Presbyterian* phalanx, with a spotless record, and marching on, elbow touching elbow, in the path of national righteousness and universal liberty. Nor are the sturdy footsteps of “the other branch” lagging far behind. Justice is a word always dear to true Presbyterians; and when they have turned their backs upon liberty, they have grievously wronged their own time-honored principles. We need not stop to define the position of our *Dutch Reformed* brethren; the church that looks back to glorious old Holland as her mother, is not likely to give a divided allegiance to any righteous cause. If after the late triennial convention at Philadelphia, we cannot speak so of the *Episcopal* church, yet what eloquent and pow-

erful advocates of National justice and humanity to the negro, are found in her ranks! Nor let it be forgotten what a patriotic and fervent prayer the whole church, bishops, priests, deacons, and laity, offer up every Sabbath day in behalf of the National Senate and Representatives in Congress assembled; beseeching Almighty God that He would be "pleased to direct and prosper all their consultations, to the advancement of His glory, the good of His church, the safety, honor and welfare of His people; that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavors upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations." What friend of Congress, or of National security, honor and justice, cannot, with all his heart, say *Amen* to that prayer! No denomination in the country have been more faithful to the claims of the negro, or laid costlier sacrifices upon the altar of social justice, than the *Unitarians*; as, indeed, was to be expected of the disciples of the illustrious Channing. As to the connection of *Friends*, they have been, for generations, a living, witness-bearing epistle of impartial humanity, known and read of all men. The other Protestant bodies are all, so far as we know, on the same side; some of them most effectually. Of the position of the Romish church we need say nothing. That, too, is well understood. The religious sentiment of the North, as represented by the Protestant churches, is, then, we repeat it, overwhelmingly in favor of equal and exact justice to all men, without distinction of color; nor will it be satisfied with anything less.

And we believe that the same religious sentiment is quite as earnest and decided in demanding fixed legal and constitutional guarantees as the condition of restoring the secession States to an equal share in the legislation and government of the nation. We will only add that, as without the upholding strength, the moral aid and comfort, ministered by the religious sentiment of the people, the Union would not have been saved, so we firmly believe that, without the upholding power and inspiration of this same sentiment of humble dependence upon

Almighty God, and devout trust in His wisdom and guiding hand, the Union can never be reestablished upon just and lasting foundations.

11. *A Rupture deprecated.*

We have already said that the people still look for harmony and co-operation between the executive and legislative branches of the Government. They feel that the crisis entitles them to uncommon solicitude and urgency on this subject; and why should they not be gratified? If our voice could reach the ears of the humblest member of Congress, we would beseech him to do what he can to avoid further rupture, and to heal, if possible, the unfortunate breach already made. It is a time, so we cannot help feeling, for extraordinary prudence, moderation, patience and self-control; a time to exercise the highest qualities of patriotic and Christian manhood. If any member of Congress, at this critical juncture, "offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able, also, to bridle the whole body." While standing firm as a rock, Congress can well afford to exercise great gentleness and patience. The people may not think it perfect, nor be ready to indorse every thing it has said and done; still less, perhaps, do they approve of the peculiar sentiments and policy of some of its leaders. But the popular confidence in its sterling honesty, patriotism, wisdom and general character is very great; and we have no doubt this confidence is well-deserved. Even while we are writing, a letter reaches us from Washington, in which the writer, one of the most eminent merchants and Christian philanthropists of the country, says: "I have to-day conversed with several old members of the house, and they all agree that they have never known any Congress composed of so many men of high moral character; and that it contains more religious men, and less men who are ever seen going below for drink than any they have ever known." To this testimony the writer adds his own opinion, formed after having been for four months a careful and deeply-interested looker-on. His praise of the ability, high character, remarkable sobriety and dignified deportment of the great body of

senators and representatives, is most emphatic. We do not believe the loyal people will be disappointed in the Thirty-Ninth Congress, if only they, too, will have patience, and not exact too much at once.

We do not presume to think that our voice can reach the ears of the President. But if it could, we would also entreat him—with that entire respect to which the Chief Magistrate of the Republic is entitled, and yet with the frankness which becomes an independent American citizen—to be steadfast and immoveable in adhering to the “good old Cause” for which he buffeted the pitiless storm of war, and which is now leaning upon his stalwart arm, to help enthrone it in peace. We would recall his earlier record as the champion of “the plain people” of the South, and of the rights and dignity of labor; and of his still nobler record as the champion of the Union, both on the floor of Congress and in his own Tennessee; and also as the trusted friend and counsellor of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. We would venture to remind him of his solemn pledges to the people who raised him to his high office, to the colored race, to the world and to Heaven. Nor would we fear to predict, that, if during the rest of his term of office, he should continue to move on the line of these most honorable antecedents, he has still a peerless opportunity to link his own name to those of WASHINGTON and LINCOLN, and thus enshrine it in the perpetual and grateful memory of his country. In behalf, too, of all Christian people, who feel the heavy weight of his burden, and offer constant prayer for him, we would beseech him to do as his martyred predecessor did, to cast all his care upon God, and not to be too much disturbed by the tongue of censure. True greatness consists, not so much in not having faults, as in curbing and subduing them.

“————— If a foe have kenn'd—

Or, worse than foe, an alienated friend—

A rib of dry rot in thy ship's stout side,

Think it God's message, and in humble pride,

With heart of oak replace it; thine the gains.

Give him the rotten timber for his pains.”

### 12. *Conclusion.*

But, whatever may be the course of the President or of Congress, the Republic will, doubtless, continue to sail on in the track foreordained by the Infinite Wisdom, freighted still with inestimable hopes for our posterity and for all mankind. The divine principles in which it was founded, and which have just been so effectually vindicated on the field of battle, have not grown old, or in the least spent their force; they are as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, still fresh and strong as in the beginning,

“ Are yet the fountain light of all our day ;  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;  
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,  
 To perish never.”

Their perfect triumph may be delayed for a little while, but the end is certain; and it would be no strange thing, if even the wrath and folly of man were made the means of hastening the glorious consummation. Surely, God has not raised up this our free American nationality, breathed into it such prolific life and energy, given to it a vast continent for the development of its matchless powers, trained it with such marvellous care and providence, and now purged away so much of its dross in the fiery furnace of civil-strife, to the end that it might wither and die; but rather that it might prepare the way for the advent of a higher, more humane and Christian-like civilization, and so, by the light of its great example, help to illuminate and bless the world.

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P. S.—Since this article was printed, the President's policy has been still further developed by his message vetoing the Civil Rights Bill. His objections to the Bill are so fundamental as to leave little ground of hope, that he will approve of any measure which the wisdom of Congress may deem needful to protect the freedmen and enforce the Great Amendment. Without adopting exactly the doctrine of the *Dred Scott* decision, the main argument of the Veto differs but little from that decision in its essential spirit and scope. It remains to be seen whether Congress will pass the Bill over the Veto.