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REMINISCENCES OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

CALHOUN, SEWARD AND LINCOLN.

ADDRESS

—OF—

HON. J. M. ASHLEY,

—AT—

MEMORIAL HALL, TOLEDO, OHIO,

JUNE 2, 1890.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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MEMORIAL HALL, TOLEDO, O., June 2d, 1890.

General JAMES M. ASHLEY,

Toledo, Ohio.

Dear Sir :

The undersigned, on behalf of the Toledo Branch Society of the Army of the Potomac and the Veteran Association of Battery H, 1st O. V. Light Artillery, do hereby most heartily thank you for your able, instructive and eloquent address this evening delivered at Memorial Hall, and earnestly solicit a copy of the same, with your consent that it be published in the public journals and in such more permanent and enduring form as may be deemed best.

Hoping for and awaiting your favorable reply, we are

Your obedient servants,

J. C. LEE,

L. F. LYTTLE,

CHAS. M. MONTGOMERY,

N. HOUGHTON,

D. P. CHAMBERLAIN,

For the Toledo Branch Society of the Army of the Potomac.

WM. CORLETT,

J. L. PRAY,

WM. E. PARMLEE,

JOHN H. MERRELL,

W. G. PIERCE,

For the Veteran Association of Battery H, 1st O. V. Light Artillery.

TOLEDO, OHIO, June 3d, 1890.

Gentlemen :

It gives me pleasure to comply with the wishes of the societies which you represent.

Herewith please find copy of my address as requested.

It is proper to state that the major portion of the address, touching the relation of Calhoun, Seward and Lincoln to the War of the Rebellion, was put in type and the historic quotations verified before its delivery.

The extemporaneous part of the address was so faithfully reported that but few corrections, as you see, were required.

Truly yours,

J. M. ASHLEY.

To General JOHN C. LEE,

WILLIAM CORLETT and others,

Committee.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I need not tell you how welcome your cordial greeting is to me to-night. You can all see that. In again meeting so many of my old friends face to face, I remember with pride the greetings which I have received on like occasions, when making public addresses here at home. And as I stand here and recognition follows recognition, my pulse beats are quicker, and I am glad that I accepted the invitation of your committee. At first I felt that I could not take the time, and I certainly should not have done so but for the worthy object which your committee represented to me you had in hand. The surroundings in this hall; the beautiful display of flags—with the quartet singing, and the thoughts and emotions of the hour, stir my heart to its very depths, and carries me back to the historic scenes and heroic acts of 1861, and I feel that I am again but thirty six years old. In my mind's eye there is now passing before me panorama after panorama, the like of which the world had never seen, and of which many before me formed a part. And though more than a quarter of a century has elapsed, I can see to-night, as I then saw, the advancing, resistless power, which glowed in face and eye and step, as the volunteer soldiers of the Republic, in the faith and hope and strength of youth, marched forth to victory or death.

Four years later I saw, as I now see, passing in review before President Lincoln, his Cabinet and

Generals, at the national Capital, the survivors of that invincible army, with war-worn visage and torn and tattered banners, returning victorious to their homes amid the acclamations of a grateful people, and as long as I live (and listen as now) I shall hear the measured and triumphal tread of their immortal feet.

I fear to trust myself as of old, on an occasion like this; and I have put in cold type what I propose to say to you to-night, except such anecdotes as I may interject.



MR. PRESIDENT:

The annals are yet unwritten of the men who, prior to and during the War of the Rebellion, moulded and directed public opinion; raised, organized and equipped armies for the defense of the Nation's life and led them to victory. But the facts will soon be eagerly gleaned from the records of the past, and woven into some of the most thrilling and instructive chapters of our national history.

So also must the unwritten history of the master conspirators in the slaveholders' rebellion be compiled and written by impartial and conscientious historians who "shall a round, unvarnished tale deliver, nor set down aught in malice."

As one of the actors in the National Congress, from the beginning to the end of that unprovoked rebellion, it is to-night my duty, in addressing you, to speak dispassionately of men and facts from my personal recollection, refreshed by such official and other authenticated records as I can without labor or loss of time command.

Within the limits of such an address, I can only present to you in brief such facts as are within my memory, or can be verified from accepted sources, touching the opinions and movements of public men,

parties and churches, which paved the way for and made possible the rebellion of 1861.

Had not my library, which I had for many years been collecting, with all my private and political papers (including many letters both from leading abolitionists and secessionists) been destroyed by fire in 1871, I should have given you some original reading to-night.

Beginning active systematic work as an abolitionist when but eighteen, I spared neither time nor labor to learn and thoroughly understand the position and tendency of every public man of note or promise in the South, and also the exact status of as many of the men of intellect in that section who were not in public life, as could be induced to answer my letters, especially clergymen.

Like most boys, I was a worshipper of great men, particularly military men; and before I was fifteen I made a pilgrimage to the "Hermitage" to see the idol of my heart, General Jackson.

Before that, I had seen at Fleming Springs (a fashionable Kentucky resort in those days), Colonel Richard M. Johnson, Vice-President; General Leslie Combs, Henry Clay, Cassius M. Clay and Mr. Corwin of Ohio; all of whom I *then* regarded as among the greatest men in the world.

In February, 1841, I went to Washington, that I might witness the inauguration of General Harrison on the 4th of March, and especially to see Mount Vernon and the tomb of Washington. When I visited the gallery of the House of Representatives, the first man I asked to have pointed out to me was ex-President John Quincy Adams, "the old man eloquent," as he was called. I then looked upon Mr. Adams as one of the most extraordinary men in this country and especially admired the way in which he handled the "slave-barons."

The fact that he was the only ex-President who had ever served as a member of Congress added to

my esteem for his character, and this admiration remains as strong and fresh to-day as it was then.

You will all remember that he was stricken down in the House, and fell with his face to the foe, fighting the slave conspirators when he was over eighty years old.

While in Washington, and before the inauguration of General Harrison, Colonel Johnson, the outgoing Vice-President (who was a friend of my father), introduced me to President Van Buren at the White House. I then regarded my presentation to Mr. Van Buren as the most important event of my life. I was also delighted to be introduced to John M. Botts and Henry A. Wise, leading Virginia Whigs, and to R. M. T. Hunter, a leading Democrat, each of whom were members of the House, and were regarded by their friends at that time as remarkable men.

Four years later I attended the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore, in May, 1844 (although not a voter), and through the friendship of ex-Vice-President Johnson had a seat on the floor of the Convention with the Kentucky delegation; I then favored the nomination of Van Buren and Johnson, the anti-Calhoun ticket, which had been defeated in 1840.

Before the Baltimore Convention assembled, I visited Washington, to study the situation. [Imagine a boy of twenty studying the situation.] Mr. George M. Bibb of Kentucky, at that time Secretary of the Treasury, introduced me to President John Tyler, who was openly a candidate for the Democratic nomination at Baltimore.

Mr. Bibb also introduced me to the great nullifier, John C. Calhoun, then Mr. Tyler's Secretary of State.

After the Convention at Baltimore had nominated James K. Polk of Tennessee for President, and George M. Dallas of Pennsylvania for Vice-President I returned to Washington, and while there

called on Mr. Calhoun twice, to look at and study the man. Personally Mr. Calhoun was to me the most pleasing public man I have ever met, and the memory of my interviews, and the letters which I afterwards received from him, will always be a source of pleasure. I was an ardent admirer of General Jackson, and knew that the old General hated the great nullifier and had expressed a wish to hang him; but notwithstanding this fact, each time I talked with Mr. Calhoun he charmed me by the frankness and freedom of his manner, and the dignity and courtesy of his bearing.

If I could have accepted his pro-slavery and his State's-rights opinions, I should certainly at that time have followed his leadership as enthusiastically as thousands of young Southern men of that day followed him faithfully, and adhered to his political heresies and fatal dogmas until death, or the defeat of the Rebellion, buried them in a common grave forever. I afterwards came to know that Mr. Calhoun had been the master conspirator in defeating the nomination of Mr. Van Buren at Baltimore, and that, as Secretary of State, he officially committed the President-elect (James K. Polk), *one* day before his inauguration, to the unjust and indefensible war with Mexico.

I state these facts about myself that you may know how, through correspondence and personal acquaintance, I was enabled in 1861 to clearly comprehend the power and purpose of the conspirators, and the danger which menaced the Nation's life.

For thirty years or more prior to the Rebellion the slave conspirators worked like "sappers and miners" in their preparation for it. They were tireless, cunning and unscrupulous in all they proposed or did. If I should now undertake to present in their historic order but one in ten of their so-called "peace and compromise propositions," it would re-

quire all the time which I propose to give to my address.

One of their earliest, boldest, and most objectionable acts was to deny the right of any citizen to "petition Congress on the subject of slavery." The presentation of such petitions by John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, Mr. Giddings of Ohio, and Mr. Slade of Vermont was the pretext for a majority of the "slave-barons" in the House to threaten to withdraw unless the North "accepted in good faith as a peace offering and compromise" the adoption of a "gag-rule," which they at once formulated, and, with the aid of Northern allies, had adopted.

From the hour of the adoption of the "gag-rule" until the War of the Rebellion, the "slave-barons" were practically the Nation's political masters.

On the 24th of November, 1832, Calhoun and his co-conspirators in South Carolina passed an ordinance of secession, using the tariff as a pretext, and then and there an organized scheme of a slave empire took form and shape. General Jackson's proclamation against nullification, and his message to Congress, were patriotic and able State papers. The history of that formidable conspiracy ought to be impressed on every child of the Republic, to the end that General Jackson's noble and manly bearing might the better be contrasted with President Buchanan's weak and humiliating surrender to the demands made by the rebel conspirators of 1860 and 1861.

In 1836 Calhoun inaugurated the Texas annexation scheme, and attempted to force it into the Presidential election of that year.

In his "Thirty Years' View," Senator Benton,* when speaking of this Texas annexation plot, declared

* See Senator Benton's speeches in the United States Senate prior to the Mexican War.

that "the Calhoun conspirators had organized and revived the nullification and disunion plot of 1832, and revived it under circumstances more dangerous than ever, since coupled with a popular question which gave the plotters the honest sympathies of the patriotic millions."

"I have often," he added, "intimated it before, but now proclaim it. Disunion is at the bottom of this long concealed Texas machination. Intrigue and speculation co-operate, and I denounce it to the American people."

"Under the pretext of getting Texas into the Union, the scheme is to get the South out of it. A separate confederacy, stretching from the Atlantic to the Californias, is the cherished vision of disappointed ambition (pointing to Calhoun), and for this consummation every circumstance has been carefully and artfully contrived."

This speech by Senator Benton was made before our unjust war with Mexico, and of course before the acquisition of California and Mexican territory, or the completion of the Texas annexation plot, and shows how clearly the great Senator understood the conspirators.

In that same speech he declares "that he intends to save himself for the day when the battle for the disunion of these States is to be fought; not in words, but with iron, and for the hearts of traitors, who will appear in arms against their country."

These were prophetic words of warning, uttered by one of our greatest Senators; but they were unheeded.

Mr. John Tyler, who had been elected Vice-President as a Whig with General Harrison in 1840, became the acting President on the death of the President in 1841, one month after his inauguration.

At first secretly, and then openly, Tyler abandoned the Whig party which elected him, and identified himself with the Calhoun nullification wing of the Democratic party. As Benton, in his "Thirty Years' View," states it: "The Texas annexation scheme now became an intrigue on the part of some for the Presi-

dency, and a plot to dissolve the Union on the part of others, and a Texas scrip and land speculation scheme with many," and he openly denounced it.*

Prior to making an official move for the consummation of the Texas annexation plot, it became necessary to get Mr. Webster, who was Secretary of State, out of Tyler's Cabinet, and the conspirators were equal to the task. Mr. Webster was without much trouble bowed out of the Cabinet, and Mr. Legare of South Carolina selected for his place.

In a short time Mr. Legare died and Mr. Upshur of Virginia, an ardent disciple of Calhoun, and a personal friend, was made Mr. Legare's successor as Secretary of State.

Within a few months Mr. Upshur was killed by the explosion of a big gun on board the *Princeton*, and Mr. Calhoun was made his successor. The Texas annexation and secession plot now took form and shape under the direction of the original conspirator.

One of the earliest and most extraordinary official acts of Mr. Calhoun, after assuming the office of Secretary of State, was to write and publish the first and most elaborate official State paper ever issued by this Government in favor of the maintenance and propagation of slavery. Mr. Benton says "that Mr. Calhoun did not permit this document to be published until all hope for the success of his intrigue for the Democratic nomination at Baltimore had been abandoned and a conspiracy to form a separate republic consisting of Texas and some Southern States had become the object" of Calhoun and his followers.†

In a short time after the defeat of Mr. Van Buren for renomination at Baltimore in 1844 by the selection of Polk, a mass convention was held in South Carolina, at which resolutions were adopted "in

* See Benton's *Thirty Years' View*, Vol. II., chapter on Texas Annexation.

† See Benton's "Thirty Years' View."

favor of a convention of all the slave-holding States, to demand the prompt annexation of Texas, *with or without war*," and if refused by the North, on such terms as the Calhoun conspirators dictated, "the Southern States should proceed *peacefully and calmly* to dissolve the Union and annex Texas to the Southern Confederacy."

Conventions of a like character were also held in a number of Southern States immediately after this South Carolina manifesto was issued, at which Southern conventions resolutions such as I have just quoted were enthusiastically adopted.

Two days before the inauguration of Polk, the Texas annexation plot, with its scrip and land-jobbing scheme, was practically consummated by Mr. Calhoun, as Secretary of State, and the unjust war with Mexico followed as the conspirators intended.

President Polk could have defeated the Calhoun-Texas annexation programme had he been a man of ability and honesty against the plot. But, as he was a weak and vain man, the conspirators easily captured him, and the war, boldly inaugurated for slave conquest and domination, ended in the acquisition of California and one-third of Mexico.

When Mexico, a sister republic, lay prostrate, weak and bleeding at the feet of the United States, and her officials were forced to execute an unjust treaty, relinquishing all claim to any part of Texas, and also cede to us California and what is now New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Nevada, and all the territory north of the southern boundary as now designated on our maps, except the Gladson purchase (about *one-third* of her entire territorial area), her Peace Commissioner sought to have a clause inserted in the treaty which should provide "*that the United States should engage not to permit the establishment of slavery in any part of the territory thus ceded.*"

In a communication of September 4, 1847, from Mr. Trist, our Minister to Mexico, to Mr. Buchanan,

Secretary of State, he writes that the Mexican Commissioner said to him: "If it were proposed to the people of the United States to part with a portion of their territory in order that the Inquisition should be established there, it would excite no stronger feelings of abhorrence than those awakened in Mexico by the prospect of the introduction of human slavery in any territory parted with by her."*

Mr. Trist, when communicating the above proposition to this Government, in his letter to Mr. Buchanan, said that he answered the Mexican Commissioner as follows:

"The bare mention of such a treaty is impossible. No American President would *dare* present such a treaty to the Senate. I assured him that if it were in their power to offer me the whole territory described in *our project, increased ten-fold in value and in addition covered a foot thick with pure gold, on the single condition that slavery should be excluded therefrom, I could not entertain the offer for a moment, nor even think of communicating it to Washington.*"

Now, gentlemen, you see the kind of men we had to fight.

The historian will find no difficulty in determining why the slave-barons confided so implicitly in Mr. Buchanan when President. His conduct while Secretary of State and Minister to Great Britain was a guarantee of his subservient co-operation.

As I now look back upon that cold-blooded crime, and see a small, weak, struggling sister republic, not claiming to rank with us in wealth, culture or civilization, crushed beneath the iron heel of power, without the shadow of a pretext—not only without a pretext, but in the face of an official falsehood, pleading that the territory and people which she is forced to cede to us shall not be cursed with human slavery, I feel the blush of shame tingle my cheek.

You all know how the slave conspirators treated

* Wilson's Rise and Fall of the Slave Power.

this manly and pathetic appeal of the Mexican Commissioner. And what must the honest American historian say of this appalling and indescribable crime?

The annexation of Texas was now an accomplished fact; the ten millions or more of worthless "Texas scrip" (as it was called) then afloat, most of which was in the hands of the conspirators, now became valuable, and the land "certificates" at once commanded a ready market. The slave-barons thus triumphed politically and financially at the expense of more than two hundred millions (the cost of the war) from the public Treasury, the loss of over twenty thousand lives of American soldiers, and the sacrifice of our national honor.

The discussion which followed the proposition to prohibit slavery by law in all the territory acquired from Mexico, again shook the nation politically from centre to circumference, during which Mr. Calhoun, for the first time in our history, in an elaborate speech "*denied that Congress had the power under the Constitution to prohibit slavery in the territories of the United States acquired by the common blood and treasury of the nation.*" You will note that Mr. Calhoun now denies, for the first time, a power which had been exercised under Jefferson and all the earlier Presidents without question down to that day.

Again the slave-barons threatened to dissolve the Union, unless their imperious demands were complied with, and, as a result, a series of so-called compromise measures were patched up, by which California was admitted as a free State, the territories left open to slavery south of $36^{\circ} 30'$, and a new and more exacting fugitive slave law was passed, than which there never was, in the history of any civilized people, a more infamous enactment.

In 1846 the Supreme Court, which had been deliberately packed by the slave-barons, decided, in the

Van Zandt case, that the Constitution and laws of the United States recognized property in man, and the United States Marshal for the District of Columbia soon after advertised two colored women for sale, and after selling them at public auction deposited the money in the Treasury of the United States at Washington.* The Dred Scott decision soon followed, and the Republic of Washington and Jefferson was thus practically transformed into a slave despotism.

In the Presidential election of 1852 both the Whig and Democratic parties resolved, in their platforms, to abide by, and maintain in perpetuity, the compromise measures of 1850, including the Fugitive Slave law; and pledged themselves to discountenance all discussion of the slavery question in Congress or out of it.

Many well-meaning but weak men in the North imagined that this was to be the last and final demand of the slave-barons. They were doomed to disappointment.

In 1854 a new crisis was precipitated upon a long-suffering and confiding country. It will be observed that whenever a "crisis" was needed, the conspirators always had one ready at hand.

The slave-barons now demanded as a condition of remaining in the Union, that the "Missouri Compromise" should be repealed, to the end that they could take their slaves into Kansas, and thus make a slave State out of a territory which by their own votes had been dedicated to freedom, as a compromise to get Missouri into the Union as a slave State.

To this insulting demand a majority of the old Whig party in the North, and many members of the Democratic party, entered strong and vigorous protests.

*Wilson's Rise and Fall of the Slave Power.

During this disgraceful controversy nearly all the Whig members of Congress, both Senators and Representatives from the Slave States held a secret caucus in Washington without conferring with, or notifying, their Northern political associates, at which secret caucus a majority of the Southern Whigs attending it decided to support the repeal of the Missouri compromise, as proposed by Douglas.

This caucus, and the secret action of the Southern Whigs, terminated the very existence of the old Whig party. All will remember that Mr. Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska bill became law, and that the Republican party was then born. As a people we had now reached a point in our moral descent and political abasement from which nothing but a baptism of fire and blood could have redeemed and held us together as a free people, and saved us from the decay and death that had been the fate of all the slave-holding empires of the world.

The "slave-barons" were everywhere rampant and defiant, the National Government subservient and obedient, and the Southern churches either silent, apologetic, or open defenders.

I have thus traced the steps by which, in the land of Washington and Jefferson, the government which they established became a despotism completely dominated in all its parts by an imperious, slave-holding oligarchy.

As a historical fact, we find that our democratic Republic had been completely transformed except in name, and was then being administered in the interest of an insolent and unscrupulous privileged class.

The National Constitution which prohibited the importation of slaves after the year 1808, and the laws and treaties of the United States which made the slave trade on the high seas "piracy," were trampled in scorn under their feet.

While the slave conspirators in political life were

moulding and directing parties, and through them administering the National Government, and on their own motion making war and conquering new territory for slavery at the expense of the blood and treasury of the nation, the slave-barons were co-operating commercially by defiantly and actively engaging in the African slave trade, which was by law and treaties with all civilized nations declared piracy, and the result on conviction, death.

In the year 1858, the year in which I was first elected to Congress from this district, the flag of the United States actually covered more pirate ships engaged in the African slave trade than the flags of all the other civilized nations of the world combined. De Beau's *Southern Review* states in 1857 "that forty slavers were annually fitted out in the ports of New York and the East, and that the traffic yielded their owners an annual net profit of seventeen million dollars."

In November, 1853, the *Southern Standard* said: "We can not only preserve domestic servitude, but can defy the power of the world. With firmness and judgment we can open up the African slave immigration again, and people this noble region of the tropics."

The *New York Evening Post* published a list of names of 85 vessels, fitted out in the port of New York between the first of February, 1859, and the 15th of July, 1860, for the African slave trade.

The *New York Leader*, at that time a Tammany paper, asserted "that on an average two vessels each week cleared out of our harbor bound for Africa and a human cargo."

The *New York World* declared that "from thirty to sixty thousand slaves a year, under the American flag, are taken from Africa, by vessels from the single port of New York."

I remember when a yacht called the *Wanderer* ran into a harbor near Brunswick, Georgia, in broad daylight, in December, 1858, and landed a

human cargo of some three hundred or more slaves direct from Africa. This fact was duly chronicled at the time by the Southern newspapers, and some of the blacks were dressed up in flaming toggerly and driven in carriages through the public streets, as a menace and defiance to the National Government.

If the "slave-barons" could have held possession of and administered the National Government for another four years, as they had for the ten preceding years, there is no question but that a majority of the Southern States would have passed laws authorizing incorporated companies and individual citizens of their respective States to import direct from Africa, China, or *elsewhere*, such persons as might be apprenticed to said corporations or citizens, for a term of service *not to exceed twenty-one years*. That such a scheme was discussed in 1857 and 1858 I know, and that it had the approval of many slave barons and many more who hoped to become "slave-barons," if such laws should be enacted by their States, I also know. Of course it was not intended nor expected that *one* in a thousand of such apprentices would live long enough (even if they lived fifty years) to see the end of their servitude.

The statutes of nearly all the Southern States provided for the arrest and sale into perpetual slavery of free negroes for petty offenses, which oftener than otherwise were not offenses in fact, under which laws the kidnapping and sale of free men, from the Northern as well as the Southern States, were encouraged and protected.

And the Southern law reports and advertisements of runaway slaves furnish ample testimony that "slavery wasn't of nary color," as Hosea Bigelow put it.

I have *seen* a number of persons, held as slaves, who were beyond all question pure white, without

a drop of African or mixed blood in their veins, and have seen hundreds, such as the newspapers describe as "runaways," and "so white, that they would readily pass for white persons." Slaves of this description were often the children of the slave-master.

I knew many Southern men, and served with some of them in Congress, who openly proclaimed that "the natural and normal condition of capital and labor was that in which capital owned the labor as slaves."

In 1858 and 1859 the domination in the National Government of the slave-barons and kidnappers at home and of the African slave-pirates on the high seas was complete.

On every ocean our flag practically gave the slave-pirates immunity from search or seizure. At home, no one of the thousands who were notoriously engaged in this infernal traffic had ever been convicted, while hundreds of well-known Christian citizens, both men and women, who had obeyed the Divine command to give a cup of cold water or crust of bread to an escaped bondman, fleeing to Canada, were arrested, convicted and punished by long, cruel and unjust imprisonment.

It is conceded that not less than half a million slaves were imported direct from Africa and sold in this country after the slave trade had been declared "piracy" by law, and by treaty with all civilized nations, and yet but *one slave-pirate* was ever convicted and hanged in the United States. His name was Captain Nathaniel Gordon, and he was executed in New York City, February 28, 1862.

I declined to sign a petition for his pardon, and told Mr. Lincoln it was about time somebody was hung for slave piracy.

THE DEFEAT OF DOUGLAS.

The deliberate and successfully-executed plot of the conspirators to defeat Mr. Douglas for President

in 1860 gave ample proof of their consolidated power and indicated unmistakably their ultimate purpose. Their last and crowning political move was the one in which they had convened in Washington, what they called a "Peace Congress."

When I tell you that ex-President John Tyler, the mere creature of the Texas annexation conspirators of 1845, was selected for its President, you can without much effort get at the intellectual and political status of nine out of ten of the men who fussed and fumed and amazed the country by the stupidity and folly of their so-called "peace propositions."

When the future historian comes to summarize the facts of which I have spoken he will write: "Politically, from 1843 to 1861, this was the rottenest so-called civilized government on earth; morally it was a lazar-house full of dead men's bones; financially it was bankrupt in 1861, and the conspirators borrowing money at 12 per cent." And he will add, to the glory of our volunteer army of which you formed a part, that "the madness of secession and the baseness of slave conspiracies at home and slave piracy under our flag on the high seas was then stamped out and made impossible forever."

In the midst of this moral and political abasement and national degradation of which I have spoken, Abraham Lincoln was called by his countrymen to the office of President.

Congress convened an extra session on his proclamation. All the laws necessary for the organization of an army were enacted. Full power was given him in his discretion to order and direct the army; and for four years, which I need not undertake to summarize to-night, he so administered the government as at every step to command the profound admiration not only of the great men of this country, but of the great men of the world.

I did not want Mr. Lincoln to invite either Mr. Seward or Mr. Chase to seats in his Cabinet. I was anxious to have them both in the Senate, as I looked on them as great Senators. And then, I did not feel certain that Mr. Chase (who up to that time had given no evidence of financial ability) would make a successful Secretary of the Treasury; while as a Senator I was certain he would stand with the foremost, as he had done during his first term in that body. The Legislature of Ohio had just elected him for six years, and in view of the approaching storm I felt confident he would make no personal or party mistake in the Senate, while he *might* fail as Secretary of the Treasury. It was generally rumored, early in January, that Mr. Seward was to be Secretary of State, and when I met Mr. Lincoln soon after he reached Washington, and this announcement was confirmed by him, I simply said: "Mr. President, I cannot tell you how much I regret it." He expressed some surprise, and wanted to know my objections. I answered that it was too late now to talk about it, but that my objections were the same as those I had against Mr. Seward's nomination at Chicago, and that the unsatisfactory speech which he had just made in the Senate was an additional objection.

I suggested but one name for his Cabinet, and that was Edwin M. Stanton of Ohio, for Secretary of War (then a member of Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet). I had known Mr. Stanton quite intimately from my boyhood, and recognized his great ability and tireless energy. In addition to this, I had repeatedly called at Mr. Stanton's house to confer with him after he became a member of Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet, and found him to be heart and soul against the conspirators, that he fully understood their movements and was ready and anxious to defeat their plots.

One night after a protracted interview he walked

to the door with me, and as he bade me good-night, grasped my hand and said: "Stand firm; you men have committed no blunder yet." When I repeated these words to Mr. Lincoln, and related in substance other interviews of a like character, and told him something of Mr. Stanton's early life in Ohio, I saw that I had made an impression on Mr. Lincoln quite favorable to him.

But when the Cabinet was announced, I was about as disappointed as any man in Washington, because there was but one man in it for whom I would have voted, *as a first choice*, and for him only, because he was from a border slave State, and that man was Mr. Bates of Missouri, for Attorney-General.

Of course I was delighted when later on Mr. Lincoln made Mr. Stanton Secretary of War.

All the objections I then had to Mr. Seward, as Secretary of State, *and many more*, soon became patent to the ordinary observer.

I had never regarded Mr. Seward as a practical man, nor a safe party leader, except for a party in the minority. His speech of January 12, 1861, in the Senate, after it was known he had been selected by Mr. Lincoln for Secretary of State, and his official blunders after he became Secretary, tell the story of his utter inability to safely and successfully lead a great party charged with the administration of a government such as ours during the dark days from 1861 to 1865.

He who now reads that speech of Mr. Seward, in the light of history will fully comprehend that his leadership was like the blind leading the blind.

That speech was prepared by Mr. Seward with more than his usual care, as it should have been, before its delivery in the Senate by the man soon to become Prime Minister.

After it had been written and put in type, it was reviewed and recast and conned over and over again, not only by Mr. Seward, but by more than one

friend of ability and position, and every word or line that made it mean anything was stricken out, and every word or suggestion was deliberately added that could possibly make it more foggy or nebulous.

The day of its delivery in the Senate was a solemn and memorable one, not only in Washington, but throughout the country. The great heart of the nation was still and heavy with apprehension. Every loyal citizen expected and longed to have pointed out to him the way to preserve the national unity and national life without dishonor. Never in our history has there been such an occasion for a statesman, and never before was there such a failure.

Mr. Stevens of Pennsylvania, then an old man (and by far the ablest man with whom I served in Congress), walked over with me from the House to the Senate Chamber. We both had seats in the aisle, a little in front of Mr. Seward's desk, and could hear him distinctly. I need not say that we listened, as did every one in that vast audience and in the entire nation, for one word or thought that would stir our hearts or give us hope. But no such word or suggestion came in that speech from the man who was so soon to be charged with the most delicate and responsible office in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet.

I have more than once seen both the Senate and House in mourning, but never did I see so sad an audience quit the Senate Chamber as on that day.

While walking back with Mr. Stevens towards the House, I said: "Mr. Stevens, what do you say to all that?" His answer was short, sharp and characteristic. He said: "I have listened to every word, and by the living God, I have heard nothing." After going with Mr. Stevens to his committee room, I immediately returned to the Senate, to get the opinion of the Senators with whom I was intimate. Taking

Mr. Wade by the hand, I said: "Well, Mr. Senator, what have you to say?" And he answered: "If we follow such leadership, we will be in the wilderness longer than the children of Israel under Moses." Mr. Sumner said: "I knew what was coming, but confess that I am sad." Zac. Chandler did not wait for my question, but as I approached him, raised his hands and exclaimed: "Great God! how are the mighty fallen!"

And this was the judgment of a majority of our friends, in both the Senate and House, with whom at that time I exchanged opinions about the speech. It was reluctantly admitted that it meant a back-down to the conspirators.

And this, alas! was the best, and *all*, the new Prime Minister had to offer us. Instead of pointing out the path of duty and safety as a statesman should have done, he led us into the wilderness, enveloped in a cloud of words and metaphors, and there left us.

I was anxious from the day of the delivery of that speech until the Republican Senators, with but one dissenting vote, requested Mr. Lincoln to dismiss Mr. Seward from his Cabinet. And though the President did not comply with that request of the Republican Senators, as I then thought and now think he should have done, I felt confident that we should from that time on have less of Mr. Seward's amazing assumption, that (when in his hand) "the pen was mightier than the sword." Mr. Lincoln's position and leadership was unquestioned from this date.

SEWARD.

Immediately after entering upon his duties as Secretary of State, Mr. Seward assumed to direct all departments of the Government, substantially as if he were a British Prime Minister and Mr. Lincoln but the nominal Executive.

Without consulting either the President, the Secretary of War, or the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Seward undertook, secretly and on his own responsibility, to *direct* the movements of military and naval officers as if *he* were in fact President. He caused the rebel authorities in Charleston to be notified by telegraph that the "Administration had given a confidential order to reinforce Fort Sumter," to which Mr. Seward was opposed, as a matter of policy, and therefore secretly resolved to defeat it. The next day he notified Judge Campbell, a notorious secessionist, then on the Supreme Bench, that "faith as to Fort Sumter has been kept, wait and see." No one claims that Mr. Seward did this, as a disloyal man, but as a theorist who honestly believed that in his hand "the pen was mightier than the sword." Mr. Seward was, in theory, a centralist, rather than a disunionist, and yet he was absolutely without any fixed or clearly defined policy when the Rebellion broke out. He simply drifted on an unknown sea. His efforts at delay resulted in desperate expedients, and led him to send out secret agents to obstruct, mislead and delay all military and naval movements, for fear that actual war would falsify his prophetic utterances and defeat his negotiations.

Over and over again he had declared that "within ninety days there would be peace," that "harmony and reconciliation would come within ninety days."

How peace and harmony were to be secured he never clearly made known. He simply predicted it.

In his speech of January 12th in the Senate he proposed to meet "exaction with concession," and "violence with peaceably submitting to the doctrine of coercion, and quietly evacuating all the forts, and abandoning all the public property in the rebel States, *except where authority could be exercised without waging war.*"

He and General Scott had made up their minds "to let the wayward sisters depart in peace."

By pursuing this policy, he hoped in some mysterious way ultimately to bring each seceded State back into the Union.

In that speech he said: "I am willing to vote for an amendment to the Constitution declaring that it shall not, by any future amendment, be so altered as to confer on Congress power to abolish or interfere with slavery in any State."

I say nothing of Mr. Seward's damaging dispatches to Mr. Adams, our Minister to Great Britain, nor of his blunders with other powers; I simply state that it was among our great misfortunes that he was called into the Cabinet. In the Senate he would have been both *useful and harmless*.

I saw Mr. Lincoln early the next morning after the Senatorial Committee called on him to ask for Mr. Seward's removal.

It was a characteristic interview. The President asked me "what I would do if I were in his place." This was a way in which he often put questions to men. I answered him "that what he would do or what I would do was not a fair way to put it," "but that if I was in his place and held his opinions, I would accept the resignations of Mr. Seward and Mr. Chase instanter; and at once appoint Mr. Collamore of Vermont, Secretary of State, and Mr. Fessenden of Maine, Secretary of the Treasury."

The suggestion pleased Mr. Lincoln very much, especially the naming Mr. Collamore for Secretary of State.

Mr. Collamore had been in General Harrison's Cabinet in 1841, and was recognized as an able lawyer, as well as the most conservative Republican Senator in the Senate. Mr. Collamore had acted as Chairman of the Senatorial Committee which had called on the President to demand Mr. Seward's dismissal from the Cabinet, and Mr. Lincoln saw at once that

such an appointment would strike the extreme conservative wing of the Republican party very favorably, and he was all the more pleased with the suggestion because it came from so pronounced a radical as I was, and a recognized friend of Chase. He said two or three times: "Why, Ashley, Collamore would make a first-class Secretary;" and added, "and how it would surprise the Senate!"

GENERAL SCOTT.

The day the first advance of our army marched across the long bridge at Washington will always be a memorable one to me. I had never before seen such a military display. I went directly to the White House to see the President, but found that he had gone over to General Scott's office; I followed and described with enthusiasm the marching of our soldiers, singing "Old John Brown," and said: "Mr. President, if our armies fight under the inspiration of that song, the gates of hell cannot prevail against us." General Scott (who was a Virginian) astonished me by saying "that he regretted to strike his mother." I replied with much warmth "that he who struck that flag [pointing to it] struck my mother and deserved death," and unceremoniously walked out, indignant at such an utterance from the commanding General of our armies. This incident tells the story of our national demoralization. General Scott, the commander of our armies, had at that time, unknown to Mr. Lincoln or the public, reached the amazing conclusion that it was best to "let the wayward sisters depart in peace."

General Scott soon afterwards (under the manipulation of Seward) recommended the surrender of Fort Sumter and Fort Pickens. As the President, with the approval of the Cabinet, had before this ordered reinforcements and provisions to Fort Sumter, this sudden and unlooked for change on the part of General Scott shook the faith of the Presi-

dent in him, and he immediately began the search for a younger and more reliable commander.

* * * * *

THE ARMY.

I do not care to introduce or dwell on the disasters of the Army of the Potomac, until General Grant assumed command, nor will I attempt to criticise its defeated generals. I am not a military man, and therefore not competent for such a task.

That Generals McDowell, McClellan, Burnside, Hooker and Pope did the best they could, no one now questions. That they did not do better was the nation's misfortune.

The rank and file of our army both North and South were made up of as good material as the world ever saw. In some respects the Southern soldier for a time had the advantage. First, every slave-master was born and trained to command; he became self-reliant and confident from youth up; he was an accomplished horseman, accustomed to out-door life and the use of firearms. These qualities, with a fiery temperament and splendid physical organization, made him the most formidable soldier in the world; and when you add to this the fact that he was fighting on his own chosen ground, surrounded by friends, and with natural positions for defense, you have a soldier of whom any general might well be proud. The Northwestern soldier had many of these admirable qualities, especially did he have the advantage which an out-door and frontier life gives in educating men to be self-reliant and accustomed to the use of horses and fire-arms.

The soldiers from the East did not have the out-door life of their Western comrades, and it required a year or more of active training in the field to make them equal in this regard to Western men. But when the Eastern and Western soldiers were united under General Grant, the Army of the

Potomac proved itself to be the equal of the soldiers in the Southern army, and from the day General Grant took command of that army no more was heard about the inefficiency or want of valor of the Army of the Potomac.

And I might say here, in order to estimate men's characters, some little incident in their lives will often tell you the kind of men they are. That is especially true in civil life. You go into a congress of three hundred men and you will see the timid men coming together, you will see the reckless men together, and you will see the profound men together. And so in the army; you will find all the fighting men gravitate together, as if they understood and had confidence in each other.

When General Grant, on the evening of the first day's battle at Shiloh (which had been a defeat), was told by his quartermaster that if again defeated to-morrow he would not have transportation enough to carry the troops (65,000 in number) across the river, the General inquired:

“How many can you handle?”

“Ten thousand,” the quartermaster answered.

“Well,” said the General, quietly, “if we are defeated you will be able to carry all that are left.”

This incident admirably illustrates General Grant's determination of character. He simply determined to win or be annihilated.

While talking about soldiers, my mind recurs to Thomas, the grandest figure to me of all the war. You will remember what he said to General Steadman when he ordered him to make a charge. Steadman started at once to execute his order, but impulsively turning back, said: “General, where shall I find you after the charge?”

“Right here, sir;” pointing to the spot on which he stood.

That told the story of General Thomas' character.

It is also beautifully told in one of Mrs. Sherwood's war poems.

Sheridan, when he came East, was assigned by Grant to Meade's command. Meade told Sheridan to go out with his cavalry and reconnoiter, but to be very careful about Stuart, he was a troublesome fellow. Sheridan's blood was up in a minute, and he said, with some strong words, that he could knock hell out of him, if he could get at him. General Meade, who was a very quiet man, when he saw Grant said:

"Well, General, that man Sheridan that you sent me is rather insubordinate."

The General says: "How is that; what did he do?"

General Meade repeated what Sheridan had said.

"Did Sheridan say that?" inquired Grant.

"Yes, sir; he did," rejoined Meade, with emphasis.

"Why didn't you tell him to go and do it?" was all Grant said.

Meade went back, took the hint, gave the order to Sheridan, and Stuart never troubled him afterwards.

I went down to the Army of the Potomac with a letter from Mr. Lincoln to Grant. I became a little anxious for fear the Sixth rebel corps down there at Petersburg might be detached, and attack Sherman's rear, when he was marching from Atlanta. I kept talking to the President about it until he sent me down, and I stayed there ten days. The night before I started back I looked at the map on the table, and said to the General: "I wish you would show me the situation, I want to tell the best story I can to the President to-morrow; I am going up to-night." I had been complaining about the dead cattle and dead mules and horses, and wanted the camp cleared up for fear of a pestilence. The General gave me satisfactory answers; and pointed out the situation on the map, and said to me:

“For every three men of ours dead, five of theirs; for every three of our cattle dead, five of theirs.”

Picking up some paper on the table and crushing it in his hand, he says:

“Tell the President I have got them like that!”

It made the cold chills run over me. But as I went to Washington, and caught sight of the flag floating from the dome, it kept welling up in me, “Tell the President I have got them like that!” It told the character of the man. When I repeated what he said to the President and others, they all felt exactly as I did. But after all it cheered us, and we all involuntarily exclaimed, “I have got them like that!”

And right here I might say that we of northwestern Ohio never think of the army without thinking of the old Fourteenth, the bravest of the brave, and of General Steadman, its gallant commander. But I want to say that the hundred-day men deserve honorable mention. The patriotic impulse that carried the hundred-day men into the army and to the Army of the Potomac, with Colonel Phillips at their head, and Lieutenant-Colonel Faskins and Richard Waite among the captains, and John J. Barker among the lieutenants, was as patriotic as that which carried the three-year men to the nation's rescue.

I remember well their march through the streets of Washington, and the speech of Mr. Lincoln to them from the steps of the White House, and my address to them at the front.

These men were a part of the Army of the Potomac, and although they were there but one hundred days, those one hundred days were eventful days to us and to them, and they have a right equally with the veterans to the inheritance which comes from victories bravely won. Especially is honor due to the men who so gallantly marched to battle when they were exempt by age from military duty.

LINCOLN.

It will not be claimed by the partisan friends of any man that any one of our greatest statesmen or generals were faultless and committed no blunders.

Young and inexperienced as I was, I felt confident that I knew as much about the secret purposes of the conspirators and their plots as many of our oldest leaders ; but *I knew* also that if so great a Senator as Mr. Benton of Missouri, who had served in the Senate for thirty years from a slave State, could not command the attention of the country when specially and publicly calling attention to the designs of the slave conspirators, a young and unknown abolitionist from a free State like myself could not hope to do so.

I therefore deferred to such men as Seward, Sumner and Fessenden in the Senate, and Stevens, Washburn, Grow and others in the House, and also such men as Chase, Greeley and Wendell Phillips in private life.

Before the rebellion broke out I came to know that Seward was a "dreamer," who always lived high up in the clouds ; that Sumner was a man of "books," and that Chase practically did not know men, and might be associated in the Senate for years with the chief conspirators and be entirely ignorant of their movements or their plots.

As I now look back and review, more calmly than I could then, the words and acts of our greatest men, Lincoln stands forth pre-eminent among them all.

Without experience, and confronted by trials and responsibilities greater than any President who had preceded him, he proved equal to every emergency, and never failed in the most trying and difficult hour.

Surrounded on every hand by traitors and often misinformed by real but mistaken friends and be-

trayed by pretenders, he faced a million rebels in arms, and never quailed nor faltered; he, more than all others, secured the loyal co-operation of the border slave States; he was the one great leader of the Republican party, and more, of all men of whatever party, who hoped for the triumph of the Union, and he occupied this position because he was fitted by nature for the great task imposed upon him. His leadership was gentle but firm, cautious yet persistent. He was the one man of all the men I knew in those days of trial and danger, best fitted for the place he filled so well. As tender as a woman to suffering and sorrow, he stood forth during the entire rebellion, a colossus among men.

“ Like the oak of the mountain, deep-rooted and firm,
Erect when multitudes bent to the storm.”

No man can depict the humiliations and catastrophes which this nation escaped by having Abraham Lincoln for President in 1861 instead of William H. Seward.

Back of Lincoln and Congress stood the rank and file of the army, to whom the greatest credit is due. And back of the army, there was a patriotic sentiment for national unity and national glory, which represented the moral force of an overwhelming majority of the nation. This sentiment moulded and directed Lincoln and her statesmen and inspired her generals and the army with the necessity of union and the hope of victory.

Without this united moral force Congress would not have acted, the President would have been powerless, and the Republic of Washington and Jefferson would have been divided, dismembered and destroyed, and on its ruins two or more discordant and hostile governments erected, which would have been a perpetual menace to each other and to the peace of the world.

TRUE STATESMANSHIP.

We have now reached a time (so far have we advanced in a single generation) where we can form a proper estimate of the statesmen who ruled this nation from 1836 to 1860.

Even the ordinary observer of to-day no longer recognizes their pretensions to statesmanship. Plain, practical common-sense Americans who believe in a "Government of the people, by the people, for the people," will in the future declare, *as they do now*, "that true statesmanship *does not enact injustice into law*—that that is not a democratic or republican government which affirms the legal right to property in man, or which authorizes or permits the enslavement of men by fraud or force within its jurisdiction or under its flag. At a time when the moral sentiment of mankind the world over was practically a unit against the enslavement of any race, and when the imperial governments of Russia and Brazil were emancipating their slaves, and all the great nations of the world were joining hands to attempt the civilization of the dark continent of Africa, to the end that they might make slave piracy impossible, the so-called statesmen of this country were conspiring to destroy the freest and best government on earth, and making war on their own kindred in order that they might establish *one or more* petty governments whose cornerstone should be human slavery.

The folly and crimes of the Secession leaders and their allies of the North can never be repeated again; even the memory of them will soon have

"Gone glimmering through the gleam of things that were—
A school-boy's tale, the wonder of an hour."

Never again shall there be witnessed in the land of Washington and Lincoln the blasphemy of religious teachers preaching that saint and sinner alike must see to it "that servants obey their masters

in all things because acceptable in the sight of the Lord," and that when escaping, it was the duty of the public to provide for returning slaves to their slave-masters at the nation's expense, and, crowning all, by boldly affirming the divinity of slavery.

The conspirators and their apologists may write thousands of volumes in defense of their dogma of secession and state rights, and fill them with long-drawn-out logic and quotations from the Bible and from pretended Christian teachers affirming the divinity of slavery; they may build monuments of marble, brass or iron to their lost cause and its dead leaders, and do what they may to justify or excuse their blunders or their crimes, and yet the time is coming, and *now is*, in which no sane man will read their writings except to learn from their own pens the height and depth of their amazing folly. And a generation of men shall not have passed away before all who stand before their monuments will be asking themselves whether the leaders of the Whiskey rebellion, the schemers of the Hartford Convention plot, or Aaron Burr and his conspirators are not better entitled to commemoration, in brass or iron, than the leaders of the slaveholders' rebellion.

I have not spoken personally of any of the leaders of the rebellion, because they were all the followers and satellites of Calhoun, from Jefferson Davis down to Senator Wigfall of Texas, who was dubbed by his fellow conspirators "one of the most eloquent fools on the continent."

To me there are inseparably connected with the history of the rebellion three men in civil life, who stand out more prominently than their associates—Calhoun, the great conspirator; Seward, the dreamer; and Lincoln, the statesman. Calhoun, able, ambitious, logical and persistent, and as unyielding as death; Seward, the philosophical dreamer, political prophet and presidential aspirant, the coiner of

beautiful and high sounding phrases, with no practical ability for a crisis, such as the rebellion of 1861. When the hour of action and trial came, he suggested, in his speech of January 12th, "that we meet prejudice with conciliation, exaction with concessions, violence with the right hand of fellowship," and surrender to the rebels all the public property of the nation in their States, "*except where the authority of the United States could be exercised without war.*" To crown all, he offered to vote for an amendment to the Constitution which would preserve slavery forever, and thus make the "irrepressible conflict" perpetual, so long as a single State elected to maintain the institution of slavery in its borders.

The world recognizes when it reads Mr. Lincoln's statement of the "irrepressible conflict," that he was the practical, just and far-seeing statesman.

In his great speech at Springfield, Illinois, in 1858, he said:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

This great speech made Mr. Lincoln President. After his inauguration, he followed logically and with fidelity the doctrine announced in that speech.

And when he declared in his inaugural address, that his oath and duty alike required him to see that the laws were impartially and honestly executed; and added: "*The power confided in me will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property, and enforce the laws of the Government,*" a

practical and patriotic people knew what that declaration meant. They knew that Mr. Lincoln intended "*that the house should not be divided nor fall,*" but that the Union should be maintained forever—and be all one thing—all free. And to the accomplishment of that great work he consecrated his life.

Mr. Seward would not only have been dismissed from office by any other government, but would have been arrested for usurpation of power—and for holding secret and unauthorized communication with the public enemy. And I do not believe that any President who had preceded Mr. Lincoln would have continued Mr. Seward in his Cabinet for a single day, after the formal and unanimous request of the Senate for his removal.

It was Mr. Lincoln's hopefulness and faith in man that made him so long-suffering in his dealings with Seward, Chase and McClellan, and hundreds of others, myself included.

I think he was in that respect one of the most wonderful of men. I can remember two instances, one of which was with reference to myself; the other, Senator Schurz. Schurz was in the army, and was as restless as a nervous man could be, and fired a letter of sixteen pages over the head of his commander to Mr. Lincoln, a thing which, as a military matter, was not to be tolerated. Afterward he thought better of it, and wrote Mr. Lincoln a kind of an apology for having committed this breach of military discipline. The President kindly wrote him: "Never mind; come and see me." When he came to meet him he began to apologize.

"Never mind, Schurz. I guess before we get through talking you won't think I am so bad a man as some people say I am."

Kindness, of course, broke down Mr. Schurz just as it had other men.

I went up to see him at one time about McClellan

—got there early in the morning. He hadn't got into his room. When he came in he expressed some surprise, talking to himself, as I supposed. He hesitated a moment, and said:

“ Well, General, what are you doing here so early?”

“ I came here to see you.”

“ What can I do for you ? ”

“ Nothing, sir.” I shut my mouth as tight as I could.

“ You have come up to see about McClellan?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Well,” said he, “ that reminds me of a story.”

I was determined to have a solid talk with him. So I said, rising to my feet: “ Mr. President, I beg your pardon, but I didn't come this morning to hear a story.”

He looked at me and said, with such a sad face: “ Ashley, I have great confidence in you, and great respect for you, and I know how sincere you are. But if I couldn't tell these stories, I would die. Now you sit down!” So he ordered a cup of coffee and we discussed the situation.

That was the peculiar character of the man.

I saw him one day give a pardon for a soldier sentenced to be shot, where the mother and some women of his household came there. When he did it, of course there was a scene. Tears came to the eyes of many. The President says: “ Well, I have made one family happy, but I don't know about the discipline of the army!”

That was the characteristic of the man, and because of that he held together the discordant elements—held together the border States; and I think carried us to victory better than any man, certainly, of whom I have the least knowledge. I don't know of any man in this country that I would rather have had for President, considering it after it is all over, for a quarter of a century, than Abraham Lincoln.

That the historian of the future will accord the

highest order of statesmanship to Abraham Lincoln and the Union men of 1861-65 I do not doubt.

A practical world will judge public men by what they accomplish, not by what they profess. Soldier and statesman alike must be judged by this simple standard.

From this point of view the historian will show that Mr. Lincoln found the Government disrupted and bankrupt, with a hostile government organized by conspirators on its supposed ruins. He will show that Mr. Lincoln and a Union Congress proceeded at once to secure its political unity and territorial integrity; that they raised, organized and equipped armies and crushed the rebellion; that they amended the National Constitution prohibiting slavery forever; that they were both merciful and forgiving as conquerors never were before; that all *laws* and constitutional amendments were impartial in their character, and operated on the North and South alike. He will show that under their State governments, as reorganized by them, the South has prospered and increased in wealth as never before; that the census of 1890 confirmed all we hoped and promised when we declared that her increase in cotton, sugar, tobacco, rice, iron and manufactures more than doubled in value between 1860 and 1890, and that her plantation and city property increased in value *threefold*; that a National Government, with amnesty and impartial suffrage, found a complete vindication, both at home and abroad. And knowing this, as each Union soldier and Union citizen who took part in the great drama of 1861 "folds the drapery of his couch about him," and joins the silent majority, he will know that his sacrifices have not been in vain.

There are men before me to-night who bore aloft and followed that flag at Shiloh and Stone River, at Murfessboro, Missionary Ridge and Nashville, and from Chickamauga to Chattanooga and the top

of Lookout Mountain, and from Atlanta through Georgia on to Washington, as they carried it in triumph back to their homes prior to placing it here within the shrine of Memorial Hall. And because it has been riddled by shot and shell and has been baptized with the blood of the living and the dead, it is all the more sacred to us.

Mr. President, that flag means more to you and to me to-night than ever it did before.

To us, as Americans, and to every civilized people beneath the sun, it symbolizes the unity and strength of the greatest and freest commonwealth on earth. It means invincible power and enlightened progress. It means hope and happiness to all the coming generations of men entitled to its protection. It means that never again, on the land or on the sea, can it be a flag of "stripes" to any of God's children, however poor or however black. It means the sovereignty of an indissoluble Union—and a prophecy of the coming continental republic.



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