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S P E E C H

OF THE

HON. MONTGOMERY BLAIR,

ON THE

CAUSES OF THE REBELLION

AND IN

Support of the President's Plan of Pacification,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

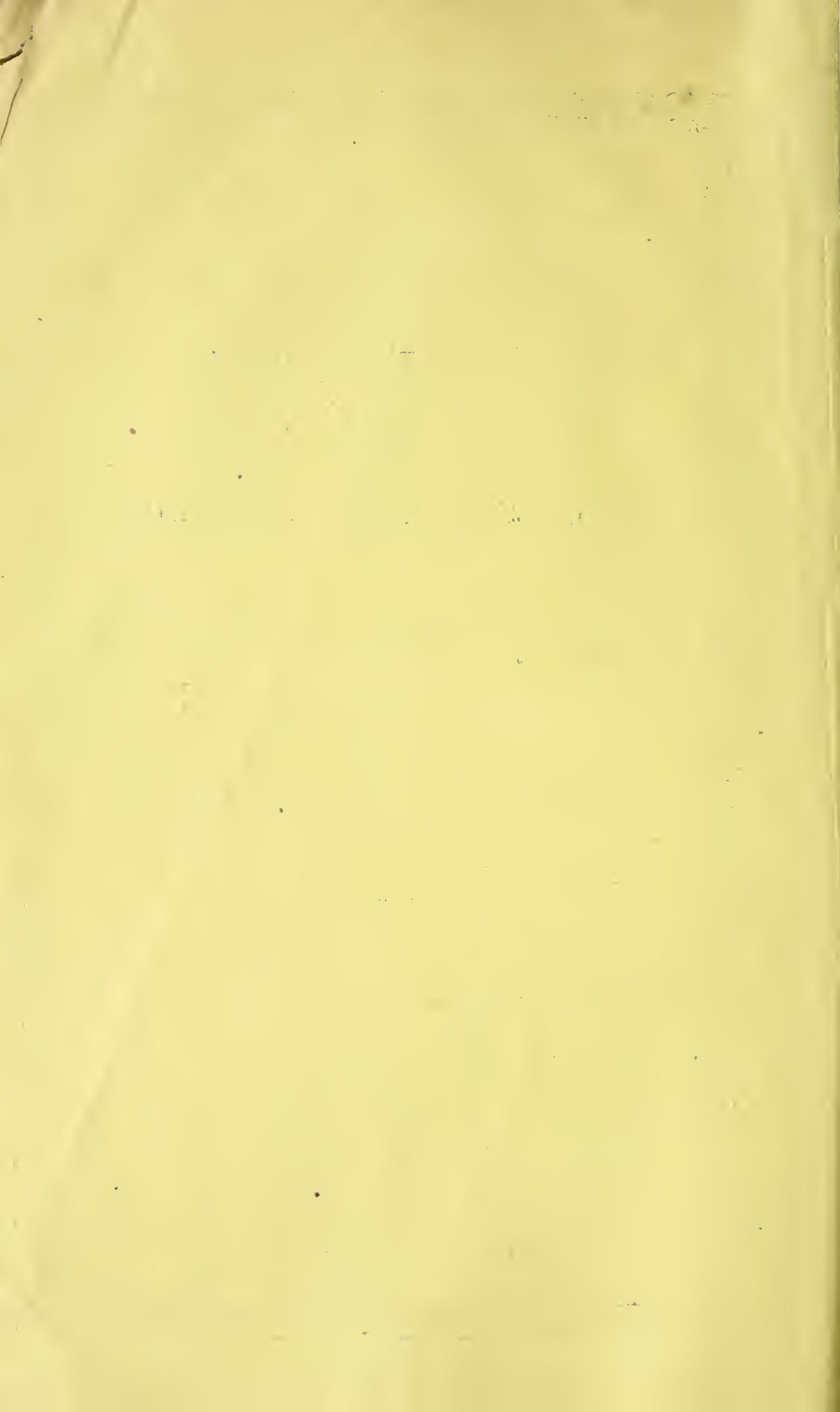
LEGISLATURE OF MARYLAND,

AT ANNAPOLIS.

On the 22d of January, 1864.

BALTIMORE:
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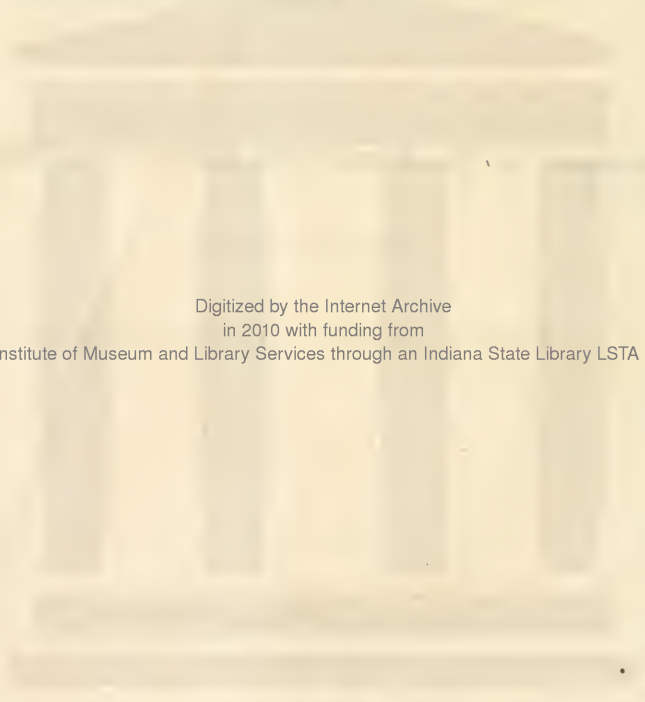
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S P E E C H .

FELLOW CITIZENS :—

The President's recent message manifests his continued solicitude for your interests. He says :

“ The movements by State action for emancipation in several of the States, not included in the emancipation proclamation, are matters of profound gratulation. And while I do not repeat in detail what I have heretofore so earnestly urged upon this subject, my general views and feelings remain unchanged ; and I trust that Congress will omit no fair opportunity of aiding those important steps to a great consummation.”

This is a renewed effort to redeem the pledge given in his emancipation proclamation and in a former message to Congress, to exert all his power to indemnify every loyal citizen for losses of slaves sustained from the acts of the Government in prosecuting the war. The proclamation of amnesty appended to the late message extends the benefit of the indemnity proclaimed previously to that white class once embarked in the secession cause, but that now abandons it and takes the oath of loyalty and adhesion to the Constitution, the leaders of the rebellion only excepted. This is more than a pardon ; not only does the President spare the lives of the unfortunate dupes of conspirators, but he restores them their property.

Another indulgence is granted by the late proclamation to the victims of the fraud and artifice, or what has been far more prevalent, the secretly-embodied military power

of the contrivers of the rebellion. It is the invitation to participate again as brethren in the Government on resuming relations of sincere loyalty to it.

A third advance looks to the perfect restoration of State rights in the Union, by means of the loyal popular suffrage within the several States, thus recognizing their constitutions as existing and obligatory in everything but in that feature which made the war—and which the war has for the most part obliterated—slavery. Even as to slavery, its subjects—who as freedmen are brought into new relations with the States—are remitted to the States, the President promising to support “any provisions which may be adopted by such State government in relation to the freed people of such State, which shall recognize and declare their permanent freedom, provide for their education, and which may yet be consistent as a temporary arrangement, with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class.”

These clauses manifest a willingness to refer the changes in State constitutions relating to slavery, which the war resulting from it shows to be necessary to the people and States most affected. This harmonizes with the great principle on which the Government rests. If the President's benign and patriotic suggestion be received with favor by the friends of free government, bound up in the Union, and based on the grand, all-pervading principle of the Declaration of Independence, it will become evident to all the world that there is an innate vital power in our Constitution that can heal the worst disorders to which it might be subjected.

It is our duty now to put to shame the advocates of monarchy, oligarchy and aristocracy. The majesty of a great, free people is invoked to achieve this great work. The nation is appealed to by the President to sanction, by its co-operation, the design which with him is but suggestion.

The man at the head of the Republic vaunts no military prowess as a substitute for the nation's will. He is no

Cromwell. Congress is no military council. We have no Carnot to organize victory. The Government embodies the will of a free people, and that imparts an impulse through faithful representatives that renders the Republic irresistible in a good work. The suppression of the rebellion and the elimination of slavery from this country is the herculean labor before it. Its accomplishment will convince the nations that popular suffrage is the true sovereignty, whether to wield the sword against those who defy it or to heal the wounds it is compelled to inflict in asserting its authority. I hope you will bear with me while bringing under review the series of steps which have brought us to the issues presented in the President's plan of pacification to show the wisdom of the plan, and that the patriots of all parties should unite in giving effect to it.

Nothing was more conspicuous throughout the struggle of the colonies with Great Britain than the stern devotion of the founders of the Government to the public good. They sacrificed all personal and party considerations to subserve it. This simple feeling, this instinct of the heart, created this glorious empire of freedom. It will re-establish it on more enduring foundations.

Monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, are different modes of the same thing. It is monopoly by a few of the rights of the many to appropriate their labor. It was not against the forms of government that our forefathers rose in resistance to the mother country. On the contrary, the hearts of the people were full of loyalty even to a king until they found him to be a tyrant.

The most striking manifestation of the king's tyranny is thus portrayed in the original of the Declaration of Independence :

“ He has waged cruel war against human nature itself,
 “ violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty, in the
 “ persons of a distant people who never offended him, cap-
 “ tivating them, and carrying them into slavery in another
 “ hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transpor-

"tation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of
 "INFIDEL Powers, is the warfare of the CHRISTIAN King of
 "Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where
 "MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his
 "negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to pro-
 "hibit or to restrain this execrable commerce, and that this
 "assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished
 "die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms
 "among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has
 "deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also
 "obtruded them, thus paying off former crimes committed
 "against the LIBERTIES of one people, with crimes which he
 "urges them to commit against the LIVES of another."

But this "piratical warfare against human nature" had its origin, not in the personal character of the British king. It sprung from *that spirit of monopoly* which has ever, and will forever, animate arbitrary power. The European potentates had learned, as the first principle of kingcraft, that he who commanded the labor of a nation became its master. Hence that monstrous usurpation so strongly marked with the reprobation of Jefferson and his colleagues in the original draft of the Declaration of Independence. The monarchs of England and Spain, resolved on keeping their colonies in absolute subjection, looked to a monopoly of the African slave trade as the means of enforcing it.

The treaty of Utrecht stipulated, says Bancroft:

"For the Spanish world in the Gulf of Mexico, on the
 "Atlantic, and along the Pacific, as well as for the English
 "colonies, that her Britannic Majesty (by persons of her
 "appointment,) was the exclusive slave trader." "Eng-
 "land extorted the privilege of filling the New World with
 "negroes, as great profits were anticipated from the trade.
 "Philip V., of Spain, took one quarter of the common
 "stock, agreeing to pay for it by a stock note. Queen Anne
 "reserved to herself another quarter, and the remaining
 "moiety was to be divided among her subjects. Thus did
 "the sovereigns of England and Spain become the largest

“slave merchants in the world. Lady Masham promised herself a share of the profits, but Harley, (prime minister,) who had good sense, and was most free from avarice, advised the assignment of her Majesty’s portion of the stock to the South Sea Company.

“Controlling the trade in slaves, who cost nothing but trinkets, and toys, and refuse arms, England gained by the sale of the children of Africa into bondage in America, the capital which built up and confirmed a British empire in Hindostan. The political effects of this traffic were equally perceptible in the West Indies. The mercantile system, of which the whole colonial system was the essential branch, *culminated in the slave trade, and in the commercial policy adopted with regard to the chief produce of slave labor.*”

Here is the clue to the conspiracy of kings which made negro slavery its fulcrum. It is an instinctive fact that the conspiracy of the slaveholders—the oligarchs in the South—against the free Governments of this continent, originated in the same passions, avarice, and ambition, looking to territorial conquest and political power, and negro slavery was alike the instrument of both. No fact could more strongly elucidate the immense force which the absolute control of a system of slavery, though wielding a mass of the lowest *caste* of laborers, may exert over greater numbers of a middle order not so concentrated under a single will. The monopoly wrested by England from Spain made the monarch of the latter kingdom dependent on the former, as a joint stock-holder in the slave trade with a company of her merchant princes, sharing their scandalous profits in a merchandise which was to debase the Spanish provinces into fit subjection to such a master. And the historian also tells us how the British throne, although its occupant did not appropriate the mercenary products of the slave trade *ASSIENTO* to herself, but gave them to her great trading companies, fostered through the gains of their monopolies the conquest they were destined to achieve for England in India, Africa, and the South

Seas. Meantime the source of these gains—the sale of the negroes in the American colonies—was encouraged by the whole force of the parliamentary and royal authority and influence. All the efforts of the colonies, by legislative enactments or otherwise, to stop the establishment of the slave system were vetoed by the king, and public opinion was invoked by declarations of Parliament “that the trade is highly beneficial and advantageous to the kingdom and the colonies,” and for that purpose, by statute, “the ports of Africa were laid open to English competition,” the statute expressly declaring that “the slave trade is very advantageous to Great Britain;” and the bench of judges, “Holt and Pollexfen, and eight other judges, in pursuance of an order of council, giving their opinion that negroes are merchandise, and that therefore the act of navigation was to be extended to the English trade in them to the exclusion of aliens.” The Crown encouraged the trade not only by orders to the colonial Governors, such as “the royal instruction of Queen Anne to the Governor of New York and New Jersey to give due encouragement to merchants, and in particular to the Royal African Company of England,” but by premiums to purchasers, land being given to emigrants “on condition that the resident owner would keep four negroes for every hundred acres.” South Carolina, even, as late as 1760, united in the common efforts of the colonists to stop the increase of slavery; but Bancroft says:

“She only gained abuse from the English ministry. Great Britain, steadily rejecting every colonial restriction on the slave trade, instructed the Governor, on pain of removal, not to give even a temporary assent to such laws; and but a year before the prohibition of the slave trade by the American Congress in 1776, the Earl of Dartmouth illustrated the tendency of the colonies, and the policy of England, by addressing to a colonial agent these memorable words: ‘We cannot allow the colonies to check or discourage in any degree a traffic so beneficial to the nation.’”

The result of this systematic policy—building up a slave empire in the New World in furtherance of Great Britain's commercial ambition is thus summed up by Bancroft :

“ For the century previous to the prohibition of the
 “ slave trade by the American Congress in 1776, we assume
 “ the number imported by the English into the Spanish,
 “ French and English West Indies, as well as the English
 “ continental colonies, to have been, collectively, nearly
 “ three millions, to which are to be added more than a
 “ quarter of a million purchased in Africa and thrown
 “ into the Atlantic on the passage. The gross returns
 “ to English merchants for the whole traffic in that num-
 “ ber of slaves may have been not far from four hundred
 “ million dollars.”

Well, what was Great Britain's commercial policy which slavery as adjunct was to consummate? Mr. Bancroft explains it in a paragraph based on documentary proof, in these words :

“ The white man emigrating became a dangerous free-
 “ man. It was quite sure that the negroes of that cen-
 “ tury would never profess republicanism ; their presence
 “ in the colonies increased dependence. This reason was
 “ avowed by a British merchant in 1745, in a political
 “ tract entitled—‘ THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE—THE GREAT
 “ ‘ PILLAR AND SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH PLANTATION TRADE
 “ ‘ IN AMERICA.’ Were it possible for white men to an-
 “ swer the end of negroes in planting, (it is there con-
 “ tended,) our colonies would interfere with the manufac-
 “ tures of these kingdoms. In such a case, indeed, we
 “ might have just reason to dread the prosperity of our
 “ colonies ; but while we can supply them abundantly
 “ with negroes we need be under no such apprehension.
 “ Negro labor will keep our British colonies in due sub-
 “ serviency to the interest of their mother country ; for
 “ while plantations depend only on planting by negroes,
 “ our colonies can never prove injurious to British manu-
 “ factures, never become independent of their kingdom.”

Such was the British policy as associated with slavery. It is simple and consistent. The grand monopoly of the slave trade increased its navigation, increased its commerce with Africa and all European dependencies in the two Americas, increased its planting and other agricultural interests everywhere; the negro laborer doing the work in the colonies, thus saving for home industry the peasantry of the British Isles, that would otherwise emigrate, and become dangerous freemen. This slave system thus retarded the growth of the distant plantations by that hardy Anglo-Saxon yeomanry, which it was feared would soon acquire the independent spirit of the New World, that would endanger the supremacy of the mother country, rivalling her in arts, in arms, in commerce, and every species of enterprise.

The monopoly thus gained by merchants over Africa, glutted by the profits of the "merchandise," in the shape of men transplanted to America, inspired their ambition to extend it over the East Indies; and the result was the conquest of Hindostan, by the intrigues, corruption, commercial bargainings, sanctioned by treaties entered into with the native princes, and upheld by the diplomacy and arms of England; a monopoly which steadily excluded from the East India possessions white emigrants; a policy also adopted by our southern slaveholders.

This was the thriving attitude of England's slave policy, when the Congress of the Colonies passed the act of prohibition in 1776, and Jefferson and his compeers characterized it in the Declaration of Independence with stronger terms of reproach against the king than any other in its category of wrongs—that long list of "*repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States.*"

Is it not amazing, that the slave States, having up to the hour of pronounced independence made war on the slave trade, and the Power that compelled submission to its aggravated mischiefs, should recoil from its denunciation in that great State paper, written expressly to sum

up the grievances suffered under the Government it was designed to renounce as the only mode of deliverance from them? No sooner was the paper read, than South Carolina and Georgia, then, as more recently, instinctively the prompters of the action of the South, when a question of slavery is involved, objected to the scathing clause—and why? “A change came o’er the spirit of their dream.” When the slave trade and slavery were instruments in the hands of the king, they saw them plied as a vast monopoly to amass wealth and power for those having the control, and to reduce to dependence those who were obliged to buy and live under the monopoly. The inhabitants of continents and the markets of continents were under its sway. Slavery and the slave trade, under the management of a foreign Power, was a curse, but under the management of the masters of South Carolina and Georgia, promised much to avarice and ambition. The whole South soon perceived that an oligarchy of slaveholders could easily personate the king, and profit by the lessons of the monopoly he established. How well they have applied and improved upon the precedents of their royal master, to which we have adverted, a glance at their course after they had expunged from our *Magna Charta* the passage provided to insure the extinction of the slave trade and slavery, will show.

The first step of the slaveholders after assuming the royal prerogative in reference to slavery, was the demand to set aside the Congressional interdict against the slave trade. This was enforced by threats of dissolving the Union, so necessary to the establishment of our free infant institutions. A new lease had to be granted to the slave trade, to save the Government from rebellion at its birth. Their next requisition was, that the political power over free men and free institutions, should be compounded with their domestic institution, asserting arbitrary authority over the African slaves among us. This, too, was conceded, as the price of unity and peace. The slave power, acquired a constitutional right to representation in Con-

gress, for two-fifths of the persons it held in bondage. Thus endowed with the new political faculty of importing and breeding a population to legislate for the nation, the master-class in the South readily asserted the character of a privileged class. The capitalists, monopolizing the lands and the labor adequate to their cultivation, at once reduced the non-slaveholders to entire dependence upon them. They became tenants-at-will on the great domain of the privileged order, and, although indulged with the right of suffrage, in effect it was but a choice between individuals of the same order, the invariable result being the election of all the higher functionaries, and the legislators, State and National, from that class, which, having command of the labor and land of the South, had also command of the votes of those who held their livings of them. Hence, the State and Congressional representation of the South, really represented the class consisting of some three hundred thousand persons, whose interests required that the seven millions of the whites, equally dependent upon them, but less closely allied upon mercenary considerations, than the four millions of the black *caste*, should, for security and convenience, be held under the same law of passive obedience. With great art and success, the two southern *castes* of laborers have been played off against each other for this purpose; and with like skill the southern chivalry, acting in concert, upon the instinct of cemented interest, have, though a minority, by holding the balance of power between the two great parties of the free States, contrived to carry their plans for control in the national as well as the State governments.

The ambition of holding a vast domain—the spirit of all despotism for aggrandizement—soon succeeded to the indulgence of the slave owners in the prerogative which had again and again been denied to the king by acts of local legislation—that of filling the country with slaves. It was at the threshold insisted that the whole territory south of Ohio should be resigned to slavery. The acqui-

sition of Louisiana was its next conquest; then Florida and Texas followed; and when part of Mexico, where slavery had been abolished, was annexed, the Union was put in hazard to compel the restoration of this royal institution to hold that wide region in abeyance for settlement by the masters of the South. California, although knocking at the door of Congress with her free constitution in her hand, was denied admittance but on a compromise making the rest of the Mexican acquisition accessible to slavery. This struggle for territory on the part of the privileged proprietaries of the institution was not to obtain room for its occupation. Vast regions were already held vacant by the black laborers, that like the dog in the manger could not use that from which it excluded the only species of emigration that could be relied on to turn it to account.

But the privileged order of chivalry had on political considerations an eagerness for expansion that was insatiable. The paucity of their numbers rendered it necessary that extensive spaces should be consecrated to slavery, to make States with sparse populations to create Senators, and to put distance between the species of emigration they cherished and that of the intelligent free race that threatened the power that reposed upon it. The battle which this power had fought for Missouri and won, resulting in a pacification fixing a northern limit, beyond which slavery was not to pass, although for a quarter of a century exulted in as a slavery triumph, securing all that was desirable to the South, became a mortification when Kansas was opened up to emigration preparatory to admission into the Union. It presented another temptation like that of Missouri to the spirit of southern ascendancy. The Missouri compact which excluded slavery from Kansas was violated under the corrupt influence exerted through bargains for the Presidency with Pierce and Buchanan—successively the candidates nominated and elected by the management of the chivalry for the purpose of its surrender. The strategy failed. The South was defeated in the war

it waged for Kansas. It was defeated notwithstanding official frauds and perjuries were perpetrated in aid of violence to secure its submission, and although the schemes were assisted by all the art and influence of the two perfidious Presidents engaged to effect it.

It was this first repulse to the ambition of that privileged order, by long indulgence made arrogant, followed by the election of President Lincoln, pledged to resist the further encroachment of slavery in territory where freedom was established, that hurried into birth the long-brooded-over revolt against the Republic. Mr. Buchanan's nomination to the Presidency had been obtained from the South by the solemn pledge, made in his name, by his Attorney General, Mr. Black, to the southern delegation in convention :

“ Whither thou goest, I will go ; where thou lodgest, I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.”

The conspiracy against the Union was well understood by Mr. Buchanan long before this vow was made to its principal authors. Its decisive overt act, in violation of the Missouri compact and the seizure of Kansas, was then flagrant, and this scriptural adjuration was to mark, with signal force, his adhesion to the treason ; and he was not found false to this fellowship. His whole term in the Presidency rendered the Government an instrumentality in the hands of its enemies. Their most unscrupulous agents were made heads of Departments, and when war was openly proclaimed by the thunder of cannon on Fort Sumter and trailing the flag of the country in its dust and ashes, it was found that the free States of the Union had been disarmed, the Navy dispersed in distant seas, the officers of the Army corrupted to surrender themselves and it, the South filled with munitions of war withdrawn from the loyal section, and the forts, ports, mints, custom-houses, all opened up to the conspirators, who had prepared in secrecy under the *knighthood* of the Golden Circle a force to take possession of them, and at the same time the State governments to supplant by a military jurisdiction that of the United States over the whole south-

ern region which the nation had conquered from Great Britain and purchased from France and Spain. Mr. Buchanan, to prove his faith to his allies who thus triumphed through his perfidy over the Government, gave them in his last message to Congress most efficient "aid and comfort," enforcing, by executive authority, the *dictum* that the United States had no constitutional power to "coerce" the restoration of the rights or property of which it had been stripped. And he remained faithful to them to the end. After the retirement of General Cass from the Cabinet, who withdrew because he considered the refusal on the part of the President and his Cabinet to maintain Fort Sumter against the rebels an overt act of treason, an agreement was entered into with the enemy in furtherance of the object of that treason. Buchanan's administration actually stipulated with that of Davis for an armistice which afforded time to the latter to accomplish his design, and this was officially signed by the respective Secretaries on the part of the contracting Cabinets. But this betrayal by the Executive of the United States would have produced a short-lived success had it not been supported by the two standing armies kept on hand by the chivalry of the South—armies that are the offspring of that peculiar institution to which the order itself owes its birth. The antagonism of the black and white *castes* of laborers of the South creates the double forces which maintain the oligarchy over both. The antipathies between the Papists and Protestants of Ireland is the strength of the English vice-royalty over the island. The apprehensions of negro equality on the part of the non-slaveholders renders them fanatically devoted to the designs of that class whose ambition and mercenary interests proclaim a war to prevent the emancipation feared as a transformation, elevating the blacks and degrading the whites. The slaves, disciplined to obedience, and in the presence of a soldiery composed of that stern class that held the lash over them from infancy, and now armed for their destruction on a hesitating look, make an embodied force of stout, acclimated, skill-

ful pioneers, willing though unpaid, and proud of the change from the fields of the plantation to those of the camp. These are the men that threw up the batteries that struck the colors of Fort Sumter, the men who dug the rifle pits and made and partly manned the redoubts which broke our first army at Bull Run, the men that created the fortifications at Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, Port Hudson, Vicksburg. They constitute the army of the trenches, while every man of their brethren left in the crops at home sends and supports a white substitute to fight the battles in the field. Can any one deny the share the negro has in creating the armies of the South, when it is known that the military government there has ordered grain to be cultivated there as the exclusive crop, and has conscripted the slaves of the planters to work them under military overseers when the owner has refused the office, and that nevertheless, famine stares their soldiers in the face? But for the slaves everywhere pressed to provide against these deficient supplies, the ranks of the rebel army would be thinned to make bread for the families at home and the remnant of their comrades. It was even the boast of the nullifiers in the early time of their intimidation that their institutions, like the Spartans', enabled them to make every freeman a soldier.

Slavery was thus to become the sure foundation of their republic, and it is, we see, the basis of the despotic military rule which subjects the South under a dictator, and sheds the blood of the North in torrents, to defend itself and the whole Union against the frenzied ambition of the chivalry that hoped to make cotton king over the cabinets of Europe, and the negro institution the throne of a king over this Continent. It was in this spirit that it sent out its fillibusters in Cuba, in Central America, and sought an alliance with a revolutionary party in Mexico, to restore the reign of slavery in that republic. It was in this view that Toombs, who apes the oratory of Mirabeau, in consulsing the South, announced that it would make "*the Gulf of Mexico its mare clausum,*" and "*call the roll of its*

“*Slaves on Bunker Hill.*” The maniac is now fettered, but if he had broken our army at Antietam or Gettysburg, could our unarmed farmers and citizens have arrested him in his way to Philadelphia, Baltimore and New York, with an army flushed with victory, and bearing the arms and spoils of ours? Might he not have bribed mobs like that which held our emporium for three days in terror, to take the arms won from us in the fields of battle, and join him in the plunder and conflagrations of our cities?

I have not made this recapitulation of the causes originating, and the consequences flowing from the bloody rebellion that shakes our country, to embitter animosities on either side. My effort is to expose to view the rooted evil, *which must be extracted, if we would relieve the nation from its convulsions.* Slavery, as a great element of society, makes slaves of all associated with it, by the passions it inflames: the masters, by the ambition it inspires—the masses, with which it mingles, by the deadly contagion it spreads in a thousand forms. It is marked in the Declaration of Independence as the most virulent poison instilled by the king, to enfeeble for subjugation, the people on whom he made war, and it has proved the most potent ingredient that could be employed for the dissolution of the fabric of free government, which withstood the king’s attempt. If the *virus* he infused, which was strong enough amid the enthusiasm for new-born freedom, to stifle the voice of the Declaration of Independence, denouncing slavery, and has kept the free Government—the hard-earned prize of the revolutionary war—in tremor ever since, is it now, when it has been poured out with the nation’s blood in the fratricidal war, it forced on the country, again to be admitted into the system?

What patriotic party will sanction such a suggestion? The people of the slave States will repudiate slavery, when the duress of the rebellion is removed. Missouri and Western Virginia have already formally renounced it, and the recent votes of Delaware, and our own dear Maryland, manifest their purpose to renounce it at once. In

Louisiana, Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas, the indications are also decisive. The proclamation of the President to deprive the enemy of this greatest element of power, this sinew of war exerted at all points, has announced the extinction of slavery, as essential to the success of the measures he has been compelled to adopt to conquer a peace for the Union. The armies of the Republic are on the march to accomplish the aims which have been submitted without reserve to the decision of public opinion, and they have the support of the people's suffrage. What, then, is the duty of all who are sensible that the war is an inevitable evil, from which there is no safe or honorable deliverance, but by supporting with united strength and counsels the Chief Magistrate, to whose conduct the issue is committed, and in whose avowed designs the nation has voted its confidence? Are there any who would rescind the votes of the border States, and re-establish slavery therein? Are there any who would annul the proclamation to reinvigorate the institution so skillfully plied to instigate the war, and so essential to provide the means for its prosecution?

The Democratic party of the North was seduced to countenance the measures of the southern oligarchs, preparatory to the war against the Union, under the idea that they were designed as mere menace, and were really conservative. The event has shown that the whole policy of the dominant class in the South, has been war for absolute dominion in the slave States—war to extend the despotic system on which it built, at home and abroad. Is this the conservatism to which Democracy anywhere should lend itself? Bulwer, though a Tory, has this aphorism in one of his late papers: “*A true conservative policy for a nation is the policy of progress;*” and he gives his conservative friends the admonition that “resistance to progress is destructive to conservatism.” The Democracy was in its better day a progressive party. Would it not be an advance backwards to restore the slave institution to the position it has lost in being used during the greater part

of a century, covertly at first, but now in open rebellion, to destroy the free Government by which it had been tolerated, only in the hope it would have been gradually thrown off, under the influence of public sentiment? When the masters of millions of slaves have boldly proclaimed slavery the best basis of government, and founded on it the military despotism they have set up within the jurisdiction of the United States, with the avowed purpose of superseding its authority, what friend of the Union—what friend of free government—can hesitate to strike down that system which endangers both? The plea that slavery is a local institution, not to be dealt with by Federal authority, was universally admitted to be true, till that institution engendered a rebellion which, by an admission equally universal, seriously imperils the existence of the national Government. It could not be called a Government, if, in virtue of the right of self defence, common alike to Governments and individuals, under such circumstances it could not destroy its enemies.

It is absurd to consider the war now raging as one meant to draw a line between coterminous nationalities. It is a war in the bosom of one nationality, of a people of the same race and language, on an arena bounded by the lakes, the ocean, the Gulf, and the great tributary streams that unite and insulate and mark it as the domain of one great Government. It is a war of principle and for dominion. If the dynasty founded on the slave system triumphs, it will give law to the continent. If it fails, as fail it must, unless the tendency of the age becomes inverted, there is an end of slavery among civilized nations. What a humiliating contrast is presented for the new world in the attempt of Jefferson Davis and his coadjutor rebels striving to fetter their poorer and more ignorant fellow-citizens in the chains of their four millions of negro slaves; while the Autocrat of the Russias proclaims the freedom of forty millions of serfs, delivering them from the yoke of a haughty nobility and his own right of seigniory, and establishing them as freeholders!

Our would-be nobility of slave creation has thrown down the gage of battle for the slave system against the free system of government. When the batteries at Charleston poured their hot shot into the fortress built and armed and manned by the nation to protect that city from foreign invasion, under which it had twice fallen, it signified a war of fire and sword against the nationality founded by our forefathers to secure the liberties for which our countrymen fought and conquered. The Democracy of the North rose as one man with the Republicans, in whose hands the elections had placed the Administration, to defend the cause of freedom and the Union. The Democracy then saw the conflict in which this act involved the country in its true aspect. Every step in its progress proves that it was a war waged for military supremacy on the side of the assailants—for the liberty and nationality it secures on the other. Foreign kings and emperors are invoked to join with the conspirators in making a wreck of the Republic, and share in the advantages to be derived from its ruin. Pirates, bearing the flag of the rebellion and fitted out under the auspices of wealthy speculators, looking for remuneration in the plunder of our commerce, disgrace the civilization of the age by robberies and conflagrations on the high seas. In such a war—a war for freedom on one side and slavery on the other—no permanent peace can be patched up. To endure, there must be submission to the Government as constituted by our fathers, or as it would be constituted by Mr. Davis and his military adherents. Any compromise or partition treaty would give but a breathing spell for fresh preparations for a renewed struggle.

May we not hope, as there is no escape from an issue so forced upon us, that the Democracy of the North will, as at the threshold of the war, be found with the great majority of the constituency of the loyal States, zealously battling for the right, which every patriot, of whatever party, holds to be with the Government of the Union? It has taken the stand that the extinction of the slave institution is essential to

save the Union, and perpetuate the Government which it has put in jeopardy. The armies of the Union fight to make prisoner of this giant of the war on the side of our adversaries. Once withdrawn from them, he takes from them the motives and the means of continuing the conflict.

The partisan who may thwart the brave men that risk their lives in battling for a consummation alike patriotic and humane, will, on the return of the maimed veterans to their homes, covered with laurels and honorable scars, hide his diminished head in obscurity forever.

In ordinary contests of opinion between parties, the utmost virulence of expression is soon forgiven and forgotten. But when war strikes the country, the man who withholds support to the soldiers who offer their lives in its defense, or disables their efforts by words or acts favoring the cause of the enemy, never recovers its confidence. What was the fate of the public men who took sides with England in the war of the Revolution, or that of 1812?

The political convulsions of 1798-'99, ending in the election of Mr. Jefferson, was characterized by more bitterness, with a party frenzy more intense, than when blood flowed in battles on the field. But the ill spirit vanished like the spectre of a morning's dream, when Mr. Jefferson rose to the nation's chief honor, and the country was relieved of the apprehensions of the loss of the election made by the people. The struggle had been on one side to consolidate the Federal power, and by construction, give it the tone and tendency of the British Government; on the other, to assert State rights and popular sovereignty, by strict adherence to the republican model presented in the Constitution. This, fairly construed, embraced the opinions of both contending parties. They were reconciled in the admirable inaugural address, which allayed partisan fury in its assertion of what was true of the great body of the people: "We are all REPUBLICANS—all FEDERALS." It may be truly said *now*, speaking the sense of the masses of our countrymen, "WE ARE ALL REPUBLICANS—ALL DEMOCRATS." Exclude the conspirators and the slave in-

stitution, which they have shaped into a glut to split the Union ; exclude the conspirators, and those whom slavery has made their slaves, and our countrymen are at this moment “all Democrats—all Republicans”—asserting popular sovereignty, the right of self government, the rights of the States, the nationality of the Union—all defined, balanced, checked, and bound together in the republican form of government inherited from our fathers. May it be perpetual !

