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SETTLE IT.

SUGGESTIONS ON THE PRESENT CRISIS.

BY CHARLES ASTOR BRISTED. 1874



New York:
MARTIN B. BROWN, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER.
1862.

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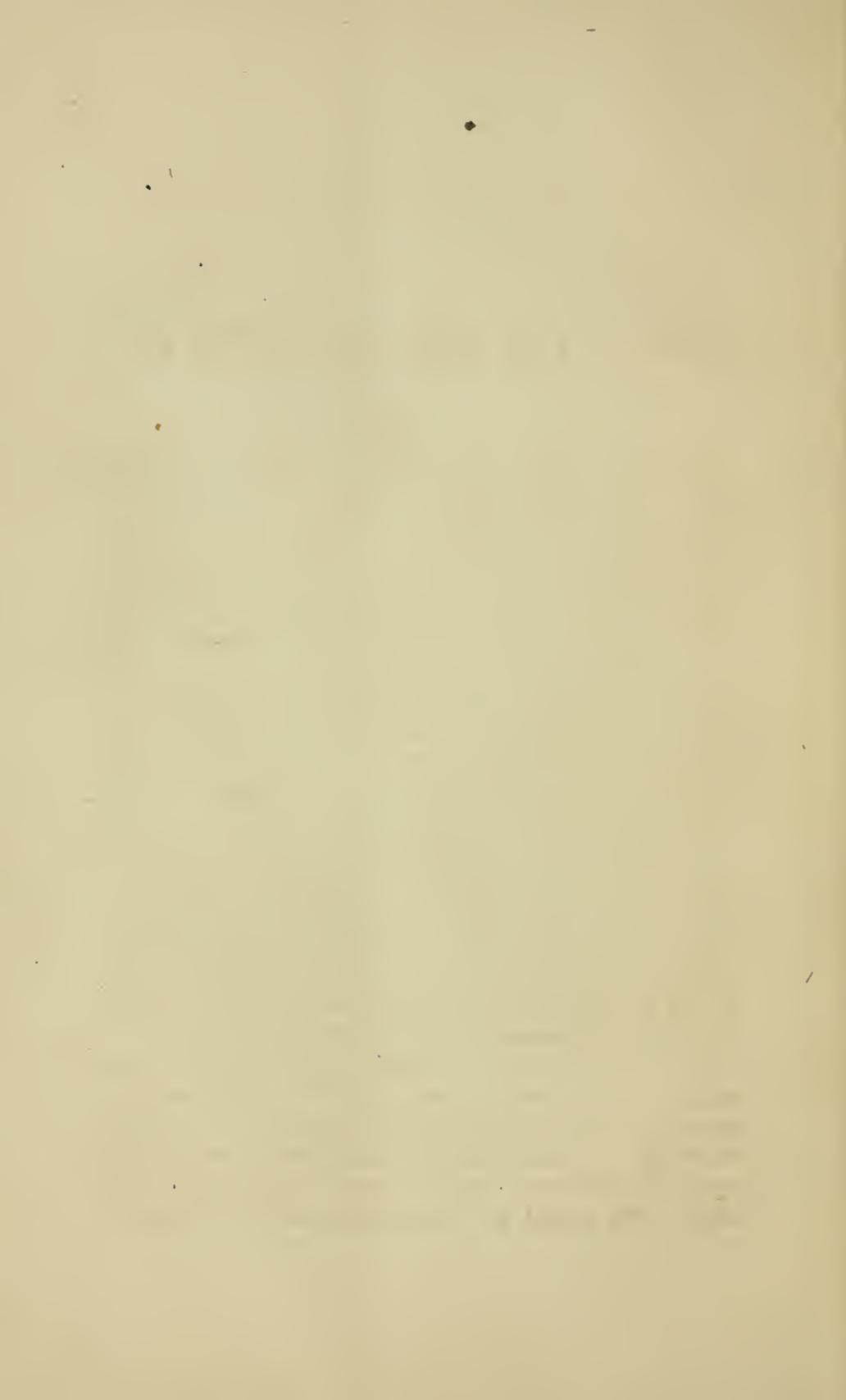
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PREFACE.

[The author of this pamphlet has never had or attempted to have any practical experience of public life. But he has long been a political student and has examined American politics from abroad, as well as at home. As he has no axe to grind for himself or for others, his absence of interested bias may possibly be a set-off to the greater political knowledge of men better known.

The correctness of his former anticipations also gives him confidence. Since arriving at man's estate he has never toadied or yielded to a Southerner. He has never ceased to warn those of his countrymen whom his feeble voice and influence could reach, against the danger as well as wickedness of giving up every thing to those aggressive semi-barbarians who have now torn the country asunder. In reference to the present crisis, he predicted almost at the very beginning of our troubles (in January, 1861), a bloody and *long* war. Being in England that Spring he steadily re-asserted his opinion, though unable to find a single person agreeing with him. Neither the enemy's successes in the following summer, nor ours last winter even made him deviate from it or from the other opinion which he formed and expressed at the first outbreak, that the war would be waged chiefly in the Border States and must ultimately become in intention what it was in reality, a war for the possession of those States.

These considerations embolden him to put forth his views in print. They may be unpopular—but he never sought popularity when a young and ambitious man with life and hope before him, and under his present circumstances he regards it as less than nothing. They may be misconstrued; he may even be suspected of wishing to aid the enemy—but he has lived long enough to learn that any man of strong convictions who expresses them boldly, must be prepared to have his motives misinterpreted. On one sole point does he desire to guard against the possibility of misconception. These suggestions have been written and published without his consulting *any person whatever*. He, therefore, hopes that no attempt will be made to consider any man but himself—still less any party or set of men, reponsible for them.]



NOW IS THE TIME TO SETTLE IT.

THERE is a lull in the war. Though our would-be invaders have escaped, through our usual want of promptness, the punishment which their audacity deserved, yet no foot of these sanguinary vagabonds has polluted the free soil of Pennsylvania. On the other hand, our armies are as far off as ever from Richmond, the Sebastopol of this contest. While both sides are pausing to recruit after the late desperate battles, it seems a fitting moment to inquire if nothing can be done to terminate the fearful struggle, or at least to reduce it within reasonable dimensions, and give it a reasonable prospect of definite issue.

I propose that we acknowledge the independence of the ten so-called Confederate States, on condition of their surrendering to us those portions of Virginia still in their possession, and all claim to the rest of the five Border States, and giving us material guarantees for the free navigation of the Mississippi and the Mexican Gulf.

Not that I doubt our *ability* to conquer the seceders. Had we made war from the first in earnest—had we treated the enemy *as* an enemy, we might by this time have subjugated, or, if need were, exterminated him. Even now it is not too late. We might go on, losing man for man, till

our opponents were swept off the earth, and we should still remain a great people, and might re-people their country.

Nor would any considerations of humanity properly intervene to stay such a proceeding. Could the whole white population of the South be cut off to-morrow, it would be exactly what nine-tenths of them deserve. Their conspiracy is the most wicked and unprovoked recorded in history. It is a crime not only against their own government, but against liberty, human progress and the world; and no earthly punishment that could befall them, would be too great.

Neither should we be deterred from extreme measures by any thought of what England or France might say. Their animosity is such that, were we inspired to behave like angels of light, we should be depicted by them as in the blackness of darkness. Whatever we have done, whatever we can possibly do, is sure to be villified and misrepresented by walking vinegar-cruets, like Roebuck, antediluvian asses like Beresford Hope, and all the miscellaneous lackeys of the French emperor, to whom an honest man would be doing too much honor by remembering their names. All that they can or may utter, should "pass by us as the idle wind."

But it is very clear that we—that is, our Government, and the majority of us—are not prepared to take this extreme course, and it is very doubtful if anything short of a foreign invasion would ever drive us to it. A feeling, strangely compounded of good and bad motives, of the longanimity of some and the cowardice of others, of unwillingness to shed the blood of the guilty

white, and indifference to the wrongs of the innocent negro, of regard for the sacredness of property, and reluctance to accept our full responsibilities, has tied our hands and clogged our feet at every step. The Government has evidently no disposition to go "thorough," for every general who gave symptoms of making *real* war, has been effectually shelved. Those of us who would carry on the conflict for the restoration of the Union, in the only way that can possibly secure its success, are, and are likely to remain, a minority. Therefore, we had better let the seceders go, and get rid of them, if we can, once for all.

[Just as the above was written, came the news of the President's proclamation, "abolishing slavery," as the newspaper-headings say. This seems, at first sight, to change the whole aspect of affairs; but, on second thought, its effect promises to be more apparent than real. However honorable to its author, I fear that, for want of the men to carry it out, it will prove but a *brutum fulmen*, and only add another to the many threats which we have uttered without executing, not so much from inability, as from want of fixed determination. I fear, too, that like most of our military movements, it is well meant, but a *little* late.]

For as to the prevalent idea that we are to subjugate them, without destroying or confiscating their property, without freeing their slaves, without hurting them more than is absolutely necessary, and then to hold them in subjection, I consider it an insane and impossible dream.

Let us look a moment at the composition of society in the ten Southern States. There are, first of all, the leaders in the movement, prominent poli-

ticians and large slaveholders, probably 200,000 in number. This oligarchical class must, of course, be exterminated or driven into exile. They have staked their all on the rebellion, and *cannot* submit.

Then come the masses — about 4,000,000 of “mean whites”—some of them small slaveholders, but the majority non-slaveholders. This class is known to be in the lowest stage of civilization, but one remove above barbarism. Enterprising tourists, like Olmstead, who have penetrated into the interior of the country, bring back startling reports of their ignorance, filth and general brutality. They would soon have become formidable to the wealthy class, had not the latter adroitly averted their envy, and directed their hostility against the North, by persuading them that a panacea for their poverty and wretchedness would be found in setting up an empire of their own, which should give them unlimited *slave* trade, and the opportunity of buying “niggers” cheap. Thus, these people, more ignorant than the Irish cotter or the French peasant, and scarcely less barbarous than the New-Zealander, possessing, too, a considerable amount of personal courage and aptitude for the use of arms, have been taught, probably for thirty years, certainly for more than ten, to hate us—and they *do* hate us, as the devil (according to the old proverb) hates holy water. Supposing them once conquered, how are they to stay conquered? It is clear that we must hold them as the English Protestant holds the Irish Papist, as the Frenchman holds the Roman, as the Austrian holds the Venetian, as the Russian holds the Pole. An army of half a million would not be

too much for the purpose. Lastly, the blacks. Whether these are all freed, or remain divided between the conditions of freedom and slavery, their relations to our army of occupation and to the conquered whites will prove a constant source of perplexity. [The idea that above three millions of negroes are first to be freed and afterwards colonized, I hold simply impracticable. Thrice our resources, great as they are, would not suffice to accomplish it.]

Let no one say that the above is an exaggerated picture of the anti-Union feeling among the seceders. Let no one ask incredulously how such a state of things could be produced in a few years. The anti-Union feeling of the South is not a thing of yesterday. The South has never been patriotic in the same sense, or to the same extent, as the North. The heresy of State Rights, and the narrowing influences of slavery, caused the Southerners to regard all questions in a sectional, rather than a national light. Such secondary affection as they had for the Union, was not from principle, but for the advantages they derived from it. They acquiesced in it, while they had the absolute control or greatly-predominating influence; as soon as this ceased to be the case, they broke it up. Secession and civil war are but the legitimate development of those doctrines and practices which made the Southerner a Southerner first, and an American long, *long* after. Politicians may not have mentioned this, because it was against their own petty temporary interests to do so; the bulk of our people may not have observed it, it was so contrary to their wishes and feelings; but men of the world, often more sharp-sighted than profes-

sional politicians, noted it at many times and in many places. It was so salient, as even to strike men who had a natural aversion to anything like political speculation. Washington Irving observed more than twenty years ago, when European travel was less general than it now is, that while the New-Yorker or New-Englander always signed himself on hotel-books as from "the United States of America," the Virginian or Carolinian merely appended the name of his State. It was impossible for a person of ordinary reflection to associate with the rising generation of educated Southerners, between 1830 and 1840, and not remark how they looked at every point of morals or statesmanship through southern spectacles. And, if this was the case with the comparatively respectable class, the gentlemen and *quasi*-gentlemen of that region, how much more must it have been with the "mean whites," who, prevented by ignorance from taking any independent position, could only copy and exaggerate the ideas of their superiors? The Border States, from their necessary contact with freedom, could not escape a certain knowledge and comprehension of the country's greatness; they could not altogether overlook the advantages of freedom, as exemplified in the superior wealth and intelligence of the North. But the patriotism of the Cotton States decreased, as their ignorance and seclusion increased.

[This was written the day before Mr. Hurlbut's third letter appeared in the *Times*. I have not altered or added a syllable. Some of the expressions read almost as if copied literally from his. They are, indeed, *common places* among all men of ordinary intelligence who have studied the Southerner.]

No doubt, there was an appreciable amount of Union sentiment in all the seceding States, except South Carolina; and our Government was therefore bound to make the restoration of the Union the original object of the war; it would have been cowardly not to give this feeling a chance. But the event proved, what observant men had long suspected, that it was a very secondary and feeble Union sentiment, utterly unable to make head against the supposed claims of State Rights—a sentiment which, in comparison to the Union feeling of the North, was “as moonlight unto sunlight, or as water unto wine.”

We are supposed to have lost by this war, one way and another, 200,000 men in less than two years. If we made it summary and internecine, we might crush and annihilate our enemy in another year at the expense of as many additional lives. But, by going on as we have been, we shall lose the 200,000 more lives, and we shall not crush the enemy.

I propose, therefore, that we offer the Seceders peace on these terms: the independence of the ten so-called Confederate States to be acknowledged, they surrendering to us the whole of the five Border States, and we, moreover, retaining two or more strongholds, as material guarantees for the free navigation of the Mississippi and Mexican Gulf.

These are the only terms which we could accept, consistently with our honor and safety. The majority of the inhabitants of four Border States and Western Virginia, have unmistakably and repeatedly declared their preference for the Union. To surrender them, would be the height of coward-

ice, and a confession that we were conquered ; not to mention the vital importance of Washington to us, from its prestige as the capital. With respect to Virginia proper, it is notorious that the Confederates established their capital at Richmond, for the facility of operating thence against Washington. It cannot be left there as a standing menace to us. Two rival capitals, in such proximity, are not to be thought of. Even should we hereafter find it convenient to transfer our metropolis elsewhere, that of the Confederates must not remain at Richmond. The inhabitants of Southern Virginia are, doubtless, averse to our rule. But those of Eastern Tennessee are equally so to the rule of the Confederates. An exchange between the loyal Tennesseans and disloyal Virginians, might be effected without any formidable expense, or other difficulty.

The possession of material guarantees for the free navigation of the Mississippi and the Gulf is absolutely necessary, from the impossibility of trusting any promises or treaty stipulations which the Confederates might otherwise make.

The advantages of such a peace would be manifold, certain and immediate. We might disband, at least, 400,000 men of our army. We should cease to augment our rapidly-accumulating debt—*might* nay, ~~may~~ entertain reasonable hopes of diminishing it. We should certainly have stopped the progress of slavery in one direction for ever. We should have redeemed from slavery a large and valuable tract of country, for the "institution" can be eliminated from the Border States in comparatively short time, with full compensation to the owners. Thus, we should vindicate ourselves before God

and the world, and gain the good opinion of all nations, whose good opinion is worth having—which category, it is hardly necessary to add, does not include England or France. Starting anew with twenty-four free States, and as many millions of free population, our national energy and resources would soon enable us to repair the losses of war. Our credit would soon stand higher than ever. The oppressed and destitute of all lands would, more than ever, flock to our shores. We should go on better than before, because freed from our great curse and our great drag-chain.

And if any one should say that by such an arrangement the conspirators would get off too cheaply, that their success in forming a separate government would compensate them for their failure first, in retaining control over the whole country by intrigue, and afterwards in conquering it by a *coup d'etat*; I reply, let us have a little patience. Let us leave these men to their own devices, and we shall see them punished to our hearts' content.

It is not pleasant to be God's executioners. When the natural working of His ordained laws brings about His vengeance, our satisfaction is more complete. In the desolation wrought upon Virginia by her own inhabitants, and their professed friends, we see the just retribution of her wickedness in deliberately and willingly preferring evil to good. The apparently accidental conflagration of Charleston suited us better than if it had been caused by our shells. Had Richmond, as lately reported, been depopulated by pestilence, we should have hailed it as a direct interposition of Providence. Were a negro insurrection to break

out spontaneously anywhere in the South, we should regard it with less mingled feelings than one directly fomented by ourselves. Let us, then, I repeat it, but have a little patience, and we shall soon see the new Confederacy an object of pity, rather than of hatred or fear. It is founded on a suicidal principle, the right of mutual dissolution. At present, its members are held together by the bond of resistance to us. The outside pressure of war once removed, they will begin to quarrel among themselves. The mean whites are naturally disposed to envy their rulers. Now, as for the last fifteen years or more, their common hatred of us, holds both classes together; remove our contact, and the masses will speedily grow uneasy. Their fear of Abraham Lincoln's imaginary despotism once dissipated, they will not tarry to realize the actual despotism of Jefferson Davis. The bad faith, inherent in all classes, will soon embroil them with some of their foreign friends, and destroy what little credit they might otherwise have. They will find themselves poorer out of the Union than they were in it. The partial success of their plans, will prove their own most deserved punishment.

So far, so good; but the prospect is not entirely roseate. There are strong objections to be urged against this plan, or any plan, of separation. These objections let us proceed to consider.

The first impediment to any offer of terms on our part — I put it first, really believing it to be at the root of the whole difficulty—is our pride. The Union is considered by us to be the cause (as it really was the principal cause) of our greatness. It has been a name to conjure with. Our devotion

to it, has been our patriotism and loyalty combined. A portion of the glory of the Union attached to every individual citizen. Any diminution of this glory, was every individual citizen's personal loss. Then we have been taunted by Englishmen, and Frenchmen, and Southerners with the dissolution of the Union, till our great wish is to give their taunts a practical answer, by maintaining it in spite of them all.

Now, the original Union is undoubtedly a great thing, but it is not quite the one thing and only thing needful. Let us take an extreme case. Suppose it could be restored to-morrow, on condition that Jefferson Davis was its president, and the Breckenridge programme carried out, slavery made national, Kansas a slave State, all freedom of discussion everywhere suppressed. Who would accept the Union on such terms? A few hundred, perhaps a few thousand, miserable wretches might be gleaned throughout the country who would do so, but surely the great bulk of the nation would reject the offer with indignant loathing.

Devotion to the Union is our loyalty. The English are an eminently loyal people, yet they did not hesitate to change their dynasty in 1688, when their liberties depended on the change. Devotion to the Union is our patriotism. The Dutch are an eminently patriotic people, yet, when in danger of being conquered by Louis XIV., they resolved, if the alternative could not be avoided, to leave their country, rather than yield to the tyrant.

Once admit that there may be something more valuable than the old Union, and the charm is broken. We can see that we have idolized it—

that is, have put an exaggerated value on it, as men frequently do on really valuable objects.

No man does wisely in disregarding words and names, for they often involve the most important things. Still, when the reality can be preserved by yielding the semblance, it is the part of a wise man to yield the semblance, though it cause a temporary loss of prestige.

This line of argument will be more fully and naturally developed in treating of the second objection.

Doubtless, to give up the Union in its entirety, implies a certain humiliation. But it must be considered that we have only a choice of evils, evils, too, for which we are not wholly unaccountable. The guilt of the conspirators is, indeed, measureless, but our own conduct has not been without reproach. Let us confess frankly, that the cowardice or stupidity, or both, of the Democrats and Old-Line Whigs, who, until recently, made up between them a large majority of the country, had brought us to a pass from which we could not escape without humiliation. We have suffered humiliations. We suffer them now. England bullied us in the Trent affair. France shamelessly invades Mexico under our noses. Spain has threatened St. Domingo. The very Mormons assume airs of superiority towards us. Our national stock, which used to be at 16 per cent. premium, is now virtually at 16 per cent. discount. If we can escape the recurrence of these and similar evils, would it not be well to do so, rather than struggle against the chance of escaping a single humiliation, which we may have to undergo after all?

As to the taunts of the French and English, I have already said, and now repeat it, that we ought to treat whatever they say about us with utter indifference. It has always been one of our greatest national weaknesses, that we are *curious to see ourselves abused*. If no man in the country ever read a line extracted from an English paper, beyond the actual items of European news, we should be all the better for it. Suppose that after the five thousand false prophecies which these lying scribes have uttered, one of their predictions should prove partially true, is that a triumph which should grieve or concern us? Is the prevention of such a triumph worth the sacrifice of a single life, or the expenditure of a single dollar?

Still less reason would the Confederates have to brag, or we to care for their bragging. If they dictated the terms of separation to us, they might, indeed, triumph. If, however, we assign the terms, they will not "have achieved their independence," but *we shall have kicked them out* as unworthy our society, which they doubtless are.

National pride is not a feeling to be reprehended, but it may sometimes take the wrong direction. In this respect, it might be well if we could borrow a little of our enemy's exuberant self-reliance. What, shall 300,000 half-civilized South Carolinians, whom we could put into one of the suburbs of New-York, set up to constitute a nation, and are twenty-four great States, with as many million of inhabitants, not able to stand by themselves? Shall we let our inferiors suppose that we cannot do without them?

The second objection is, that of internal danger.

It is imagined that the *separation* of a portion, will be equivalent to a *dissolution* of the whole; and that by consenting to the independence of the Confederates, we shall be acknowledging the right of secession as a principle, and thereby destroying the key-stone of our governmental fabric.

Now, so far from admitting that *separation* implies dissolution, I believe that the remaining

Union would have much stronger cohesive power than the original one; and so does the acute and profound historian of the Netherlands, to judge from the last paragraph of his pamphlet. We have seen that, owing to the prevalence of slavery, and the belief in "State Rights," the South has never—never for the last forty years, at least—been patriotic in the same sense as the North. The Southerners were, so to speak, only *incidental* Americans. These two elements of discord were always threatening our national existence. As regards real unity, therefore, the separation of these ten States is rather a gain than a loss. It is not the destruction of the body politic, but the amputation of a diseased and troublesome limb. It is not the bankruptcy of the estate, but the alienation of a property mortgaged above its value.

As to acknowledging the principle of secession, I cannot see that we should do so in the least. If the Irish should ever succeed in making themselves too troublesome for England to hold, would she, by conceding their independence, adopt the Romish faith? Did she become a republic, when she acknowledged our independence? Had we allowed the conspiracy to take its own course, *that* would

have been legalizing secession; but the very fact of war shows that the movement is an insurrection, and our utmost admission will be that the insurrection has been partially successful. Nay, the Carolinians themselves, when they fired upon Sumter, renounced their absurd theory of peaceful secession, and confessed that they were seeking a pro-slavery revolution.

The third objection (to which many would probably give the first place, if they dealt truly with themselves) is that of external danger, the constant risk of invasion from a slave-holding empire on our borders.

I have no intention of slurring over this objection, or trying to shut my eyes to its very formidable appearance. It may be admitted that, while the ruling class at the South are only fit for war and political intrigue, the ignorant masses are fit for nothing but war. They have no aptitude for manufactures, or any branch of peaceful industry. To prevent them from thinking of their own rights and wrongs, and becoming too troublesome to their rulers, those rulers must impel them into war. Fulfilling the oft-repeated promise of re-establishing the African slave trade, might, indeed, temporarily pacify the "mean whites;" but fearful as the hypocrisy of England and France has been, we can hardly expect so monstrous a tergiversation of principle, as their acquiescence in this measure. To war, then, Dictator Davis must go, just as Louis Napoleon is compelled to war every three years, to sustain his bayonet-propped throne. The sight of our prosperity, naturally taking a great start with the return of peace, would whet the hate of the Confederates. Nor is it impossible that the

Western Europeans, from sheer antipathy to us, might again indirectly assist the Southerners. The hypocrisy of a Russell might then, as now, find some pretext for declaring that "the North was fighting for empire, and the South for independence;" and the French Emperor, who bags large slices of his neighbor's territory, under the plea of "rectifying his frontier," would applaud a similar rascality in his western imitator. Thus, our peace would be only an armed truce, and we should be obliged to continue our military and naval array, for fear of invasion.

In stating the argument thus, no one can accuse me of having understated it.

To answer it, I might take high ground. I might say that, in any event, we must keep up a large army and navy for some time to come; that if the Cotton States are subjugated, we must have a large force to keep them quiet; that even in the improbable case of their being not only subdued but pacified, the threatening attitude of foreign nations would not allow us to go back to our old condition; that 200,000 men may amply suffice for an army of defence, when thrice that number would not be enough for an army of occupation; that the late rising in Pennsylvania shows what little chance of success an invader would have; finally, that to persevere in a bloody and expensive war, lest we may hereafter be threatened with one less bloody and expensive, is like a man committing suicide for fear of death.

But while believing all this to be perfectly true, I consider that there is another line of argument more effectual. Had we acceded to the demands of the Confederates without a fight (as our disin-

terested European friends advised), there would have been a likelihood, amounting to a certainty, of their invading us. The foreign bankers who had speculated in Confederate stock, would have urged them to it. Our own cowardice would have tempted them. Did we, after any amount of fighting, yield to their terms, the danger of invasion would be very great. But under the circumstances of a separation granted by ourselves, this danger will be so far diminished as to become, I do not say inappreciable, but certainly far from serious.

How far the resources of the Southerners are exhausted, is a question; but of this we may be certain, that they have sustained serious losses, both of life and property, and would be very glad of an opportunity to repose and recruit awhile. The transition from war to peace prices would be a pleasing novelty. Their newly-formed nationality would tickle their vanity and amuse their fancy. The fatigue of the recent contest, the enjoyment of the present peace, would keep them quiet for some years. And while it would be the policy of their governors to engage them in war again at the earliest possible moment, as the readiest means of preventing political and social dissensions, still it is very possible that these dissensions might get the start of the government, and the loosely connected machine might well fall to pieces before its energies could be directed against us.

But further; allowing that the rapacity and ferocity of the Confederates will naturally lead them into war after the necessary interval of repose, and admitting that Davis may have succeeded during that interval in consolidating his loose Confederation into an Empire, is it certain, or even

probable, that we should be the first object of attack? The Southerners have received some hard rubs in this conflict. "Apostolic blows and knocks" have taught them that one "chivalry" is not necessarily equal to five "mudsills." Besides, Davis, though a tremendous scoundrel, is no fool, except in the sense in which every wicked man is a fool. Whatever his ideas may have been at first, he has by this time pretty well taken the measure of his power, and understands what he can *not* do. (It would be well were all our people as wise). His known reluctance to acquiesce in the attempt at northern invasion is a clear proof of this. We may reasonably conclude then, that the first display of his aggressive cupidity will be in another direction. It will seek lands at the same time more fertile and less defended. The "golden circle" hopelessly shorn of its northern segment, will try to extend itself Southward. Mexico or the West Indies will be attacked.

This brings us to a fourth objection, that we should be conniving at a crime against humanity if we allowed the establishment of this fillibustering and slave-extending empire.

This may be briefly disposed of. We are not bound to look after the whole world's interests. See the sacrifices we have made to liberty and humanity in this war, and the thanks we have had from Europe! We shall have done our share in freeing the Border States, and any annoyance or injury which England or France may receive from their *proteges* will be a just retribution for their present conduct towards us. It will then be our turn to look on and laugh. What a delightful spectacle to all honest men if Louis Napoleon and

Jefferson Davis, the representatives of falsehood and perfidy, treason and conspiracy on both sides of the Atlantic, should go to loggerheads about Mexico or some other coveted country!

The next objection is one of expense and trouble, rather than principle or safety. It is said, we should have an immense line of Southern frontier to protect, over all of which the Southerners would smuggle imported goods for the sake of ruining our manufactories.

I cannot but regard this danger as greatly exaggerated. We have a long line of Northern frontier, yet smuggling from Canada has never assumed the proportions of a serious evil. And if we are enabled to disband 400,000 soldiers, we can afford to support a goodly number of custom house guards. It might also be suggested that our present tariff, however useful as a temporary measure, has not such intrinsic value that it ought to be regarded as a "possession forever."

Lastly, it may be asked, are the Confederates to carry off the vast amount of plunder, public and private, which they seized at the commencement of hostilities? This being a pecuniary question, might be settled as such questions frequently are, by compromise; for instance, they might be allowed to retain their public stealings on condition of refunding their private confiscations.

After all, there remains one great practical question. Will the Confederates accept these terms when offered? Certainly, to expect that a Confederate will entertain any just or reasonable proposition requires a sanguine temperament. Something might depend on the advice of their

foreign backers, yet, after weighing all the chances on both sides, and duly considering the arrogance of the Southern leaders, the ignorance of the Southern masses, and the obstinacy of both, I must admit that there is a probability against their acceptance of our terms. In that case our course would be plain. Waging the war in a more limited area, and with a more definite view, we should have a greater chance of bringing it to a successful and speedy termination. Abandoning all the territory of the Southern States, except the posts necessary as material guarantees (which should be strongly reinforced), and leaving Kentucky and Missouri to take care of themselves for awhile, we should direct every man and gunboat against Richmond, and attack it on all sides with a force of at least 400,000 men, *seizing all property, and freeing all slaves as they advance*. That nest of traitors once destroyed, the enemy having lost the main object for which they were fighting, would soon come to terms.

Even then we should have to guard against a final danger. Like other semi-barbarians, these men are more formidable in intrigue than in war. They might open negotiations in the hope of playing us some trick. It would, therefore, be necessary not to relax the vigilance of our blockade or the continuance of our military preparations till everything was settled.

LENOX, MASS., Sept. 23, 1862.





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March, April 1989
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