

# SLAVERY.

ITS

ORIGIN, INFLUENCE, AND DESTINY.

BY

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THERE are none who deny that slavery, in some way, and in some sense, is the principal cause of our civil war. For they who—abroad or at home—allege that it is caused by the actual and profound diversity between the two sections of the country as to their interests, their habits, and their character, do not deny that this diversity springs mainly from the existence of slavery in one only of the parties. And they who account for it by the angry and persistent vehemence of abolitionism, will not deny that if there were no slavery to be abolished there could be no abolitionism. It is not however worth while to use many words in proving a fact, which the map of our country demonstrates.

But if it be certain that slavery in some way is the central cause of the civil war, it is by no means certain how, or why, this cause has produced this effect. If I offer for consideration the views I hold on this subject, it is because in this country public opinion is a sovereign power, and the humblest effort to introduce into this opinion what seems to the offerer an element of truth, may at least be pardoned.

What then is Slavery? Its foundation is the power of controlling any man without his consent and concurrence. The absolute ownership by one man of another man as it exists at the South, is only the perfection and consummation of this principle. There are cases where immaturity demands guidance, or crime deserves punishment. Putting these cases aside, wherever this principle exists and operates, and in whatever degree it exists, there is that which may be called the essence of Slavery. We are accustomed to confine the name to absolute ownership. Nor do I insist that the use of the



word slavery should be extended, if only I am understood as believing that this relation of man to man is but the completion of a relation which exists in a greater or a less degree when any man possesses the right to coerce another into labor for his benefit, without the consent of that other.

It might seem that this is, in some sort, the condition of all men; for even in this busy land, few work excepting because they must. But, if we take an extreme case, it is one thing to be able to say to a man, Work for me on the terms which I offer, or starve, leaving it to him to starve if he chooses, and a very different thing, to have the right to say to him, Work for me on my terms or no terms, because I command you. These two things differ in essence; they are as different, as non-slavery and slavery. The phrase in our Constitution, "held to labor," marks the distinction between one who is held to labor, and one who is persuaded or induced to labor. This phrase is, as it was intended to be, an exact definition of a slave.

If it happens that these words present this idea to any reader for the first time, it may seem to him visionary, unreal, and unpractical. And certainly such an idea as that a legal right of thus compelling service is itself a wrong, scarcely existed upon earth until a few generations ago. If it existed in some minds, and was uttered by some voices, it had nowhere prevalence or recognition. And to-day it can hardly be said to have definite expression and acknowledged truth in the old world. All class-right is, to some extent, opposed to it; and indeed is founded upon its opposite. And yet, history, if we permit it to throw the light of the past upon the present, may teach us that mankind in all its progress, has been constantly advancing towards this end, towards the liberation of the human mind from the thought, and of the human heart from the desire, of standing over a brother-man as his master and his owner. And a reason why that goodness which has ever led and watched the advancing footsteps of our race has guided them in this direction, is, that in proportion as the thought and desire of ruling over our brother pass away, they are replaced by the thought and the desire of



standing by his side and working with him for a common good.

Let us cast a glance—a very brief and rapid glance—at the past. Beginning where history begins, we see unqualified and unquestioned despotism; now good and now evil, utterly diverse in character and influence, but always unquestioned, and unimpeded. This was and is the Oriental idea of government; Gibbon remarks that Eastern languages have no words to express any other mode of government. At length Greece arose, and under the leading of Alexander, conquered. It was the conquest of Europe over Asia; of a European way of thinking over Oriental thought; it was a step away from the Oriental idea that despotism was the only cognizable form of government.

In Greece and Rome, whatever were the abuses of certain ages, there was always the pretence, and often the reality of governing by law. And then the feudal system advanced so far as to give every man his place. For it gave to every man his rights, such as they were, and to no man the right of absorbing all other rights into his own. The feudal system had serfs, but not slaves.

The feudal system grew, flourished, decayed, and is passing away. A step further forward was possible; but not possible in Europe. Ages which had greatly varied the institutions of feudalism, had indurated them and the system of thought and feeling adapted to them; and clothed them all with steel, more impenetrable than the mail her warriors once wore. Not in Europe could the next step be taken,—and America was discovered. And in or near the same age came the great discovery of gunpowder, which has made it impossible that the scenes Froissart so loves to paint, where a few mailed knights routed and slaughtered at their pleasure mobs of peasantry, should ever be repeated. And the compass which led Columbus to America was given as the means of a commerce which has already begun its work of binding the nations into unity. And the press was given, to give wings to thought. And all these discoveries were gifts of the same goodness and were given for the same end, as that for which America was discovered and



peopled. This end was—to express it in the fewest words—that *consent* might take the place of *compulsion*, in all the ranks and regions and work of human society.

To this end this nation was planted in the home made ready for it; fostered until it was ready to live in independence, and then gifted with independence. It was ready for nationality, and became a nation. And then came the great American Invention,—greater in worth, in wisdom, and in its beneficent influence over the whole future, than all those I have above enumerated; the invention of a Constitution.

The word is not a new one. It was applied to political institutions before we used it, and is now so applied elsewhere. But, in its American sense, and in its purpose and its work, a Constitution had no existence, until it was called into being for our needs, and our good; called into being by the progress of humanity, and for that progress.

It would of course be difficult, or rather, impossible, to give here a full exposition of the grounds on which an opinion rests, that may seem to many, extravagant. This will not be attempted. But some illustration of it may be derived from a comparison between the national feeling in this country, and that in Europe, on one point; it is, the loyalty of the nation.

There are those who think this word rightly used in Europe, with an exact and definite sense; but that here it can only be used in a kind of figurative or rhetorical sense. I think otherwise. Loyalty is everywhere a supreme political virtue; if it can have no existence here, we are most unfortunate. If there be only one form of government in which it can exist, the sooner that form of government becomes ours, the better for us and for our children.

The word loyal is the English form of the latin *legalis*. The feudal vassal, of every rank, was sworn to be *fidelis et legalis*, or faithful and loyal, to his superior. *Legalis* is the adjective form of the substantive, *lex*, law. The oath then was that he would in good faith acknowledge and defend all the rights which the law gave to his superior, and obey all the commands which the law authorized.



This is the original idea, or the abstract idea, of loyalty. It perhaps never entered into the minds of the masses, and at all events it soon took the form of personal loyalty. Nor is it difficult to see how this occurred and why it was well that it should occur.

The worst thing which can befall a man is to be delivered up to the unchecked dominion of his own self-hood, before that self-hood is raised and regenerated into the perception and the love of RIGHT. "Lord of himself, a heritage of woe," he cannot then but abuse the mastery he possesses, to his own destruction. But when he is prepared voluntarily to submit himself to the law of right, and lets this law ripen into a love for his neighbor and his neighbor's rights, then a relief from external compulsion is the best thing which can happen. Therefore, that Divine Providence, which by the necessity of an infinite goodness seeks always the highest good, is ever watchful to advance as far as may be the preparation of man for this gift, and to give it as he is prepared, and to withhold it in the degree in which he is not prepared. Between God and man, as between man and man, CONSENT is better than COMPULSION, and all progress is from compulsion to consent.

But the child is necessarily subject to coercion, because necessarily immature, and unready for self-control. And in the earliest nations which history tells us of, in the childhood of man, this immaturity was universal, and so complete that universal despotism was necessary, and permitted. As the necessity grew less, despotism was modified; but in the old world, we have no evidence yet, that the people are prepared for a safe deliverance from a controlling power. The time may come, possibly it may be near, but it has not come yet. The common phrase "King, by the grace of God," is not without its meaning and its truth. It is of the grace, or mercy of God, that kings are given to those who need kings.

We see the mastery of the father over the child, made tender and useful by the parental love which the Father of us all awakens in all at the birth of the child. And so where it is necessary for a people to have a king, or personal sovereign, governing in his own right, it is as neces-



sary and useful that there exist among the people a strong sense of personal loyalty. And it exists in Europe. Weakened certainly, passing away possibly, but it has not yet passed away.

And to what can we be loyal? Let me ask another question, to what are they in England—to take England for our illustration—to what are they loyal? To their Queen. No one who has been there, or has listened to the description of what they saw and heard who have been there, can doubt that there is—not everywhere—but in vast masses of the English people, an intense feeling of loyalty to their Queen. A loyalty which would stir their hearts to their depths and arm their hands with every weapon they could grasp in her defence. And what is their Queen? A symbol and a personification of all lawful authority. In the theory of their law, she is its source; the judges of the law are her representatives, the ministers of the law her servants. She is their personal sovereign; and she impersonates the sovereignty of the state; the preservation of all order; and the protection of all property, all industry, all prosperity.

I do not suppose that in all men's minds there is a definite intellectual apprehension of this fact, or that such ideas are recognized by them as the foundation of their loyalty. But in many minds these ideas exist, and in more hearts this feeling would have power. Let there be a threat to-morrow of an uprising which should shatter the throne, and multitudes of the English—great multitudes—I know not how many, I do not even assert, although I believe a great majority of the English, would feel that if the throne went down, revolution, convulsion, conflict and distress would fill the land. For they would feel that if the throne went down, there would go down with it, for them, the foundation of all law, and all security for order or for property.

But what have we to be loyal to? No personal sovereign, reigning in his own right. What then have we?

When our fathers bent to the work of giving form and order to our nationality, they did not begin with the appointment of a personal sovereign; but with something very different. They selected those whom they thought



their best and wisest, and commissioned them to confer together and discover the fundamental rights for which all law exists, and which underlie and sustain and promote all social good ; and the principles from which these rights forever flow. And then to devise the best forms and rules for a government which should forever acknowledge and secure these rights by a constant observance of these principles. And the fabric in which all this is contained and expressed and defined, they called a Constitution. There it stood, the child of their own will. Embodying the best wisdom they had ; and resting on the consent of all. There it stood, and thank God there it stands. And this substitution of a written Constitution, so created, and so founded, is, in my most profound belief, the greatest political step ever yet taken in human progress, and a step which He who loves us infinitely will never permit to be retracted.

We live in the beginning of an age, of which the characteristic, politically, will be constitutional republican government. We are only at its beginning ; and already discern questions we know not how to solve, difficulties we know not how to meet, mischiefs we know not how to prevent. More, very many more, will come up as time rolls on. But this age, like every other of those in history, will gradually—perhaps slowly and through much error and misfortune—develop itself into the forms best adapted for the fullest operation of its dominant principle. And that principle is and will remain, the substitution of Consent for Compulsion.

Let me go back again to England for a moment. Let us compare English loyalty with our own, as to its grounds and its reasonableness. They are loyal to their sovereign. Victoria, as queen, as mother, and as matron, commands the respect of all in America. When her son was here, nothing struck me more, and I may say nothing touched me more, than the way in which that feeling was expressed. It seemed as if we felt that the excellence of English matronhood sat, in her person, on the throne of England. Not a word would I say, not a feeling have I which would suggest a word in derogation of this acknowledgment. But she must die. Her son, whatever



may be hoped of him, has as yet only given a promise of excellence. He too must die. And the lives of his successors must be subject to vicissitudes, of which history, and none more plainly than the History of England, tells the sad tale. When Victoria's uncle, George IV., sat on the throne, the loyalty of England was shocked, and almost killed, by his wickedness, and selfishness, and the unconcealed foulness of his life and character. When such another sits there, that loyalty may have a deeper, even a fatal wound. To such chances and such perils the personal loyalty of England must submit.

And through all these ages—if we do not prove unworthy of so great a blessing—will stand our Constitution. Not, as some in Europe who speak of it suppose, because it is fixed and crystallized into forms which may be broken but cannot change. The exact opposite of this is the truth. It is a living organism. It invites and provides for change. It desires all changes, in all time, which shall make it ever more able to perform its great functions. But it carefully provides that these changes shall come only as a common demand, shall be matured by a common deliberation, and rest on a common consent; common, not universal, for that it is too wise to demand.

That it must be far easier to be loyal when the object of our loyalty is a person, is certain. It must be a great relief to the human mind, in a certain condition, to have those principles of order, law, and right, to which loyalty is due, impersonated in one who can be recognized and approached. But the providence of God, as it is manifested in the progress of humanity, seeks to lift the human mind above the condition in which it requires this relief, this assistance. And the great question for us this day, is, whether the American mind and character are lifted to the height of our own institutions. If not, we need, and if we need we shall have, a king.

The very foundation of our existence as a nation is mutual desire, common consent. It has been too little noticed, that this nation stands alone on earth in one characteristic. What other great nation exists, or ever has existed, from the days of Nimrod the hunter of men, to this day, which did not acquire its growth and more or



less of its dominion, by conquest, by compulsion? Various have been the forms and modes of this compulsion; but, in some form, it has existed everywhere. Our nation alone was formed without one atom of this element. And if Texas and California seem to have been added by conquest, it was perhaps the introduction of a new element; and it was, at all events, the conquest of the land only, and not of the people; and when the sparse population we found there grew into a sufficient magnitude, it was at their own request that they were admitted to an equal share of all our rights, all our advantages, all our sovereignty. The idea of conquest and subjugation seems to me utterly foreign to the nature and working and life of our political institutions.

But it may be asked how can we compel the rebels to return within the Union, without conquest and subjugation. What right have we to *compel* them at all, if the very essential characteristic of our institutions is consent, instead of compulsion.

Before a government can be carried on upon the principle of consent, it must be clearly and practically understood, that *consent* is perfectly consistent with *contract*, and the obligations springing from contract.

As I have already said, I believe an immense step was taken in the progress of our race, by the establishment of our nationality, *because* this nationality is founded upon the principle of *consent*, and all our institutions and laws and usages must rest upon *consent*.

I now say, that consent means nothing until something is consented to; or, in other words, something is agreed upon; or, again, consent comes into effect and actual existence, when there are agreements, made by and between consenting parties; made with their consent and concurrence. And then a nationality founded upon consent, must have as its very essence, the right and the power of enforcing agreements, or contracts, made by the consent of the parties.

For example. No man in Massachusetts is obliged to buy or to sell anything excepting at his own pleasure and by his own free choice. But if he *consents* to buy or to sell, and makes an agreement to that effect, then he is



held absolutely, and if need be coercively, to his obligation ; that is, to deliver what he sells when he is paid, or to pay for what he buys.

It must be perfectly obvious, that national institutions cannot be founded upon and characterized by the principle of consent, unless it is a part of that principle, embodied in the consent of the whole nation, that when *consent* ripens into *contract*, there shall exist the right, the power and the duty of enforcing the contract-obligation.

We apply and test this principle continually, in the smaller matters of every-day occurrence. We are now testing the same principle on the largest scale.

All the States, and all the persons in every State, have agreed to our national existence and our national institutions. No matter whether they have formally expressed their consent, by oath, or voting, or otherwise. They have lived under them ; profited by them ; received their share of the good derived from them. And common sense as well as common law holds them to be *estopped* from denying their consent ; their contract.

Rebellion is the last and most consummate violation of contract-obligation. It is the violation by force of the contract which is the foundation on which our nationality rests, and therefore upon which all order, all society, all contract-obligation rests. And therefore it is a violation of contract against which the whole force of the nation should be thrown, with a concentration of all its might, and with unfaltering energy, and unrelenting determination.

But conquest and subjugation do not enter into my idea of either our right or our duty ; for this plain reason. We fight only against rebellion ; against the rebels only because they are and as they are rebels. And as soon as the rebellion is suppressed, as soon as they cease to be rebels, they return again within the Constitution ; within its obligations, within its penalties for whatever crimes they have committed, but also within its protection.

To regard them not as rebels, but as enemies in the same sense in which strangers at war with us would be our enemies, is to declare that rebellion has succeeded ; has done its work ; has separated them from us.



If consent was the foundation of our nationality, so it was of the Constitution which gives to it form and definition. The very heart and essence of this constitution, as of every State Constitution, is, that it is the voluntary work of all, the expression of the common will, resting upon common consent ; and so terminating in a common contract, and a common obligation.

The heart and essence of all constitutional republicanism is CONSENT. The heart and essence of all slavery is COMPELSION. History does not exhibit, and the mind of man cannot conceive, a more absolute political antagonism, than that between constitutional republican government, and slavery. Hence this war. For this war is nothing else than this antagonism, uttering its voice, casting off its disguise, taking up all the weapons of conflict, and seeking success by FORCE. The war, with all its fury, its slaughter, its hatred, and its sacrifice, is but a revelation of the war, eternally existing, between the two principles of Freedom and Slavery.

And yet our national constitution recognizes and protects slavery. It does so ; and it was made to do so for a sufficient reason. When our fathers framed it, they found slavery not only existing, but universally diffused ; stronger in some places than in others, but wholly absent almost nowhere. They found also, that wherever slavery existed, there co-existed with it, some knowledge of its character, and something of the fear and of the dislike that character should inspire. Three courses, and only three, were open to them. To abandon the purpose of a union of the whole. To violate the fundamental principle of consent, and try what could be done by compulsion. To accept the fact of slavery as it stood with all its concomitants, and its probable future, with the hope that truth would gradually prevail over falsehood, good over evil, and freedom over slavery. They chose the last of these alternatives, and they chose wisely and well.

At that time a conflict between freedom and slavery in this country would not have been safe ; it would not have so resulted as to promote the progress of man towards freedom. Not only was slavery, technically so-called, nearly universal in some degree, but the great principle,



so lately born among men, that it was not well for any man to have the right of compelling another to act without his own concurrence, was dimly seen and feebly felt. And therefore the kind and measure of pro-slavery which claims and loves this right, would have been found potent everywhere, and all its sympathies would have been, as they are now and ever must be, with that consummated slavery which deems it well for a man to own a man. The conflict would not then have been safe. Our fathers did well and wisely in not exciting it. They left it for a future day. It has come in our day. The way in which it has come is this.

As the years passed on, slavery, from causes all of which are not obvious, gradually withdrew from a large part of the country, and gradually became concentrated in another part; and thus slavery and non-slavery became to a great degree separated and distinguished from each other.

In that part of the country where slavery was concentrated, it flourished. It produced an apparent prosperity, in which the slaves had little share, and the mass of poor whites round them even less, while it made the few slave-owners rich in idleness. But while it impoverished and degraded the poor whites, it fed and gratified their pride that even in their degradation they could look down with utter contempt upon a numerous class below them. And this false and foolish pride kept up in their minds a comparison of their condition as freemen with that of the slaves, and they did not know their degradation; and they learned to love slavery, as well as the rich men who were masters of the slaves without disguise, and masters of the poor whites under a thin disguise.

The consequence of this was inevitable. That region became a slave region completely and thoroughly. Not only was nearly all its wealth slave-wealth, but in about the same proportion its opinion became a slave-opinion; its belief a slave-belief; its reason a slave-reason; its conscience a slave-conscience; its religion a slave-religion. Not universally, but prevailingly. And its policy,—for in this the majority ruled,—became an absolute, unqualified, slave-policy.



And in the meantime how fared it with the region from which slavery had withdrawn? That region also flourished; and while its prosperity outran anything in human experience and astonished the world, it was as remarkable for its diffusion as for its amount. It was the result of the co-operation of all, concurring in labor of all kinds, but all resulting in a common good, of which all had their share, and nearly all a share proportionate to their industry and intelligence.

With this there grew up, and into great strength, a feeling and belief that this marvellous prosperity was due to our nationality, which alone could give it safety and permanence, and to the principles of human rights which our Constitution expressed and protected. The great marts of commerce felt that they must decay with our national decay. The owners of and the workers in the mills to which our rushing streams are harnessed, knew as well as if the sun-light wrote it on their walls, that only in the preservation of our nationality could they prosper. The men who ploughed and planted and reaped those wide Western fields which could feed a world, felt that they could work in peace, and find wealth in the product of their labors, only on condition that our nationality was preserved.

In all this there was alloy enough of selfishness. But through it all, there also grew into strength, and into habitual and common thought, the notion that every man owned himself, and had a right to employ himself only with his own consent, however hard might be the terms to which he chose to consent; and that constitutional republicanism was founded on this principle.

It is this thought which underlies all the true democracy of this country. It may have in the minds of the masses but little precision of logical definition; it may be quite too much allied with and degraded by selfishness; and it often expresses itself with great coarseness of word and act. But there it is, right in itself, and a sentiment of great power. Because it has this power, there has grown up with it a false democracy, which desires to confound itself with the true democracy, that it may use it as a tool; and it acquires the use of it by false



pretences. This false democracy asserts vociferously a sympathy with the true democracy; when in fact it is in exact opposition to it; because its whole aim is to use men without their actual consent; and as this can no longer be done by violence, it is done by fraud and falsehood.

I have attempted a very general sketch of the condition and sentiment of the two great regions of this country, the slave region, and the non-slave region. And when the greater growth of the non-slave element warned the slave element that it was on the way to death, slowly and lingeringly perhaps, but inevitably, the slave element rushed into a conflict which it hoped would end in a victory that would give it permanent power and therefore permanent existence. And it may do this, unless the conflict ends, not in the victory, but in the defeat of slavery. I do not say its destruction, but its defeat. And if it so ends, whatever form this defeat puts on, the death of slavery is made more certain and brought more near. Which of these results is impending; the victory or the defeat of Slavery; the success or the suppression of Rebellion?

This must depend on the relative strength of the parties; not merely the strength which each party possesses, but the strength which each party brings into the conflict. And one important measure of this strength, is the unity of each party.

The slave party was far from being unanimous at the outset. The cautious and skilful measures adopted by the leaders of the rebellion to bring their States into the attitude of rebellion without a popular vote on the question, is, of itself, a sufficient proof of this. Their earnest and successful endeavors "to fire the Southern heart," showed that they thought it needed to be fired; and none could judge of this so well as they could. Undoubtedly there was much lingering attachment to the Union; much fear for the possible consequences of war and for its inevitable suffering and sacrifice; and some doubt whether slavery was a good thing to fight for. But the Southern heart has been fired. The voice of opposition has been silenced, and wherever necessary strangled with a rope. And while the terrible distress, and enormous sacrifice,



and extreme exhaustion which have attended the rebellion must have produced much effect, it may still be said, that so far as we can judge from trust-worthy testimony, there is now a very great degree of unity at the South.

The guns of Sumter fired the Northern heart at once. There was a wonderful uprising of the whole people. Even the false democracy saw instantly (and they are not usually mistaken on such points) that they should lose all hold of the true democracy, if they did not join, with seeming heartiness at least, in the defence of our nationality.

This uprising, in its unanimity, its earnestness, and the proofs it gave of its reality, surprised ourselves, astonished Europe, and most of all amazed and disappointed the rebels. Because the slave influence had made the mind of that region a slave-mind, they could not, they cannot now, and they never will comprehend it. But the fact was patent, and to them fearful. But time went on, and old differences revived, and new ones came up. Different interests and different regions began to look at each other with watchfulness, perhaps with jealousy and distrust. All opinion finds expression here, and is confirmed by expression; for here there can be no reign of terror. Men grew angry; and as an angry man is necessarily unwise, unwise notions, unsound arguments, and mistaken conclusions flew through the community.

Looking at the matter from some points of view, it might seem as if the war had strengthened the unity of the rebellion, and weakened that of the resistance to it. But I am not sure that it is so.

There are many sources of error on this point. Thus, it is extremely difficult to know what portion of the seeming disaffection is nothing more than a mere discovery of the disaffection existing at the beginning, but then concealed, or at least not expressed. Then again we may be deceived by the loud and universal fault-finding, which has reached an excess that would be ludicrous, if it were not dangerous. But it may not be so dangerous as it seems. Of course no one can hope for a general renunciation of the cheap and easy pleasure of fault-finding. He who finds fault with another, generally asserts by implication his own belief (an unconscious one perhaps) of his superiority, of



his freedom from that which he rebukes. He judges, he condemns, he looks from above, down. And where is the human being to whom this is not grateful? No. We may hope for money, for effort, toil, and courage to face any peril. But we must not hope for so enormous a sacrifice as the voluntary relinquishment of fault-finding. Of course it does harm; but it may also do some good; possibly in the rebuke of some actual wrong, or the correction of some actual mistake, or in the fact that it keeps us awake and alive to existing exigencies.

But whatever uncertain good this reckless fault-finding may do, it works one great and certain mischief in the despondency which it produces and diffuses.

Despondency is always the effect of weakness, and always increases weakness. Therefore it is never wise. And in times like these it is most mischievous, most dangerous. A very profound thinker has said, "There is nothing I fear so much as Fear." This saying, wise for most times, is, for us in these times, brimful of wisdom. The army of the people should be what military men call "the supporting force" of the army we have sent to the front. And a panic in the one army may be as fatal as a panic in the other.

We may be prudent and cautious; neither unduly elated nor depressed; moderate in our expectations; and yet rational, firm and hopeful.

He who has given all the money he can spare, and sent his sons to battle, while his wife and daughters toil for the comfort and health of the soldiers, has yet one more duty to perform, which, to some tempers, is the most difficult of all. It is, to repel Despondency from his own mind, and protect all whom he can from this moral palsy. Not more certain is it that red-handed Treason has brought us to this pass, than that, among the loyal, Despondency is the servant of Treason, doing its work where no thought of treason could gain admittance. Much of this work has been done; but I am sure, for all the moaning and groaning which echoes around us, that the heart of New England still beats with strong and steady pulse.

And then it must be remembered, that the differences exhibited among us, are to an immense extent, differences



as to the means and not differences as to the end. Behind nearly all of them, and urging them on, is the determination that the country must be saved. It is easy to mistake in this matter. Thus, recent elections have given the opposition a majority in some large States. But the most potent "cry" employed by the victors was against the government for its lack of energy in the prosecution of the war. And yet a political victory, gained by the expression of a vehement desire that the war should be urged with the utmost energy, and by a passionate appeal to this ruling desire of the people, is regarded by some, and made use of by some, at home and abroad, as evidence that this very desire is feeble and dying out! Some even of the leaders who won this victory in this way would have it mean "erring sisters go in peace." But our erring sisters understand these matters better than some of us do; they are not deceived, if we are.

The most fervent loyalty, the most elevated patriotism, are so fortified on this point by every motive of interest, of selfishness, and mere expediency, that I cannot doubt their ultimate success. In the loyal States there is an infinite diversity of interests, sentiments, habits, motives and opinions. And this diversity is one of degree as well as of kind. Not only is there loyalty of the loftiest and purest character, and also the most unmitigated selfishness, but there is loyalty in every degree, from the highest to the lowest, and selfishness of every degree from the lowest upwards. And there is an equal diversity of opinion as to the principles upon which the conflict is to be urged, and as to the means to be used in the suppression of the rebellion, and as to the way in which those means should be employed. All this diversity is doubtless a disturbing and retarding force. It must make the struggle longer and more difficult, and our success less perfect. But, will it defeat the struggle, will it prevent our success? I think not. I believe we shall succeed.

But, what do I mean by success? or, what success is it that I look for? On the one side of this conflict is slavery; and with it disruption of the Union, and rebellion against the Constitution. But these three are one, and that one is Rebellion. On the other side are three things also.



One of these is the opposition to slavery ; another, the determination to save our nationality ; the third, loyalty to the Constitution. And these three things are also one, and that one is the suppression of Rebellion. To many minds these three things seem to be distinct, and they have indeed assumed, to some extent, an attitude of antagonism to each other. But, to my mind, they are as closely connected, as indissolubly one in their nature and their influence, as are the three elements of the rebellion. And, therefore, as rebellion is the one thing in which its three elements are waging war against us, so a suppression of the rebellion is the one thing in which the elements of our resistance should combine. That should be the constant end ; and all other things regarded only as the means to this end. Let me try to show how the three elements of our resistance to rebellion are one.

The preservation of our nationality will be necessarily, at some time and in some way, the death of slavery. For the heart and essence of our national existence is the principle of freedom. This principle has grown in development and strength beyond the principle of slavery, not by any accident, but because it could not be otherwise in a nation founded as ours was, and characterized and circumstanced as ours has been, and is, and must continue to be as long as we are one nation. The South felt this. The Southern mind has become essentially a slave-mind. Many persons there are probably unable to form a conception of nationality or civilization without slavery ; and some have avowed this. Their hatred of the "accursed Yankees" is only an expression of the love of slavery ; Yankeeism being with them an impersonation of non-slavery. They saw plainly, or they felt instinctively, that slavery would perish if our nationality should continue. The death of slavery seems to them their own death. They are fighting for life. They are fighting to destroy our nationality, because if our nationality lives, slavery must die. In all this they are not mistaken. The only strange thing is, that we do not see this as plainly as they do.

Then, as to our Constitution. If we continue to be a nation, we must have, as I think, inevitably, a constitutional republican government ; and between such a con-



stitutional government and slavery, there must be, forever and inevitably, antagonism. And this is what I mean, when I say, that the three elements of our resistance to the rebellion, opposition to slavery, determination to preserve our nationality, and loyalty to the Constitution, are in their nature and essence, One.

Shall we preserve our nationality? I can only say, there seem to me reasons why we should, and influences leading to that result, of such irresistible weight and force that I do not believe they can fail. Against them all comes the disrupting force of slavery. And while I write there are jealousies, intrigues, outeries, threatening to separate the West from the East; they are strongly reinforced by something which calls itself, and may believe itself a defence of the Constitution; and the whole is used energetically by the demagoguism, which would sacrifice everything that came between it and its prey. But I do not greatly fear such things. The power of evil can do much, but there are barriers it cannot pass. I believe that if the Mississippi were open to-day, and the Eastern Atlantic closed against the West, they would fight as desperately to reöpen it as they are fighting now to reöpen the Mississippi. They need both; no matter which they need most; they need both absolutely.

But shall we preserve our present Constitution *as it is*? In my judgment, that Constitution has not yet been violated, in any way or to any extent, greater or less. But there are those who think otherwise. There are some who are very angry about this; or who express a great deal of eloquent anger, in hopes to excite some anger among those who hear or read them. I do not say they do not believe what they say. There are persons, not unfrequently met with, who, when they want to say a thing strongly, begin with making themselves believe it. With some minds this is an easy process, and a useful one; for it enables them to give to what they say the earnestness, and force, and influence of honesty—of honesty of a certain kind. It may not be very wise in me, or in any one, to contemplate remote and imaginable perils, which, if they are not mere follies, are only not impossibilities. I do not believe that the various elements



of opposition to the government, and of friendship for the rebels *can* so coalesce and inflame each other, as to make it necessary for the government to sacrifice our nationality *or* sacrifice our Constitution; but, if this choice *must* be made, then, with as much love and reverence for the Constitution as my nature is capable of, I should still say, our nationality must not be lost, and rebellion must not prevail.

The Senate has been recently agitated by a case, where a man supposed to be an active sympathizer with the rebels, was arrested and imprisoned. The President and Commander-in-Chief in this war upon the very life and being of the country, had suspended the Habeas Corpus, and imprisoned him. Then the man utterly denied his sympathy, or at all events his active sympathy with the rebels. And thereupon the President (always through his agents) offered to release him at once, if only he would take the oath of allegiance to the United States. And he would not; and remained under arrest. Now I wish to repeat most emphatically, that there was not, in my judgment, any violation of the Constitution here, of any kind or any degree whatever. But if there was any violation whatever, I am sure it was not a substantial violation. I am willing to say farther, that if I *must* choose between that defence of the Constitution which holds it always on the hand and uses it as a tool, and has it always on the lips and makes it a means for obstructive agitation, and ostentatiously clings to its letter while it is weakening the defence of its very existence; — if I must choose between this and that other defence of the Constitution which would preserve its vital principles, and the allegiance due to it, even at the cost of some violation of the letter, I should not choose the former. I would not save the body at the expense of the soul.

Some of the “Defenders of the Constitution” of the present day, use with much emphasis the phrase, “The Constitution makes us a nation.” It suits my way of thinking better to say, our nationality made the Constitution. “We, the people of the United States,” determined to become a nation. By our agents we determined also upon the principles and the forms which should manifest



our nationality to ourselves and to the world, and govern us in all the working of our national life. These principles and forms are expressed in the Constitution. I am willing to say almost anything of it, excepting that it *makes* our nationality. The Constitution proves our nationality, defines it, expresses it, guards it, protects it, *but does not make it*. I can sympathize heartily, with any defence of our Constitution which seems to me honest and rational. It may be honest and rational, although I do not think so. But if it does not seem so to me, I cannot sympathize with it.

I can discern no limits to a nation's right of self-salvation. A man may save his own life by any effort or any means, not prohibited by the laws of God even in that extremity. I am sure that this right, and this duty, belong equally to a nation.

Success then I hope for. Success in retaining our nationality. Success in preserving the life of our Constitution. And I also hope for success against slavery, because this is involved in the preservation of our nationality and our Constitution.

Would that I were able to impress my convictions on this last point, upon the community. A mistake in relation to it seems to me to be doing great mischief.

The divisions of opinion which weaken our efforts may be reduced into two classes. I will designate them, for my own convenience, as the anti-slavery party, and the opposition party; although each of the parties of whom I would speak includes those whom these words would not accurately describe. I think the mistake they make is one, although it assumes two very different aspects.

The anti-slavery party believes it will advance its purposes by a direct attack on slavery; they say, let us kill slavery and rebellion will die. If they believed as I do, that our nationality and our Constitution were the very best possible instruments through which slavery might be assailed and extirpated, in the best time and in the best way whatever that may be, they might adopt a different course.

The opposition would treat slavery tenderly, in hopes to allure or entice the slave States back. They do not realize



that our national life has been, from its beginning, working against slavery. That, while it permitted slavery to acquire great extent and power, it built up the prosperity of the free States at a far greater rate, and strengthened the element of non-slavery against slavery, until the supremacy of the latter disappeared; and that the slave States saw this clearly and perfectly; saw and knew beyond all doubt or question, that slavery must die if it did not escape from the Union; saw and knew that the hour had come when only the struggle was possible, because delay would make even the struggle impossible. They therefore sprang into rebellion; and this day, they see and know, every man of them, that a return to the Union involves the decay and certain death of slavery before a very long time. Between this peril, and the chances of war, they chose, and must choose. They know, if we do not, that the public sentiment of this country will never permit such immunities and securities for slavery as would give it enduring vitality and permanent power, even if such were possible, which I do not believe. The opposition party deceive themselves if they think they can bring back the slave States by any other means whatever than by making the chances of war valueless to them. And yet it is this very opposition, and the division in our counsels and our conduct that it produces, which alone give to the rebels all the hope they have, all the chance they have. For if they have any hope now of foreign intervention, they know, if we do not, that it is this division alone, which will make intervention possible.

I think our government makes a mistake allied to this. The President knows that there is a divided sentiment in the country, and that we can only succeed by bringing the whole strength of the loyal States to bear on the rebellion. And he labors, honestly and earnestly, to reconcile, or at least combine, the two great parties which he recognizes. His mistake is, not to recognize, and not to throw himself upon, a much stronger party.

Each of these parties desires and demands that the rebellion shall be put down, *in its own way*. The great mass of the people desire and demand only that the REBELLION BE PUT DOWN. A year ago this great party comprehended



almost everybody. Now, the anti-slavery party have persuaded many that the rebellion can be put down only by direct assault upon slavery. The opposition have persuaded many that it can be put down only by treating slavery tenderly. But I believe the great mass of the people stands where it stood. If Abraham Lincoln, in whose absolute honesty of purpose every one has confidence, and as to whose capacity doubts have arisen only from his seeming vacillation, would adopt and declare *his own policy*, his own method of putting down the rebellion, on no other ground and with no other thought and no other motive whatever, than that he verily believed it to be the best way to SUPPRESS THE REBELLION, he would find himself at once at the head of this great party, the people. Then, they would be glad to see him carry out this policy vigorously and unrelentingly, destroy what he might, or save what he might. They would not be led away from him by the outcries of the leaders of any parties, or of all parties. If he removed from office, civil or military, every man whom he has a right to dismiss, and who would not act energetically and cordially in carrying out his policy; and if he would throw the whole force of the government into it, without hindrance, stop, or stay, the people would go with him.

A few days since I had this conversation with a most excellent and intelligent lady. She said to me, —

“Do you not expect that this war will be the death of slavery?”

I answered, “I have no opinion about that.”

“But do you not hate slavery?”

“Yes, as much as I can.”

“Do you not believe God hates slavery as much as you do?”

“Infinitely more.”

“Then, if you do not believe that this war will put an end to slavery, you must lack faith in Providence; either that He does not hate slavery as it should be hated; or that His imperfect wisdom does not tell Him how to extirpate it; or that His power is inadequate to the work He would do.”



I replied, "I hope my answer will not offend you; but, perhaps the difference between us may be, not that I have less faith in God, but less faith in myself, less faith in the purity of my motives, in the accuracy of my perceptions, in my judgement as to what is best, and as to the best means of accomplishing the best results."

Slavery has been permitted to exist almost always and almost everywhere, as technical, or absolute slavery. But against it Christianity strove from the beginning; or, as I should say, our Father worked through Christianity to lead men away from it. How much is signified by the little fact, that in the year 321 the Edict of Constantine, which established the worship of the Lord's day, by prohibiting on that day, and for that purpose, the sitting of the courts and all judicial proceeding, makes one exception. It is, in favor of the proceedings by which a slave was formally made free. So has Christianity ever worked against Slavery, with great and continued success; not yet with entire success. But it is certain that if Christianity does not ultimately succeed in conquering slavery, slavery will succeed in conquering Christianity: for their essential antagonism is eternal. I am sure that Christianity will ultimately conquer slavery. But by what means, by what steps, or at what rate of progress, Christianity will advance in its conquest of slavery,—that I do not know.

It certainly seems to me probable that slavery must be materially weakened by this conflict and its results. It seems to me possible, and not improbable, that it may receive a wound that is obviously fatal, and be brought near to inevitable death. It seems to me possible, but not probable, that it may utterly perish, and once for all disappear from this whole country to be seen here no more.

I know, certainly, only this. It is now our duty, the most absolute duty of all in the free States, to FIGHT. To fight against Rebellion. To fight against it by every weapon we can use, whether it be forged of steel, or impelled by fire; or only by words winged with the fire of loyalty to God and to our country; or only by thoughts and feelings which find no utterance. Fight against the serried ranks of Rebellion if our place be there; fight



against the errors or malignities which sympathize with Rebellion if our place be at home ; fight, even in our own hearts, against prejudices, or passions, or interests, or habits, or hatreds, which, not intentionally or consciously, but in fact, paralyze our efforts, strengthen and envenom our dissensions, and give aid and comfort to Rebellion.

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Slavery is compatible with much excellence of heart and character and conduct. I have no doubt whatever, that there are many slaveholders who are kind and just men. That they heartily acknowledge their duty to their slaves, and endeavor conscientiously to discharge their duty. But wherever this goodness exists within slavery it must be exceptional. It must exist, not because of slavery, but in despite of it. And I suppose that such slave-owners are not among those who believe that slavery is essentially a good thing, and who love slavery. Because it seems to me this love can have no other origin than the love of dominion and mastery, grounded in pure selfishness.

So also, as I admit that compulsion is good while there is an immaturity which demands it, slaveholders will tell me that the negro race is incapable of maturity ; and therefore the best thing for it is and will always be the guidance and guardianship and protection of slavery. This I do not believe. I lay aside all inquiry into the origin of the negro, or into the differences which separate him from the white man. I am sure of this ; he has, or is capable of having human affections and human thoughts. He is therefore a Man. And therefore he is or may become something which should not be a slave.

I have repeatedly spoken of slavery as existing technically and avowedly, and as the absolute ownership of a man by a man ; and then we call it slavery. And as also existing in its elements and its essence wherever a right exists of coercing a man to labor for another in any way, without his own consent and concurrence. This may be called compulsion. I will not insist that it be called imperfect,



modified, disguised slavery, because I might then use a word which may impart to the thing itself, a character which does not belong to it. I will call it compulsion.

It is very possible to see the deformity of slavery, when it is undisguised, and to hate what is thus seen, and all the while to love and cling to that right of compulsion which is similar in essence. To illustrate my meaning, I will go again to England. There, hatred of slavery has appeared to be dominant and zealous, and it has certainly been eloquent with some and vociferous with many. But our civil war has applied a touchstone to the English hatred of slavery. It has brought it into conflict with the interests, the prejudices, the jealousies and the fears of the ruling classes. In all conflicts it is the weakest party which yields; and in this conflict, the hatred of slavery appears to have yielded in the minds of these classes. The reason seems to me plain enough; because the fact seems to me certain, that, while technical slavery has no existence in England, and while every Englishman rejoices in the boast that if a slave stands upon English soil his chains fall from him, the very essential principle of slavery exists and operates in England, and has great favor there. What I mean is, that the South, and the whole Southern mind and character, are not more permeated and dominated by the principle of Slavery, than the English mind is permeated and dominated by the principle of Servility.

The cement which holds the fabric of English society together, is Servility. An Englishman looks upon those higher than himself in class-position, with a humility and subservience, that to a stranger who sees it or reads of it, is either disgusting, or amazing, or amusing. But he looks down on those below him in class-position, and demands and receives the same humility and subservience. We read of the castes in India, and wonder at them. But in England the noble families are far above the untitled in all social arrangements. The landed gentry will not meet on equal terms with the merchant. And the merchant looks down with the same self-complacency upon the retail trader. A shopkeeper would be a phenomenon in a great house, if he had not been sent for to exhibit his wares. And all look down, alike, upon their



servants. It is true the question of wealth runs through all this, because now, in England, mere wealth, however come by, gives a spurious kind of rank, which some acknowledge and some do not.

When chemists speak of a substance differing from another in that one of its many elements is changed for another which occupies precisely its place and enters into all its relations, they say the new element has *replaced* the former. It is precisely in this sense, that I say the Servility of England *replaces* the Slavery of our Southern States. For servility enters into the relations of English society, and affects the various classes of the nation, with a close analogy to the place and influence of slavery in the South.

For example, no one would say that the four millions of slaves love slavery. There are slave-owners who say it, but they do not think it, and cannot expect any person to suppose that they believe it. And yet slavery must have affected the minds of these millions. Many of them doubtless value the protection, the food and shelter it gives them; and they dread the consequences of any agitation for freedom.

So, in England, more than as many millions are utterly without voice or vote or political rights, and are nothing more than the producers of wealth for the residue, for wages which only sustain life. They cannot love the institutions which bring upon them this constant degradation and frequent suffering. But they are accustomed to their condition. They know not how otherwise to get the means of even living. And they fear change, for they have lost the capacity of hoping for anything better.

We supposed that the negroes would move in some way in furtherance of their deliverance. I did not expect insurrection; I did not desire it, nor do I know any person who did desire it. But I supposed that a movement like that which has actually taken place in some parts of the slave region, would have become, by this time, general. It is, in substance, a refusal of the slaves to work unless for wages and on terms agreed upon. Such a movement would have been a fearful calamity for the Rebels. The negroes could not have been coerced without the aid of



soldiers who could not be spared from their armies. And a compliance with their demands would have struck at the heart of slavery. But the slaves have not moved.

So it is often said that England is "on a volcano," and that her laborers and her poor must rise up and seize the first opportunity of breaking their bondage. I do not believe they would. What keeps the slaves quiet, would keep them quiet. Fear and habit have great power.

Again. In the South the slave-owners are not all of one mind. Some among them, certainly, dislike "the peculiar institution." They consider it as fastened upon them, and know not how to cast it off without utter ruin. But they would be glad to have it mitigated, and improved, or removed if possible. So in England, of the governing classes there are some, we know, and more, we suppose, who do not believe that civilization demands that the exuberant wealth of a few should co-exist with the enormous mass of misery, destitution and degradation festering at the base of English society. Nor do these persons love the Servitude which characterizes their country. They wish, some of them act, for the mitigation and improvement of this state of things. But they look upon this evil as fastened upon them, and so rooted in the whole fabric of English society, that it could not be taken away without bringing the fabric itself to ruin.

Again. Russell's Diary gives us conclusive evidence, that the leading conspirators of the South desire, earnestly desire, a monarchy. And slavery must desire a monarchy. The very nature of the case makes it certain, that if slavery should ever become the acknowledged "corner-stone," as Mr. Vice-President Stephens calls it, of a State, at its summit there must stand, whatever title he may bear, a despot. But servility, which is only modified slavery, differs from slavery, which is intensified servility, in this. It does not require a despot. Less will satisfy its needs. Hence England requires and has a "constitutional monarch."

What does this phrase practically mean? The king (or queen) of England reigns on condition that he will not govern nor attempt to govern. Queen Victoria has less political power than any one of her most prominent



and influential subjects. Indeed she has none. It is the universally recognized proof of her sagacity and her fitness for her place, that she abstains from any interference with the government of the country. While I write, the "London Times," which speaks for and to the aristocracy of England, inculcates, somewhat rudely, the same abstinence upon the Prince of Wales. Where then is the actual power of the State, for it must be somewhere? It is in the hands of an aristocracy, who are the possessors of unquestioned power, and are, of late years, beginning to cast off their disguise. This aristocracy is, partly an aristocracy of rank, and partly an aristocracy of wealth. Keen observers say that the last is gaining on the first, and getting the mastery. It is difficult to say how this is, because they work with so much harmony. The aristocracy of rank seeks to bring wealth within its "order," by marrying the possessors of wealth, or ennobling them. The aristocracy of wealth seeks to add the advantage of rank, by marriage alliances, or by getting titles. But considering them as one, this aristocracy is the absolute master of England; more absolutely its master, than Louis Napoleon is of France, or Alexander is of Russia. The aristocracy appoints and sustains and directs the ministers. The Prime Minister is their chief servant. The Queen, who calls these ministers her servants, is but the servant of their masters. And this is in perfect harmony with English institutions and English character. Everything in that nation depends upon class distinctions and class rights; and it is necessary that the highest class should be the master of the rest.

A Constitution is a supreme law alike obligatory upon the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judicial departments, and upon the whole people; to be violated by none, and to be changed only by common consent. Of this, or anything like this, they have absolutely nothing in England. Parliament, which is controlled by the aristocracy, may enact what law it will. The veto-power of the king has been abandoned for many reigns and many generations, and is dead. Whatever Parliament enacts, every executive officer, every magistrate, every judge, and every subject, must regard as law and obey as law. The



“Constitutional King of England” is therefore a king who reigns on condition that he will be only a pageant and not a king, and whose kingdom is utterly destitute of a Constitution.

All this is perfectly consistent with a vast amount of moral worth, with individual and national energy, and with all the splendor and grace which intellectual ability and culture of the highest order can impart. All these are there, abundantly and certainly. I do not doubt in the least that all are there; I am only endeavoring to state and illustrate the principle which runs through them all.

Our fathers were Englishmen. They brought with them English blood and character,—although not then precisely such as these are now. I cannot enlarge upon this difference, nor consider the modifications these elements of character must have undergone while more than six generations have lived and died under circumstances very different from those of the English people. But we remained her colonies, and politically a part of England, until we won our Independence. Since then we have not been politically her colonies. But we have stood in what was very near to a colonial relation and dependence in other respects. Her mind and her manners and usages and judgments about men and things have influenced ours in a degree and in a way that few of us have been aware of. I certainly was not. Therefore I consider this war a second war of Independence. That chain is broken, at all events; and its links can never be welded together. I hope that the anger which now exists may pass away, and be succeeded by kindness; and I hope we shall learn to make due allowance for the governments of Europe. The growth and prosperity of a nation founded upon Consent must be a constant menace, and an ever-growing peril for institutions founded upon Compulsion. If our institutions attract to us the sympathies of the governed classes, so much the more must they repel the governing classes. We should indeed ask of these governing classes to be more than human, if we ask them not to look upon our institutions with dislike, our prosperity with jealousy and fear, our perils with hope, and our decay—if that shall come—with rejoicing.

Let us be just to the aristocracy of England. Their



hostility to the free States and their sympathy with the slave States, astonished, grieved and angered us. But let us not forget that the suppression of the rebellion and the restoration of our prosperity under a constitutional government, would be, for that aristocracy, a peril, only less, if less, than the rebellion itself is for the United States.

I hope this war will complete our independence of England. For with the most sincere acknowledgment of great and various excellence in the English character, I am quite sure that her influence has been, on some important points, quite injurious to us.

Servility includes the two ideas of the sentiment servility on the part of those who look up, and the love of servility on the part of those who look down. And no doubt we have imported a good deal of servility from England. Of the love of servility in those who look down, I fear we are not quite rid yet. We do not all cordially accept the principles of American institutions as those under which we must live, whether we like them or not, as long as we live here. I fear that some of us subject ourselves to much discomfort, in the vain effort to establish for ourselves and our households, habits and relations which we can no more import from England than we can import her climate. I have been amused to see some persons trying to live, as to their habits of food and clothing and exercise and exposure, *as they do in England, and because they do so in England.* This is of no great consequence. More mischief comes from the endeavor to insist upon English relations, where the effort can produce only continual irritation. Class-rights cannot flourish here. If one of my readers happens to know a man who seeks to treat all within his reach as his servants, and all his servants as slaves, I am sure he knows a very uncomfortable man.

From the servility which looks up, we are pretty well rid. We see it seldom, except in new-comers, who brought the habit with them, and have not yet learned their American lessons. But they learn these lessons very soon. Perhaps they do not learn, perhaps they come to a school where it might, at present, be difficult to learn,



what should take the place of servility when that passes away. The best lover of his country will hope that it may pass away. But he will also hope that as it passes away, a recognition of the rights of others, fidelity to duty, the love of usefulness, and courtesy and kindness and civility will take the place of servility.

Some at home, and more who visit us, complain of the manners of this country. So far as I can judge, our manners are, in the main, good. It is not fair nor reasonable to apply to them the standards of foreign usages or of factitious refinement. The true test is, are they, in general, expressive of a courteous and kind feeling. I think they are. We meet sometimes with coarseness and rudeness; but equally in all classes of society; and in every class it seems to me an exception, and not the rule.

But I am not so well contented with another characteristic of our country. It is the feebleness of the sentiments of Respect and Reverence. It is difficult to speak aright of these topics, and perhaps I ought to distrust my own conclusions. I will only say that I should be glad to see my fellow-citizens treat each other with more Respect; and manifest more respect for many things, and among them, for place, office, function. These exist only for the good of society. This is their end, however imperfectly it be attained, and however it may be concealed or obstructed by self-seeking and self-love in all their various forms. But it is certain that this end must be imperfectly attained, if the rights which belong to them are not honestly acknowledged and Respected.

And so as to Reverence. Of this I would say even less. But the common consent of all times has ever declared that age should be held in Reverence; that the paternal relation should be held in Reverence. I will only ask is a sentiment of this kind very strong and general among us; is it stronger in this generation than in the preceding; was it stronger in that than in its predecessor? I will let others answer. I fear some may answer, it is not strong, and that is well. It is growing weaker, and that too is well.

But all the Reverence I have spoken of is nothing, in



comparison with the Reverence which is due to God. I do not fear an avowal that this Reverence also is a poor and foolish thing ; but I do fear, that in point of fact, it is, in general, a feeble sentiment.

We live in an age of marvellous prosperity ; of an activity of the human intellect and an energy of human action, and a perpetual progress in discoveries and in utilizing discoveries, which has had no precedent in history. But it is also a characteristic of the age, that the idea of God has quite too little distinctness and force in any of the departments of human thought ; and, most of all has this idea disappeared from politics. This word seems to mean at the highest, only a regard for the mere material interests of men ; and, at the lowest, gambling with the minds and passions of men for the cards, and public office or the public purse for the stakes. This condition of things seems to me like one where the Sun is darkened ; a condition in which there is no light from above, and no light but that of the lamps we make, and kindle and feed with our own hands ; a condition, which gives us little reason to hope for much wisdom of opinion, conclusion or action.

Were I to permit myself to dwell on this subject, it would be with especial reference to the godlessness of that spirit of reform, which is so powerful among us. How many good and earnest men I know now active in their conflicts with the demon of Intemperance, and the worse demon of Ignorance, and, to bring the matter nearer to my specific topic, with Slavery itself. Do they seem, generally, to walk and work in the light of the truth that if their work be a good work, it must be God's work ; and that if they would work with Him, they must work as His instruments, and in His own way ? This conviction would leave them zealous to be His instruments ; to do His work ; to hasten the time ; to open the way. But it would cause, I think, a great change in the manner of their working. How much more cautious would their conduct be ; how much kinder their words ; how much less hatred would their words express and excite ; how much more, and how much better, would be their success.

This characteristic of the times seems to me more sad, and more alarming, because never yet was there so much



need of the recognition of God, as at this day, among us. What else can have power to quell the raging storm and bid the heaving sea of passion be still, before it wrecks the best hopes of our country, and of our race.

I will not permit myself to pursue this topic. I will say only, for the few, if there be indeed any, who would follow out this train of thought in their own minds, that, in my judgment, constitutional Republicanism cannot enter upon its completion and consummation, until it becomes a Theocracy; and that it is not, in very fact and deed, advancing towards its completion, when it is not advancing towards this end. Let not those who are startled by this word suppose I mean a restoration of the old Jewish Theocracy. In the Theocracy I desire, the altar will not be built with hands, but will be in the heart; the offerings will be of acknowledgment, obedience, and reverence, and love. The House of God to which we shall go up, to worship our Father and listen to His answers, will be His Word, in which He dwells forever.

And what of the conflict, which I began with saying was in some way caused by slavery? How will it end, and when will it end?

I do not deny that there is much which would lead me to fear that vices and falsities prevail among us, and are so indurated by time and habit and our past prosperity, that we may need a long period of distress and discipline, and may now be only entering upon a cycle of suffering, which in its intensity and in its length will equal the years of our prosperity.

But my hope is stronger than my fear. I think I see much among us that is good, and that is earnestly seeking to be better. Much that shows, that if we have abused our prosperity in part, we have also, in part, used it for our own good and for the world's good. And then I believe that we shall succeed. That Rebellion will be suppressed; that the value and force of our Constitution will be proved; that our loyalty will be enlightened and invigorated; and that by all these means, a firm foundation may be laid for a wider and loftier prosperity than we have yet known.