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The Cowards' Convention.



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LOYAL PUBLICATION SOCIETY,

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DECLARATORY RESOLUTION.

The object of the Society is expressed in the following Resolution, formally adopted by unanimous vote of the Society, at its first Anniversary Meeting, February 13, 1864.

Resolved and declared, That the object of the Loyal Publication Society is, and shall be, to publish and distribute tracts, papers and journals, of unquestionable loyalty, throughout the United States, in the cities and the country, in the army and navy, and in hospitals, thus to diffuse knowledge and stimulate a broad national patriotism, and to aid in the suppression of the Rebellion by the extinction of its causes, and in the preservation of the integrity of the Nation, by counteracting the efforts of the advocates of a disgraceful and disintegrating Peace.

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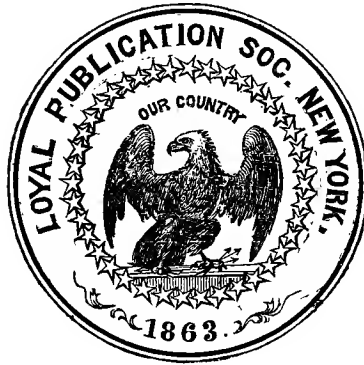
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LOYAL PUBLICATION SOCIETY,

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No. 68.

THE COWARDS' CONVENTION—No. 1.

To the Editor of the New York Times :

"An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse."—GAY.

In this most portentous crisis of our political history, the first thing necessary for all loyal men is to know the full extent of our danger. It is no use mincing or dodging the matter. We have to do with enemies who, if successful, will complete the work of their fellow-traitors at the South. The secessionists tore the country in two; the framers of the Chicago platform would scatter it in fragments.

When thus speaking of the so-called Democratic party, I have no wish to say much against or about their nominal standard-bearer. He was a good, though slow business man; is a good driller, good engineer, and altogether a very fair *defensive* commander. And there is certainly this much propriety in his nomination, that if his party succeeds, we shall speedily have occasion to try our commander-in-chief's capacity in that species of warfare for which he is best adapted.

Nor is it intimated that the War Democrats, whom party organization and a misplaced fidelity to names will dragoon into the support of a peace platform, have any intention or desire of destroying the nation and dividing the country indefinitely. They will vote in ignorance of the real issues, as hundreds of thousands voted for Pierce in '52, as thousands voted for Seymour in '62. Though certainly not blameless, since there is an ignorance so blind and wilful that it is almost as wicked and quiet as harmful as wickedness itself, they may well be acquitted of voluntarily compassing the national destruction.

But neither the nominal leader nor the deluded War Democrats will have any hand in shaping the policy of the party. Its real managers are the framers of that precious confession of faith, the Chicago platform. Horatio Seymour, the Prince of Jesuits; Fernando Wood, a man capable of any enormity; Vallandigham, a Southerner by birth and a traitor by profession, as deadly an enemy of the Union as Jefferson Davis himself—these are the men who rule the Opposition, who direct it now, and will direct it if, for our sins, it is permitted to become the government.

The necessary results of their success are generally understood, but it is evident the loyal and patriotic public does not appreciate the extent of the danger. Thus we hear it constantly said, "If the Chicago candidate is elected, the restoration of the Union at once becomes impossible. We are humiliated by the recognition of a Southern confederacy; our democratic principles will be violated, and the contiguous existence of two rival nations will bring about a chronic state of war and all the inconveniences to which Continental Europe is subject," &c., &c. All which is true enough so far as it goes; but it goes a very little way into the matter. After enumerating these obvious results which the popular mind so strongly and so justly deprecates, we are only on the top layer of our Pandora's box. *If we could demonstrate with mathematical certainty that a Southern Confederacy might be acknowledged on terms neither dishonorable nor destructive to ourselves, and that our democratic form of*

government might undergo various innovations with impunity, we should not have gone the first step toward proving that such terms could be procured and such innovations would be made by a "peace-at-any-price" President. On the contrary, the impossibility of the latter proposition would only become clearer by the proof of the former.

Let us, for the sake of argument, admit—

1. That a peace, acknowledging the independence of a Southern Confederacy, may be made without any disgrace to us.

2. That modifications in our democratic theory and practice of government may be made, without ruin, or even with benefit, to the country.

3. That two rival nations may co-exist on the territory of the old Union.

There is nothing in these admissions to interfere with the following conclusions :

1. That the peace made by the so-called Democratic party would be a most dishonorable one.

2. That the modifications of Democratic principles made or permitted by them would be highly injurious and destructive.

3. That the North could not exist as an independent nation under the rule and on the principles of the Peace Democrats.

(The first and third of these propositions are intimately connected, but as the third must come last, since all national evils are summed up in destruction, and the question of reconstruction or separation is the most pressing, and has, therefore, a right to the first place, I arrange them as above, though the division is somewhat awkward.)

First, then, we will admit, for the sake of argument, that a peace may be made recognizing a Southern Confederacy (note the indefinite articles), on terms not disgraceful to us.

(Observe that nothing is said about the safety of such a proceeding. Honor, and honor alone, is the subject of our story.)

Such an assumption may be made. It has been made by a whole class of persons—the English writers favorable to the North, who, disagreeing with the Pro-Slavery Britons on all other points, agreed, for some time at least, with them in this, that the war would be one “for boundary.” However much a man like Professor Cairnes, for instance, may have mistaken the spirit or the wants of the American people, we cannot suspect him of wishing our disgrace.

But what sort of peace must this be in order not to be disgraceful? Clearly one of which we, rather than the Confederates, should fix the conditions, they making great sacrifice to obtain the acknowledgment of their “independence.” It would naturally proceed, as far as possible, on the *uti possidetis* principle. It would give us all the Border States except East Virginia, whatever view be taken of their condition—whether, as we say, they are States which have remained faithful to the Union, or, as the Confederates and philo-Confederate Europeans say, they are “conquered provinces.” We could not expect to keep New Orleans, but we should be obliged to retain one fortified position on the Mississippi, that our navigation of that river might not be at the mercy of paper agreement with repudiators. If we could suppose that phenomenon, a well-informed and impartial European, to act as umpire, the most he could ask of us would be to “rectify the frontier” by ceding Tennessee in exchange for Eastern Virginia. It is hardly necessary to add that we must have nothing to do with paying any of the Confederate expenses, directly or indirectly, or altering any of our institutions to suit them, or even acknowledge the right of secession, the Confederate independence being admitted merely as an accomplished fact, without regard to its merits.

In short, the supposed honorable peace must be such a one as would be honorable to us, had the North and the Gulf States originally been two distinct sovereignties, fighting for

the border territory and the navigation of the Mississippi. Now, what chances are there that such terms of separation, or any like them, would be obtained by the Chicago policy of "immediate armistice and ultimate convention" ?

None, whatever.

The claims of the Confederates are well known. They demand *every foot of territory* south of Mason and Dixon's line, including the national capital, the surrender of which involves the surrender of our national existence. (About this there will be somewhat to say hereafter ; for the present, we are only speaking of national humiliation.) The sole doubtful point is whether they do or do not include Kansas in this claim. Some time ago there were grounds for suspecting that they had relinquished their pretensions to Maryland and Delaware ; but Davis has just disposed of that ambiguity in his answer to Col. Jaques. *He asks of us a territorial cession far more humiliating than that which the whole force of Germany has recently extorted from Denmark : and this is the only condition on which he will agree to the "immediate armistice."* And recollect that "Jefferson Davis says," is a much more comprehensive formula than "Abraham Lincoln says." The latter is not the people of the United States, though as the executive of their Government, and the representative of their majority, his words have great weight ; but Davis *is the State*, in Secession, as much as Louis Napoleon is in France, despite his hypocritical pretence of being unable to interfere with the individual "sovereignties."

But this is not all. Far from it. The prominent rebel organs have repeatedly announced as *essential* conditions of peace, that we should acknowledge the right of secession, return to Slavery all the negroes whom the progress of the war has set free, or pay their value, repudiate our own debt, to punish the loyal men who hold it, and—last humiliation of a conquered people—do what they would never do for themselves, pay theirs !

Will it be said, "It is easy to claim anything, but would the North accede to these preposterous demands ?" I an-

swer, not only is it probable, from their uniform subserviency to their Southern masters, that the Peace Democrats would do it, *but it is certain that they must, if they mean to carry out their own principles consistently.* The right of secession they already acknowledge, and the rest follows, from their professed doctrines, by easy inference.

If, as the O'Conors, Brookses, and other Peace Democrats, are never weary of telling us, the negro is an inferior animal, without civil rights, then the disposition of a few hundred thousand blacks is a matter of no more consequence than the disposal of the same number of cattle, and becomes an insignificant detail in face of the great question of peace. If the war is "unconstitutional," as Horatio Seymour pronounces it to be, all the measures employed in carrying it on must be tainted with the same unconstitutionality; and, of these, the war-loans are not the least potent or prominent. If it is "unholy," as that Apostle of the New Gospel of Peace, F. Wood, declares—if we were impious and unchristian in taking up the gauntlet which the conspirators threw down to us at Sumter—then we, as repentant Christians, under the guidance of that eminent disciple, Saint Fernando, should make what restitution we can to our aggrieved and invaded secesh brethren.

Such is the immediate prospect of degradation presented to us by the sages and patriots of Chicago, a degradation so deep and damnable, that it would make us a scorn and a hissing throughout the world, and any man with a soul above a flea's would be ashamed to look his own wife and children in the face.

Let me conclude this part of our subject with a little anecdote, after the manner of our worthy Executive.

Mlle. Luther, a young and pretty Parisian actress, accepted the protection of a well-known restaurateur. A lady named Doche, of more experience in the profession, expostulated with her on the lowness of her choice—"My dear, you astonish me! An eating-house proprietor at your time of life? One keeps that sort of thing for the last."

So I say about submission to the enemy. *One should keep*

that sort of thing for the last. When we are in the very ultimate ditch, with Washington besieged, Philadelphia taken, and Boston blockaded, with Gov. Seymour's friends pillaging and murdering in New York worse than they did last year, and no troops at hand to shoot them down, with gold at 2,000, and every boy of fifteen conscripted, *then* it will be time to talk of throwing away our arms and begging for peace. Submission on the part of those who cannot help themselves, if not honorable, is at least excusable. But what words can depict the infamy and degradation of those who surrender everything while they have the best of the fight, and run away from the battle when victory is hovering in their grasp?

THE COWARDS' CONVENTION—No. 2.

To the Editor of the New York Times :

Having shown that even were an honorable separation possible, it could not be obtained on the principles of the Chicago Convention, I proceed to the second proposition.

Let it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that innovations might be made in our Democratic theory and practice without injury.

Such a hypothesis may be framed without doing violence to our intelligence or even to probability. We (by *we* I mean all of us who are not demagogues and place-hunters, and do not get a living by lies and flattery) know that nothing of man's institution is perfect, that Democracy is no exception to this rule, and our Democracy no exception in this respect to other Democracies. Those of us who have looked deeper into the matter know that any government, as it goes on, has a tendency to intensify its own faults, and that the predominant element of it is constantly absorbing all checks. Thus, as what we may call the centripetal element is constantly gaining ground in an autocracy, and accumulating more and more power about the one source of it, so

what we may call the centrifugal element, is as constantly gaining ground in a Democracy. This has been exemplified in our own history ; for though the Federal Constitution has remained unaltered, thanks to the guards with which its wise framers surrounded it, the constitutions of nearly all the older states have been largely modified in a democratic sense.* In view of all which a change theoretically anomalous, might be practically beneficial.

Our assumption, then, is not unreasonable in its very nature. It is not like those impossible figments of the brain put forth by the leading spirits at Chicago, so dreamy and baseless that the very rebels for whose benefit they were devised, cannot help laughing at them—proposing, for instance, that we should give up five and a half states, of which we now hold possession, for the *chance* of getting them back *some time or other* by a convention—a piece of absurdity in comparison with which the fable of the dog and the shadow becomes a solid reality.

Among our hypothetical changes might be a prolongation of the Presidential term to eight or ten years ; a return in all the states to a permanent judiciary ; a limitation of universal suffrage in the great cities where its results have been so unsatisfactory ; and generally, without multiplying examples, we may admit that a number of alterations, theoretically anti-democratic, might be made without overthrowing the government or ruining the country.

Note always, that these changes are not recommended. Their practicability is merely assumed for the sake of argument. And after this assumption, it is still true that the innovations brought about by the success of the Chicago platform, would be utterly subversive.

For, in the first place, yielding to the rebels would involve a self-condemnation of democratic government by confessing its impotence for self-protection ; and in confessing this, we really give up everything. If such government were in all

* This took place at the South less than at the North, owing to the continued preponderance of an oligarchic element in the former.

other respects perfect, without this element it would be worthless. It would resemble the horse who had but one fault—that he was dead. Once allow that a Government based on the voice of the majority may be resisted by a minority, and the whole theory of democracy is as practically disproved as the divine right of Kings was in England when William of Orange walked in and kicked out James II. and his court of French pensioners, the Woods and Vallandighams of that day. Its existence is at once rendered precarious, and put at the mercy of any minority bold and cunning enough to conspire against it. This is what the foreign enemies of our Union were continually predicting—that it was not able to resist internal pressure; and the Chicago leaders are intent on verifying their most sombre predictions. After this confession of weakness, our Government might not perish to-morrow or next month, but it would assuredly collapse as soon as another great strain was put upon it; and we shall see hereafter to what sort of strains it would speedily be subjected.

The utterly subversive character of this confession will become still clearer, if we consider the class in whose favor it is made.

If there is any principle which more than all others may be called fundamental in the theory and practice of our Constitution, it is that of political equality—equal rights and no class privileges. And as it is the chief distinction, so is it the chief virtue of our Government. Nobody doubts that a man of wealth and refinement, who is willing to live selfishly—that is for himself and his class—may live more comfortably in several European countries. He can get more for his money, and find more agreeable companions. Our institutions were of and for the people, expressly designed to promote the welfare and happiness of the greatest number. Consequently and naturally the people have always been jealous of anything that looked like a tendency toward the establishment of class prerogative. At one time they had a great fear of moneyed corporations, and though some of its phases at the time were extravagant, the subsequent encroachments of railroad and other companies on public and private rights

have proved that this fear was well founded. Hence too the "Native" movement, however provoked or even justified by the misconduct of some of our foreign citizens, could never take root in the country. In the case of the negro, one unfortunate exception was made to the rule of equal rights—an exception that has proved the rule with a vengeance!

But now this corner-stone of our Constitution is to be rejected, and at whose bidding? That of a sectional oligarchic class, amounting, according to the very largest estimate that has been made of them, to a million of persons—something less than one thirtieth of the whole population, and fewer, comparatively, than the aristocratic class of England.

And this is the upshot of so many years' teaching and practice of the once great Democratic party! A party which, spasmodically faithful to its name, every now and then rode its hobby at the most erratic pace; which hunted down banks and tariffs because it suspected in them the germ of a possible aristocracy; which, in pursuit of the largest liberty, assigned, both by executive appointment and popular votes, the most notorious violators of law to be its special administrators and guardians; which decried learning and good manners as un^republican, and claimed to be the special servant, agent and friend of the working classes. The moment it finds itself face to face with an oligarchy of any courage and skill, it can suggest nothing except to surrender "body and boots."

The French Emperor and his flatterers boast that he has reconciled the strong points of an autocratic and a democratic government. On this subject the world is not quite agreed; many think the task too difficult even for a Napoleon. But, so much easier is evil than good, it is quite possible to combine some of the worst features of an oligarchy and ochlocracy; and this is what the Chicago schemers are endeavoring to give us. I want none of their patent mixture. To borrow the indignant words of Mr. John Jay, "it is hard to say whether the sham aristocracy of the Southern slave masters, or the sham Democracy of their Northern serfs, is the more despicable."

THE COWARDS' CONVENTION—No. 3.

THE CHICAGO PLATFORM—TWO GOVERNMENTS, AND
THE RESULT—CHAOS COME AGAIN—GEN. McCLELLAN—HIS PLATFORM AND HIMSELF—PEACE AND UNION.

To the Editor of the New York Times:

Having proved that the Chicago platform involves utter disgrace to the country, and a total abandonment of the fundamental principles of democracy, we shall now show how it will lead, and that not remotely, to a destruction of our national existence and an unlimited subdivision of the country.

Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the North and South might, under certain circumstances, co-exist as independent nations on the territory of the Union.

Of course they would not co-exist comfortably. There would be wars and a state of disturbance approaching to chronic. All we suppose is, that they might exist, as the nations of Continental Europe, though they live uncomfortable and expensively enough together, still live.

But to make this state of things even hypothetically possible, the North must be supposed to start fair with the South.

How the South would start we may pretty accurately foresee. It would be a strong military oligarchy, composed of three classes—a ruling aristocracy, white plebeians and black slaves. *Nominally*, it would be founded on a principle of mutual dissolution, the "State Sovereignty" theory; but it is obvious that this fiction was merely used as a means of getting certain States out of the Union, and that having served its purpose, it is now practically disregarded, as Davis' invasion of Kentucky and the recent language of his organs about North Carolina must clearly show. To resist the encroachments of such a power, the North would have

to be *firmly united* under a real, live national government (not a league or a confederacy dissoluble at pleasure); also, she must come out of the war *unhumiliated* and unweakened by any cession of border territory. She could not afford to begin her separate existence as a conquered country.

Now, how can the Chicago policy satisfy either of these conditions?

In the first place, the "immediate armistice" demanded by it will only be granted by Davis, on condition of our surrendering all the territory south of Mason and Dixon's line, including the capital. The first essential preliminary therefore to the cessation of hostilities, is *our national destruction*, for there is no case in history of a nation surviving the alienation of its capital. When the seat of government becomes permanently attached to another country, the nation is annihilated. Let us, however, in order to give ourselves every chance, suppose either that we shall inaugurate the exceptions to this hitherto universal rule, or that Jefferson Davis shall be graciously pleased to leave us "My Maryland." Alas! this goes but a little way to save us, for the next moment we stumble on something which prevents us from ever having an efficient government—the doctrine of "State Sovereignty."

Doubtless the supporters of this disorganizing invention would like to use it as their master at Richmond has done, merely as a stepping-stone to power, which they might afterward cast aside. But they would find it impossible to lay the spirit of ruin they had evoked. The circumstances are not the same. We have no aristocratic and scarcely any plebeian class, no universal interest like Slavery to bind the States; their "sovereignty" would be for us a fearful reality, and that reality— anarchy.

The principle has been established that one or more states may lawfully and peaceably secede from the general government. As soon as the West is dissatisfied with a high tariff, or New-England with a new one; as soon as Pennsylvania wants a Fugitive Slave Law, or Ohio objects to one—quick, raise the standard of secession! The central government

could only expect to maintain its integrity so long as it commanded a majority in every state.

Nay, how can we even hope that this disintegrating process would be confined to the separation of the states from one another? We shall have to descend to much smaller fractions of government before we reach the ultimate atoms. Every one of the larger states contains a variety of conflicting interests. So far from a state possessing any peculiar indivisibility, as the disunionists claim, it is much easier to divide a state than the Union. That states *can* be divided is proved by the fact that they *have* been. Maine was made out of Massachusetts, Vermont out of New York and New Hampshire, and recently West Virginia out of Virginia.

In estimating the destructive forces at work, we must not omit the outside influence of the Southern oligarchy, and the two great powers of Western Europe. The former would have no objections to acquiring the nearest portions of our territory as subject provinces; the latter, remembering our ancient strength, would never rest till we were broken into the smallest pieces. The Europeans have as yet only ventured to work indirectly by intrigue; they would then be emboldened to renew the Mexican experiment.

With all these agencies undermining our government, nothing short of a perpetual miracle could avert its destruction. The country would be *comminuted*. New England has homogeneousness enough to hold together, but all the territory west of the Hudson would be sundered into more fragments than there are states. The Southern pro-slavery portions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, would separate from the Northern anti-slavery portions. The city of New York would break off from the state, the western counties from the eastern. Some of these fragments would probably be swallowed up by the Southern oligarchy or empire; the others, if they did not become European dependencies, would go on squabbling among themselves, with no better position in the world than the South American Republics or the petty German states.

The prospect is too terrible and melancholy to contemplate

without a shudder, even in imagination ; yet we must look at it, for the danger is here, imminent, right over our heads. A Republican Senate may delay it for two years, but from the time that an armistice is under way, from the time that it is *officially proposed* by us our ruin is certain ; it may be delayed, but cannot be averted.

One would gladly disbelieve that men can be found so infatuated as to labor day and night for the very purpose of bringing about this catastrophe ; but the fact is as undeniable as it is lamentable. They have been condemned too often out of their own mouths ; and disagreeable as the investigation may be, the causes of their folly are, at least, not difficult to find.

In the first place, the copperhead is the mean white of the North. The Southern oligarch has established the same superiority over him as over his own plebeian neighbors. The copperhead is the slaveholder's servant, and in seeking to tear the country to pieces, he is only following his master's bidding. Secondly, he is inspired by an ever-craving lust for office and its emoluments, deprived of which, he rages like a beast deprived of its young. Certain politicians of the old Democratic party had come to consider the government of the country as their own property, which they, like the Aldermanic " Ring " of New York, could farm out for their sole personal advantage, and in which no outsider had any right to interfere.

Hence their blind fury against the Republicans, whom they regard as having robbed them of their own particular stealings. " We will never let a single Republican hold office again ! " exclaimed a triumphant Western Copperhead, two years ago, when the elections seemed to promise a restoration of his party to power. That was his idea of sending his opponents to Tartarus ! For vengeance these men will sacrifice anything. Earth and hell are alike ransacked ; no ally is to be despised or unsought ; Jefferson Davis, Louis Napoleon, the very English aristocracy whom they used to abuse—all these they beg, and beseech, and implore, and entreat and supplicate to come and help them ruin the country, so that

only they may be revenged on those infamous Black Republicans, who have excluded them from the fat places which were their gods !

But General McClellan, it may be said, is not an old politician, or a "Peace-at-any-price" man. He explicitly declares that Union is the only possible basis of peace.

What then ?

If we could take the General's letter by itself alone, "pure and simple," as the diplomatists say, then, without much coaxing, we might state the case thus : "The difference between Lincoln and McClellan is that the former wishes the Union restored without slavery, and the latter wishes it restored with slavery. Lincoln tried McClellan's plan for a year and a half, and then was obliged to give it up and adopt the more radical course as a military necessity. McClellan's election would, therefore, *put back* the war, and is so far to be deprecated ; still, it does not necessarily involve absolute ruin."

But, alas ! we can no more take the letter without the platform as an exposition of the party, than we can take Hebrews without John and James, or *vice versa*, as an exposition of the New Testament. The one complements the other, and it is too plain, on comparing them, that the letter was framed to catch one class of voters and the platform to catch another class, with directly conflicting views. And the comparison brings back to mind those twenty years of compromise and dishonesty, when every candidate was bound to be "available," and every declaration of principles to be Janus-faced ; when the Presidents were miserable ciphers, the tools of their own cabinets ; when politics were regarded as a mere knaves' scramble for office, and most persons considered government a mere superfluity—not a very ornamental one either—and the whole concern was driving to destruction in the merriest and pleasantest way imaginable.

But in those days there was something to be said for "going in on the general issue," as Seymour calls it. Though the practice was gradually eating away all political honesty and truth, its fatal effects were not yet clearly perceptible,

and meanwhile the immediate questions before the people were not of a vital character. If a cabinet did split about a fiscal agent or an ad-valorem duty, nothing very terrible could come of it.

Such is not the case now. The issue between the two branches of the so-called Democratic party is as grave and as clearly drawn as that between death and life. "Immediate cessation of hostilities;" "Union as an indispensable condition of peace." It is no more possible to be in favor of *both* these than it is to serve God and Mammon; and an administration composed of war and peace men, *supposing them all to be in earnest*, would resemble a coach with three horses at each end.

Suppose McClellan elected. He must, according to all precedent, construct a Cabinet from both wings of his party. Then the President and half his Secretaries refuse to make peace except on the basis of Union. As Davis has spurned that condition in advance, they must go on with the war, in a slow, creepy, McClellanish sort of way, to be sure, but still go on with it somehow. But the other half of the Cabinet is, at least, equally earnest for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Will they not, therefore, do all in their power to block, and trammel, and hinder the war—to bring to a stand-still what was already retarded in its progress? *And is it not this exactly what "our adversaries" want?*

No, the alternative between the two candidates, Lincoln and McClellan, and the two parties, the Republican and the so-called Democratic, is *Peace and Union through the War*, or *Permanent separation, Dishonor, and Destruction*. Which will the American people choose?

Loyal Leagues, Clubs, or individuals may obtain any of our publications at the cost price, by application to the Executive Committee, or by calling at the Rooms of the Society, 863 Broadway, where all information may be obtained relating to the Society.

