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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

OUR UNITY AS A NATION.

From the "New Englander" for January, 1862.

Mrs. Gertrude F. Vinquet
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25.

ARTICLE VIII.—OUR UNITY AS A NATION.

Do we fully realize all that is expressed by these simple words? Do we even now comprehend all that we shall lose if this unity shall pass away definitely and beyond the hope of recall? We have been a great, proud people, springing into existence with almost magical rapidity; able to take our place among the nations of the world, and make our flag respected wherever it might wave. With an ever-expanding territory; with an ever-increasing commerce; possessing in the bosom of our own land all varieties of climate; and accustomed to look on the peace and prosperity of our country as things immutable; how will it please us to have the boundary of the cluster of States remaining in the Union cut down to the Pennsylvania line? For, in the event of the final recognition of the Southern Confederacy, it would not be easy to hold back from them Maryland and Delaware. How shall we endure the loss of *prestige* which will reduce us to a second rate power? Shall we be pleased to have the loyal States of Kentucky, and Kansas, and the divided State of Missouri, dragged from us by force, or, if they succeed in remaining in the Union, exposed to the continual attacks of the surrounding rebel States?

In fine, how shall we, of the Northern and Eastern States, exist, separated by only an imaginary line, from a people who openly profess hatred and contempt for our characteristics and our institutions; and whose ambition will cause their interests to clash with ours at every moment? For we should be wrong to imagine that, after a formal recognition of their separate existence as a nation, our relations would assume an amicable form! A thousand motives for discord would arise continually; and our dissensions and wars would be interminable. Those who know the spirit of the South can never be the victims of such an illusion. So completely has slavery undermined the tendency of our institutions, that the slave States, to-day, are far more inclined to feudalism than to republican-

ism. With this retrograde movement has grown up the spirit of antagonism to ourselves; and it may be asserted, with all truth and justice, that so indifferent have these people become to the honor of the American name, so false to the heritage of their fathers, that they would gladly accept the protectorate of any foreign power. In contemplating this disloyalty, *not to a Government but to their nationality*, we pause and ask in amazement, what could have produced such a change? What could thus have perverted the hearts and minds of a portion of our countrymen?

We are in the midst of the great crisis of our national history. We are passing through an epoch of transition; such epochs as are recorded in the annals of all nations, and from which they never emerge as they have entered them. Every event of this kind has an end to work out; a mission to accomplish; and takes its origin in a great underlying cause, which is but too apt to escape for a long time general recognition. Thus, if we were to ask what was the original cause of the present revolt of certain States, and their war upon the Union, very many would reply, "Abolitionism is the cause;" and yet, in this, how greatly would they err, for *Slavery*, and *not* Abolitionism, is the basis and motive power of this rebellion.

Without entering into the merits or demerits of the institution, it is enough to state that it is one which the unanimous voice of civilized humanity is every day more and more loudly condemning. The Southern States, at the commencement of our career as a nation, were fully aware that slavery was an evil, and a clog on the progress of any people where it exists. They acknowledged this freely then; urging in extenuation that they had been hampered with the institution, and that it had not been established among them by any will of their own.

We find the following in Winterbotham's View of the American United States, published in 1795. It shows conclusively how greatly the spirit of Southern slave-holders has changed since that date.

"In countries where slavery is encouraged, the ideas of the people are, in general, of a peculiar cast; the soul often becomes dark and narrow, and assumes

W.B. Jr. 24, 11

a tone of savage brutality. Such, at this day, are the inhabitants of Barbary and the West Indies. But, thank God! nothing like this has yet disgraced an American State. We may look for it in Carolina, but we shall be disappointed. The most elevated and liberal Carolinians *abhor slavery; they will not delude themselves by attempting to vindicate it*; he who would encourage it, abstracted from the idea of bare necessity, (there can be no necessity of acknowledged wrong), is not a man, he is a brute in human form. For, '*disguise thyself as thou wilt, O slavery, still thou art a bitter draught!*' It is interest, louder than the voice of reason, which alone exclaims in thy favor."

Humility, however, though a Christian virtue, is not a general characteristic of human nature, and certainly not of the races that formed the strata of the Southern population, and they soon wearied of apologizing for an institution which they imagined to be for their *interest to perpetuate*. Self-sufficiency and arrogance succeeded; for when we have once resolved on pursuing the *wrong*, it is far easier to *assert* that we are right than to prove it.

Meanwhile, the Free States, by the same obedience to a natural law, had moved in exactly the opposite direction. From indifference they had passed to a comprehension of the moral evil of slavery, and this, of course, engendered a tacit, if not avowed dislike and condemnation of it. However, to a large party in these States, this spirit was obnoxious. They would have stopped the progressive movement of mind, and rolled back the popular sentiment. "Better to leave these things alone," was the cry. True, it might have been *better*, according to this way of reasoning, if there had never been a Luther, or a French revolution, or an uprising of our own people against oppression; but it was not in the God-ordained progress of humanity that these things should fail to be at their proper time.

Then came the aggressive and exacting spirit of the slave power, growing in strength and audacity every day; not content to be and remain what it was, but, following the bent of despotism everywhere, desirous of engrossing all power, and becoming the ruling element of the country.

The growth of opposition to this spirit in the South was very slow of development in the North. It was continually held in check by the law-and-order-loving character of the

people; by their appreciation of the magnitude and importance of the question, and the immense complication of difficulties that lay in the way of its solution. It is owing to these causes that we have for years been striving to reconcile the two antagonistic systems, which have for ages agitated the world. We have claimed to believe in freedom; we have made it our boast that we have proved before the face of the world, despite the incredulity and sneering comments of the upholders of other forms of government, that a people are capable of ruling themselves in liberty and harmony; and yet here, in the very midst of a nation proud of their freedom and enlightenment, has existed, and exists, a relic of the darkest and most absolute despotism. We have believed that we might permit a system at variance with everything around it; an anomaly which has been the creator of anomalies, such as the existence of a Democratic pro-slavery party. We have striven to *wrest* harmony from these discordant elements, and we have persisted in refusing to believe that from the working out of a natural law, as inevitable, and as much beyond our control as the great ocean-tides, the two systems diverged from the outset, and that no point of contact, no sympathy, no bond in common was in the nature of things possible.

We do not as a people realize this yet. A dim consciousness is dawning in many new quarters, but, in general, though we know that we are sundered, and that our nationality is imperiled, we do not yet comprehend that this is the cause of the present convulsed state of our country.

De Toqueville long ago perceived in the South elements dangerous to the Union. He says:—

“Of all the Americans the Southerners should most desire the Union, for they alone of all the rest would suffer in being abandoned to themselves; and yet they are the only ones who threaten the existence of the Union.”

He doubted, too, the power of the Federal Government to maintain itself in case a dissolution should be attempted; but he did not count on the love of country that springs up insensibly and inevitably in the heart; nor on the *great necessity* of our oneness as a people, which now, for the first time during our existence as a nation, we have been aroused to feel.

The mother country is putting forth her mightiest energies to protect the birthright of her children; and is it not our duty to ponder well on the *cause* that is arming brother's hand against brother; and which has long since destroyed all the ties that naturally bind together the people of one country, one religion, one language?

There is a vague idea abroad that this rebellion once crushed we shall return to our previous condition; but this is impossible. Neither nations nor individuals ever pass through a great stirring experience and remain what they were.

Had it been possible for things to remain in *statu quo*; had the slave-power been less exacting, or the spirit of opposition to it less strong in the free States, we might have been better pleased to live on tranquilly, leaving the great inevitable contest to our posterity; but this could not be; and if not possible in the past, still less will it be so in the future. The step of a decided rupture was a thing that needed years of preparation: hereafter it will be but a continuation of an old feud, ever increasing in bitterness and rancor. While then these momentous events are passing, it becomes us, the People, to be equal to the emergency, and not strive by lagging behind to detain the irrepressible course of events.

Suppose that we succeed with great loss, and infinite suffering and toil, in quelling this rebellion, leaving the institution of slavery intact, what shall we have gained? The South will have suffered a double humiliation;—that of a defeat, and the old consciousness that they possess an institution that in the opinion of the free States is such an evil and shame that its extension cannot be permitted. Even should there be a Union party at the South, strong enough to reconstruct the Union on its old basis, will there be there men wise and just and moderate enough to tamely accept this position, which it must be admitted is humiliating, and continue to love the Union? Is it logical to believe that a people, who on this very ground have revolted, without awaiting actual grounds for complaint against the Federal Government, will so entirely change in views, and even in nature, as to subsequently acquiesce willingly in the measures which even in theory provoked their revolt?

If not, if the spirit of revolt still live, shall we treat these States as conquered provinces, and establish a military despotism over them? Would not such a course be entirely incongruous with the nature of our Government, and revolting to the liberal sentiments of our people? And if not this, what then? Shall we at last, after having won the victory with such struggle and self-sacrifice, consent to the independence of these States, that is to say, to the dismemberment of our country? We shall be obliged finally to look these questions frankly in the face; why not do so now? Why not recognize and acknowledge at once *the fact* that until the *cause* of our dissensions is removed, our harmonious unity as a people *is an impossibility*? "Let the cause be removed!" the answer comes back. "Let us of the free States silence the Abolition pulpit and press. Cease to meddle with the institutions of the South and we shall have unity!" We say "yes," most cordially. Let us be consistent. If we will not do one thing let us do the other. Silence the pulpit and the press; turn back the course of public opinion; throw open the territories to slavery; not only this, let the master take his slaves where he will, North, East or West, and let them be recognized everywhere as his property, and then we shall have unity; the unity of retrogression and despotism it is true, but better even than the vain effort to bind together elements that have no affinity!

That the existence of slavery in our country has ever been considered by all minds as an element of danger to our peace and prosperity as a nation is demonstrated by the words of all who have ever written on the subject. De Toqueville says:

"The most formidable of all the ills which threaten the future existence of the United States arises from the presence of a black population upon its territory; and in contemplating the causes of the present embarrassments, or of the future dangers of the United States, the observer is invariably led to consider this as a primary fact."

And this comment was made long since, before the slave power had commenced its exactions, before it had ventured to assert in the face of Christianity and civilization that slavery is a God-appointed institution, alike beneficial to master and

slave, and consequently to be propagated as much as possible : before the springing up of the irrepressible antagonism in the free States which such an attitude could not fail to engender : in a word, before it became a question of abject submission to tyrannical exaction, or the utter demolition of the system which produced such results.

This is absolutely and unavoidably the issue. We know that every step of human progress has been accomplished by these terrible upheavings, this fierce battle between the Old and the New : the efforts of progressive humanity to cast off one by one, as they discover them, the clinging errors of a darker period, and emerge into the brightness of a newer day. It is requisite then that the People should have a distinct and comprehensive conception of the purpose, the *idea* for which they are struggling, suffering and sacrificing ; and unless they make of this *idea* their standard, morally convinced of its holiness, its necessity, and are willing to cast aside the errors and prejudices that oppose it, and render vain all their efforts, a contest like this is but a wanton destruction of human life, and a wanton waste of the products of human toil.

And it seems as though Providence itself had presented the occasion for the solution of the problem which has so long baffled the wisest statesmen of our nation. We have long known that slavery is an evil ; it is an incubus on the nation ; but *how should we get rid of it ?* This has been our dilemma hitherto. Let the revolted States be forced to return to their allegiance, and we shall be, with regard to this question, in exactly the same position as before. The Federal Government will no longer have the right to resort to measures legitimated by revolutionary exigencies, and the opportunity for action will have been lost until a new revolt shall again present it. This is the first time in our national history that the opportunity has offered itself for emancipating the slaves, *not on the Abolition principle*, for this, however just in the abstract, becomes unjust in practice, but simply in accordance with the law of confiscation according to the code of all civilized nations under similar circumstances. And it is this fact that makes this opportunity so particularly favorable, and marks this as

the preëminently happy epoch for the accomplishment of this purpose. Southern property is vested almost wholly in slaves, and if these are to be excepted from the law of confiscation, very little will be left to come under it. If the whole matter is made to turn on the point that only property used in the prosecution of the rebellion can be lawfully confiscated, no species of property is so completely and conclusively covered by this clause as the slaves. In tilling a rebel master's fields, in attending to his house, in obeying his orders, they are ministering to the maintenance of the originators of the rebellion, without which, of course, it never could have existed. If the master need money for the furtherance of his plans he sells his negroes. It is difficult to conceive in what better way property could be employed in the furtherance of rebellion; for if we insist on reducing the formula to its *literal* sense, the only actual, material property used *directly* in the war, is the general equipage of officers and men. The slave owner claims his slaves as his property, in which he has invested so many thousands of dollars. We simply take him on his own ground in confiscating them to the Government, which, representing the Republican principle, can make no use of money vested in human beings, and consequently emancipates them. This is the simple and feasible solution of the great problem; the short path that will lead us outside the stupendous wall that has so long hemmed in slavery.

But here a very natural inquiry presents itself, what is to become of these four millions of blacks suddenly loosened from bondage? Are we to intermingle with them, and acknowledge them as equals? People are alarmed at such a prospect; and they would be justly so were there any grounds for such fears. Nothing is more improbable, more *impossible*, we might say, than the general amalgamation of the white and black races; and nothing more opposed to the natural order of things than the recognition on terms of equality of a race universally conceded to be inferior, and in addition to this just emerged from the degrading position of slavery. There exists in the white race an instinctive and insurmountable aversion to the black. Apart from the contempt with which we naturally view a race

condemned to servitude by their lack of capacity, there is something repulsive to us in the physique of the black; and those who have not been familiarized by the habit of contact shrink involuntarily from their touch as though they belonged to a different species. Indeed, if we are to base an opinion on the most marked indications of nature, we should say that the two races were not intended to live together. The white cannot exist for any length of time on the native soil of the African; and his health is enfeebled and his life shortened in the tropical regions which most nearly approximate to the former's natal latitude. All the tastes, habits and inclinations of the negro are purely material suited to the indolence of the physical life of the tropics, where the energy and enterprise of the white find no adequate field. In fine, the direct antagonism of the two races on every conceivable point of comparison proves conclusively that the Creator, in placing the black on a point so remote from the rest of the world, and so unsuited for the habitation of any other people; and in denying them all migratory instincts, intended them to be a race apart, for what purpose the developments of the inscrutable future can alone reveal. This then, the great natural difference, and the repugnance growing out of it, is the impassible barrier to amalgamation. Moreover, as an additional guarantee, we have the fact that the prejudices of caste, even among our own race, and with the liberal ideas engendered by a Republican Government, are only eradicated with the greatest difficulty, and by imperceptible degrees. The man or woman who has been our servant can never be acknowledged by us in the interior of our hearts as an entire equal; and even their posterity suffer, in some degree, in our estimation. The distinctions of education and custom endure long after the laws which represented them have been abolished. The position of social inferior, provided it be not accompanied by the denial of equal rights before the law, is always quietly and contentedly accepted; for people generally have an instinctive, unreasoned, perhaps unconfessed, consciousness that social distinctions arise from the working out of a law inherent in humanity. There never was but one attempt to bring all classes to the same level, and that was a phrenzy

and a failure. Arguing from this fact, it does not seem at all probable that the suddenly freed slaves would make the absurd demand to be considered the equals of their former masters, or peril their newly acquired liberty in the vain effort to attain any such impossible equality. In this very connection De Tocqueville says:—

“ Thus it is in the United States, that the prejudice which repels the negroes seems to increase in proportion as they are emancipated, and inequality is sanctioned by the manners, while it is effaced from the laws of the country. But if the relative position of the two races which inhabit the United States is such as I have described, it may be asked why the Americans have abolished slavery in the north of the Union, why they maintain it in the south, and why they aggravate its hardships there? The answer is easily given. It is not for the good of the negroes but for that of the whites that measures are taken to abolish slavery in the United States.”

There remains to be combatted yet another forcible objection urged by the opponents of emancipation. The slaves, say they, yielding to their natural indolence, will refuse to labor in a state of freedom. When to this is replied, that the blacks must either work or starve, the answer is that they would rob and murder rather than toil. This being the general view of the case, and it having been established as a fixed fact that the whites *cannot* cultivate the Southern soil without danger to life, it is asserted that to emancipate the slaves would be to sweep away at a blow all elements of prosperity at the South. It does not require much reflection to detect the fallacy of these arguments. In the first place, even while conceding the natural indolence of the blacks, do they not at the North gain a livelihood as honestly and decently on an average as the lower class of Irish? And is it not the most arrant folly to suppose that they would prefer to incur the penalties of crime, death, or imprisonment, rather than continue the labor to which they have been accustomed for years? If this reasoning be sound, why should we not suppose that the blacks would gladly accept the improved condition of free laborers, and enable the planters of the South to cultivate their products as hitherto? And, in fact, at a cheaper rate, for all economists agree that free labor is cheaper than slave labor.

In a political pamphlet written by G. de Félice, published

in France in 1846, and entitled the "Immediate and Complete Emancipation of the Slaves," there are such powerful and eloquent arguments urged with such honesty and directness of purpose, that we cannot forbear quoting some passages as confirmation of opinions we have expressed.

"But the slaves, say you, are not fit for freedom. To emancipate them all at once would be to give them a fatal gift, and in the desire to deliver them too rapidly from a bad condition, we should plunge them into a worse one. They would cease to work because they associate the idea of servitude and shame with labor; aged persons, women enclintes, and children would be abandoned; they would live in a state of vagabondage and distrust; neglecting all religious instruction, and retrograding towards barbarism. Let us then first teach the slaves to bear the weight of liberty. Let us civilize them by education and labor, adopting all such measures as may seem likely to ameliorate their condition, and when they are in a fit state for emancipation, we shall be happy to accord it them.'

* * * * *

"Let us accept this argument as sound, and try to discover its real merit.

"The immediate emancipation which we ask for the slaves, is not a lawless and limitless emancipation. There will be laws in our colonies, the strength of the public, a police, and tribunals. There will exist, in fine, all the means by which a State protects its existence, and its durability. The newly freed slaves can therefore always be prevented from committing depredations, or from changing the form of the Government. As to the rest, the English islands have never been so peaceable as since the day of the emancipation. There has been no attempt whatever to interrupt the established order of things; on the contrary, so much have individual crimes diminished everywhere, so great has been the general tranquillity, and so perfect the obedience to the laws, that the garrisons have been greatly reduced. If any one shall reply to this by reminding me of the massacres of Santo Domingo, I will advise him to read the history. I have no time to combat errors founded on the most stupid ignorance.

"What is meant, then, by the allegation that the slaves are not ready for freedom? Is it to be believed that the slaves from their lack of industry would be incapable of providing for the wants of existence? They perform now almost all the labor; they suffice for the maintenance of the colonists and their own; they know how to manage the spade and the hoe, how to cultivate the soil, gather the harvest, and prepare sugar for the market. Many, also, have trades; and when it be necessary they will be able to practice all the mechanical employments used in civilized society.

"This is not the question,' you will reply. 'We grant that they know how to work, but *they will not work.*'

"How then! Will they not have to earn their bread? and how can they earn it without labor?"

"It is not true that the emancipated negroes would take advantage of their liberty to reduce their wants to the barest necessities. The experience of the English colonies has proved quite the contrary. The newly freed slaves have not gone to wander in the depths of the woods. Some have continued to work

on the plantations; others have bought little pieces of ground, built houses, and founded villages; thus commencing to form that class of small proprietors which constitute everywhere the most moral and useful part of the population. Can such a beneficial result be complained of? and since the enfranchised slaves become honest and industrious peasants, will it still be asserted that they are not fit for the exercise of liberty?

* * * * *

“Let us suppose the worst. The day after the act of emancipation, there would be a floating and uncertain condition of things; but after the first moments of agitation, the mass would subside to their level, only assuming an improved condition of spiritual and material order.

“Believe me, the best education for liberty is liberty itself; there is no preparation for it possible; it is only by its exercise that we become worthy of it. Nothing can be given to the slave that will *really* civilize him, whatever measures we may take for his protection, so long as he remains a slave. It is the possession of man by man that must be abolished, *abolished entirely* by declaring it like the slave trade, odious and infamous. Everything short of this that may be done will be null and void in the application.”

Olmsted, in his Journey to the Seaboard Slave States, relates the following conversation which he had with a slave on this subject, which tends singularly to confirm this view of the matter.

“Well, now, would n't you rather live on such a plantation than to be free, William?”

“Oh! no, sir, I'd rather be free! Oh, yes, sir, I'd like it better to be free! I would that, master.”

“Why would you?”

“Why, you see, master, if I was free—if I was *free*, I'd have *all* my time to myself. I'd rather work for myself. I'd like dat better.”

“But, then, you know, you'd have to take care of yourself, and you'd get poor.”

“No, sir, I would not get poor, I would get rich; for you see, master, then I'd work *all* the time for myself.”

“Suppose all the black people on your plantation, or all the black people in the country were made free at once, what do you think would become of them?—what would they all do, do you think? You do n't suppose there would be much sugar raised, do you?”

“Why, yes, master, I do. Why not, sir? What would de black people do? Would n't dey hab to work for dar libben? and de wite people own all de land—war dey goin to work? Dey hire demself right out again, and work all de same as before. And den when dey work for demself, dey work *harder* dan dey do now to get more wages—a heap harder, I think so, sir. I would do so, sir. I would work for hire. I do n't own any land, I hat to work right away again for massa.”

Again, in a work written in France very many years ago by

P. S. Frousard, entitled *La Cause des Esclaves*, the author commenting ably on this subject, quotes a remark of M. Poivre :

“Free labor is the foundation of abundance and prosperity in agriculture ; and I have never seen this branch of industry flourish save in the countries where the rights of man are recognized. The earth, which yields with such prodigality to free labor, seems to become barren beneath the compulsory toil of slaves. The Creator of nature has thus ordained it. He has created man free, and given him the earth to cultivate with the sweat of his brow, but in liberty.”

Then, in confirmation of M. Poivre’s opinion, M. Frousard adds :

“It seems certain that the solidity of the State would be strengthened, and its revenue increased, if free labor were employed in the cultivation of the sugar-cane and coffee plant in America, as the vine and olive are cultivated in France, or the sugar-cane in Cochin-China and Bengal. This is the strongest argument that can be adduced in favor of the emancipation of the slaves. When this great question shall be examined with a more profoundly analytical attention than I am able to give it, let our administrators compare what our colonies do now with what they might do under a new order of things, and they will perceive that in America as in Europe, personal liberty is the principle of national wealth as well as of individual happiness. That without it there can be neither patriotism, nor safety, nor energy in labor, nor progress in art, nor encouragement for manufacture.

“A plantation can be cultivated far more profitably by free labor than by slave. A slave, ill-fed, ill-treated, and over-worked, without encouragement in his labor, without interest in his own success, must inevitably work slowly, since there is nothing to attach him to his master, and he detests his own condition. A free man, on the contrary, works for his own sustenance and that of his family. He will naturally do all that is possible to obtain the good will of the employer who gives him bread, so that he may continue to engage his services. The slave, condemned to groan through life beneath the yoke of slavery, and hopeless of ever seeing his condition improved, is consequently devoid of ambition and energy. He will do only what he is obliged to do in order to escape punishment, and far from desiring to cater to the cupidity of his master, he is rejoiced whenever he can balk it. The free man is afraid of being discharged if he does not give satisfaction, and sustained by the hope of advancement, he is prompted to labor by the most powerful motives. He does not need the severe surveillance of an overseer to oblige him to do his duty. Do we not notice a great difference between daily workmen, and workmen by the job? The latter has no need to be watched ; the hope of earning more animates and encourages him ; while the other, having sold his services for a definite time, works with more indifference, and though he receives less wages, he becomes in the end less profitable to his employer.”

With regard to the second point, the impossibility of white

labor at the South, let us be permitted in the first place to quote once more from De Tocqueville. We cannot have the opinion of a more eminent and impartial writer.

“Many of the Americans even assert that within a certain latitude the exertions which a negro can make without danger are fatal to them; but *I do not think that this opinion, which is so favorable to the indolence of the inhabitants of Southern regions, is confirmed by experience.* The Southern parts of the Union are not hotter than the South of Italy and Spain, and it may be asked why the European cannot work as well there as in the two latter countries. If slavery has been abolished in Italy and in Spain without causing the destruction of the masters, why should not the same thing take place in the Union?”

In this view De Tocqueville is confirmed by many who have witnessed life at the South and in the tropics. In Cuba, where the meridional sun pours down its burning, overpowering rays, the railroads are laid entirely by Irishmen; and on the plantations the exposure and fatigue of the *mayoral* (overseer) are almost equal to that of the slaves. We may therefore safely conclude, until we have some more convincing proof, that there is far more of plausible pretext than of truth in these assertions. Were slavery abolished at the South its fields would be peopled and re-peopled by the emigrant population that swarms in the large cities of the North; a population oftentimes festering in misery and want on account of the impossibility of obtaining employment; and who would gladly run the imagined risk to better their condition. With the tide of emigration that would flow Southward, it might be that ere long black labor would be to a great degree superseded; and in this case it would seem a natural consequence that the blacks should move on towards the tropical latitudes so much more in consonance with their nature and inclinations. Santo Domingo and Hayti would doubtless, in the course of time, absorb, through the medium of voluntary emigration, the larger portion of the negroes on this continent; and thus at last deliver us from the incubus of a black population in our midst. The contest, if thus decided, will leave us stronger as a nation than ever before, for we shall not only have got rid of our elements of discord, but we shall also have vindicated the supremacy of the Federal over the fractional State Governments. The doctrine of State rights, as opposed to the ruling power of the whole, has always been dangerous to our greatness and

durability as a nation. It is an idea which debilitates instead of strengthening, by substituting petty jealousies for a noble national pride. That even in the early days of the Republic this spirit was condemned by patriots is evinced by the subjoined paragraph of a letter addressed to Washington by James Duane:—

“I once flattered myself that the dignity of our Government would have borne some proportion to the illustrious achievements by which it was successfully established; but it is to be deplored that Federal attachment, and a sense of national obligation, continue to give place to vain prejudices in favor of the independence and sovereignty of the individual States.”

Let those who, infected by this false doctrine, doubt our right to enforce obedience from the revolted States, read the following lines and learn the opinion of the great, wise father of our country on this subject:—

From Governor Lee to Washington in 1794, alluding to the insurrection in the western part of Pennsylvania:—

“My grief for the necessity of pointing the bayonet against the breasts of our countrymen is equalled only by my conviction of the wisdom of *your decision to compel immediate submission to the authority of the laws*, and by my own apprehensions of my inadequacy to the trust you have been pleased to honor me with. I never expected to see so strange a crisis; much less to be called to the command of an army; on the judicious direction of which may perhaps depend our national existence. But being ready to give my aid on the awful occasion, I was willing to take any part in the measures *you might think proper to order for quelling the insurrection without regard to rank or station.*”

“By their fruits ye shall know them,” said the holy Nazarene, and this eternal principle is true of all time. The evil tree of slavery has produced naught but accursed fruits. A system founded on the absolute denial of human rights, and sustained by the force and terror of despotism, could only be consistent with itself by destroying patriotism and all sense of justice. Those who believe in and uphold this system are like those who have sat so long beneath the shade of a poisonous tree that their perceptions are obscured. The very atmosphere they breathe is infected, and they can no longer distinguish right from wrong. In vain shall our noblest sons offer up their lives; in vain shall we each and every one be called on to sacrifice our dearest affections, and our most precious interests, if, after all, the *cause* of our difficulties is still to remain. All our efforts, all our sufferings, will be but a barren sacrifice.

The administration can of itself make no move in this matter, since it is but the exponent of the people. It is at present limited to following as far as possible the law already laid down in the Constitution. Nevertheless, at a time like this, all pre-existing laws must, to a certain extent, be set aside; for the laws sufficient for the protection of the country, in times of peace, are not equal to the exigencies of self-protection against revolt in a great struggle for national existence like this. It is for the people themselves to ponder calmly, but gravely and profoundly, over the great question at issue. It is for them to become convinced that if we do not avail ourselves of the opportunity which now presents itself, for annihilating the sole barrier to our unity as a people, it would be wiser, more consistent, and more humane, to cast down our arms, yield up all foregone conclusions, give up all faith in what we have hitherto held dear and sacred, and let the waves of retrogression sweep over us and bear us back to the ideas of a past age.

We know that these things can only be realized by degrees. People are naturally, and to some extent wisely, conservative. They doubt as yet the justice of such a course; they are incredulous as to its necessity, or even its expediency; but each day as it rolls away, and each event as it transpires, will bring them nearer and nearer to a juster appreciation of the subject. Félice, in the pamphlet from which we have before quoted, makes the following remarks with regard to the abolition of slavery in the French colonies. They are equally applicable to ourselves.

“There are three questions to be considered. First, the question of duty. Are we, or are we not, morally obliged to declare the immediate and complete emancipation of the slaves? Secondly, the question of success. Are we likely to carry out the project of immediate emancipation? Finally, the question of interest. What will be the result for France and the colonies from the application of this system?”

“I will venture to assert beforehand, that these three questions are closely bound together. The principle of justice is also the principle of strength and utility. In other words, only the desire to perform without delay our duty towards the slaves, can furnish us the necessary means of success, and protect all our true interests.

“No reflective person will be astonished at the intimate connection which we find between the useful and the just. By a great law of Providence, that which

is good in itself always promotes the common welfare of all. The transition from disorder to order may present some difficulties; but this is of short duration, and the beneficial results lasting. Not one single instance can be cited, since the beginning of the world, in which a people have experienced a permanent injury from being governed in their political system by the eternal laws of morality."

In conclusion, let us be permitted to distinctly state our position, so that we may leave no cause for misconstruction. We do not urge the abolition of the slaves as a means of carrying on the war successfully. Though we deem slavery an outrage of the rights of humanity, and as a great wrong, productive only of evil, yet we would not, in order to abolish it, arm the hand of the semi-barbarous black against our own race. We mean only that as fast as the government which represents our nationality shall triumph; as fast as the national flag shall wave over the revolted States, the property vested in slaves, of all those found in arms against the Federal authority, *shall be confiscated*, and the slaves consequently freed from bondage. The property of loyal citizens cannot, of course, be interfered with, but as there are probably few such, save in the States of Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland, slavery will have received a shock from this general emancipation from which it can never recover; and the border States will find themselves under the necessity of voluntarily enfranchising their slaves, since they will have lost all value in the market. Provided, as we all hope and believe, the national arms shall triumph, this programme will be simple and practicable; but if the people shall not resolve to execute it; if they shall shrink before the responsibility of a step requisite for the general safety, ours will be but a victory *in name* which will leave us in no better condition than before the commencement of the war.

Americans of the United States who love your country, and would fain see its nationality restored, take to your souls the conviction and ponder well upon it, that so long as slavery is not swept from among us, vain will be your heroic sacrifice of life; vain all your generous efforts at reconciliation and reconstruction of the Union. Only when our proud flag shall float over *freedom in each and every State*, shall we be able to realize the aspiration of every patriotic heart—OUR UNITY AS A NATION.

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