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THE RECORD

OF THE

DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

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THE  
RECORD OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY,  
1860—1865.

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I.—SECESSION AND RECONSTRUCTION.

THE War against Rebellion has passed into history. Had it proved unsuccessful, the political party which has never ceased to predict its ill-success and to obstruct its progress would have claimed and secured, as the reward of its political sagacity, the management of our national affairs for a generation. To oppose a successful war, however, is likely, in a Republic, to prove the destruction of any organization guilty of so unpatriotic a blunder, and the Democracy, which has thus proved its faithlessness to the great principles on which it was founded, is now seeking to obliterate the damning record of its course since the election of 1860.

For a few months, indeed, after the fall of Sumter, the indignant energy of the people suppressed open manifestations of factious opposition. Since the surrender of the rebels and the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, also, the hopelessness of the cause of slavery and state rights has stilled all rising agitation; and the mourning of a nation has forced those who lately attacked our late Chief Magistrate with ceaseless venom to beslime his memory with yet more nauseous praise. These scanty proofs of patriotism are now appealed to in the hope that an easy public may in a few short years forget the consistent policy which lost no opportunity of embarrassing the Government and encouraging the Rebellion, during the gloomy period when the national life hung in the balance and destruction seemed only to be averted by unanimous effort. It is not pleasant to reflect that a powerful party, which had for nearly half a century controlled the destinies of the country, has played so base and treasonable a part in the hour of peril; and the people will be ready to banish all memories of so disgraceful and humiliating a fact. It is important, however, that in the future we should know who are to be trusted and who to be shunned. The problems to be

solved within the next ten years are too momentous to mankind to be confided to those who have proved themselves recreant alike to republicanism and to true democracy. It may therefore not be amiss to throw together, in a shape for preservation and convenient reference, a few of the innumerable proofs that the great Democratic Party has throughout the contest been the consistent and faithful ally of the Rebellion; that it invited secession, declared that coercion was unconstitutional and war illegal, and that it opposed every measure adopted by the nation to carry on the war—suspension of the *habeas corpus*, conscription, emancipation, loans, legal tender money and taxation—everything, in fact, to which we owe the fortunate result of our unexampled struggle.

#### HOW THE SOUTH WAS TEMPTED TO SECEDE.

No one imagines that, had the South supposed that its revolt would have been resisted by an united and determined North, it would have plunged into the fiery gulf of rebellion. Its people were assured by their leaders that secession would be peaceful, that it was justifiable, that it was the only remedy for innumerable wrongs, that any attempt by fanatical abolitionists to interfere with the movement would be met and neutralized by their Democratic allies in the North, and that eventually the Union would be reconstructed under a pro-slavery constitution of their own dictation, with New England left out, or only admitted as one consolidated state. How fully they were justified in promulgating these fatal errors can easily be proved by references to the utterances of chosen leaders of the Democracy.

#### OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE TO REBELLION.

Ex-President Franklin Pierce, in a letter to Jefferson Davis, as early as January 6, 1860, thus assured him that his Northern allies would be faithful to the last extremity.

“I do not believe that our friends at the South have any just idea of the state of feeling, hurrying at this moment to the pitch of intense exasperation between those who respect their political obligations, and those who have apparently no impelling power but that which fanatical passion on the subject of domestic slavery imparts. Without discussing the question of right—of abstract power to secede, I have never believed that actual disruption of the Union can occur without blood; and if through the madness of Northern Abolitionists that dire calamity must come, the fighting will not be along Mason and Dixon’s line merely. It will be within our own borders, in our own streets, between the two classes of citizens to whom I have referred. *Those who defy law and scout constitutional obligations will, if ever we reach the arbitrament of arms, find occupation enough at home.*”

## SECESSION JUSTIFIED.

Few Democratic statesmen were found bold enough to defend secession as a constitutional right, but the South was assured in the most formal way that the wrongs inflicted on it were ample to justify secession as a revolutionary remedy.

Thus President Buchanan in his Message of December 3, 1860, proclaimed to the world, that

“The long continued and intemperate interference of the Northern people with the question of slavery has at length produced its natural effects. . . . Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and has been implanted in the heart of man by his Creator for the wisest purposes, and no political union, however fraught with blessings and benefits in other respects, can long continue if the necessary consequences be to render the homes and the firesides of nearly half the parties to it habitually and hopelessly insecure. Sooner or later the bonds of such a Union must be severed.”

And, though he denied the constitutional right of secession, he told the South, which at that moment was taking the preliminary steps to secede, that, if the “personal liberty bills” of some of the extreme Northern States were not repealed,

“In that event, the injured States, after having first used all peaceful and constitutional means to obtain redress, *would be justified* IN REVOLUTIONARY RESISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION.”

Well might Howell Cobb say, in a confidential letter to a Georgia editor:

“I repeat to you that the administration of Mr. Buchanan is the most thoroughly identified with our principles and our rights of any that has ever preceded it, and I am willing to stand or fall upon the issue.”

After this hideous invitation to rebellion in the solemn state papers of our National Chief Magistrate, further proof would seem to be supererogatory, but a few utterances by other party leaders may be admitted to show that this doctrine was accepted by the Democracy, and was continually promulgated both before and during the whole course of the war.

Thus, on December 13, 1860, while the secession of South Carolina was rapidly maturing, Judge Woodward, the most prominent and trusted Democrat in Pennsylvania, profaned the sacred precincts of Independence Square with the following:

“We must arouse ourselves and re-assert the rights of the slaveholder, and add such guarantees to our Constitution as will protect his property from the the spoliation of religious bigotry and persecution, or else we must give up our Constitution and Union. Events are placing the alternative plainly before us—constitutional union and liberty according to American law; or else, extinction of slave property, negro freedom, dissolution of the Union, and anarchy and confusion. . . . We hear it said, Let South Carolina go out of the



Union peaceably. I say, let her go peaceably if she go at all, but why should South Carolina be DRIVEN OUT of the Union by an irrepressible conflict about slavery?"

And not only was the speaker endorsed by receiving the Democratic nomination for Governor of Pennsylvania in 1863, but this speech was declared in the address of the Democratic State Central Committee in August, 1863, to have "been vindicated by subsequent events as a signal exhibition of statesmanlike sagacity;" it was reprinted by that Committee and circulated throughout the State by thousands, as the purest embodiment of the Democratic creed, with a preface in which the Chairman of that Committee, Charles J. Biddle, declared his belief that no intelligent man "will fail to see in it the wisdom and foresight of a statesman such as the Commonwealth now needs in the direction of its affairs."

In the same spirit, the address of the Democratic State Central Committee in 1863, assures us, that

"The substantial interests of the South, especially the slaveholding interest, were *reluctantly drawn* into secession." On the other hand, the Abolitionists "counted on an easy triumph through the aid of revolted slaves, and, in this reliance, were careless how soon they provoked a collision. . . . To cover up their own tracks, they invite us to spend all our indignation upon 'Southern traitors;' but truth compels us to add that, in the race of treason, the Northern traitors to the Constitution had the start."

So, on the 16th of January, 1861, the Democratic Party of Philadelphia, assembled at a great meeting in National Hall, while State after State was defiantly passing ordinances of secession, and seizing forts, arsenals, dock-yards and custom-houses. They had no word of reprobation for Southern treason, but, in the series of resolutions adopted, they declared their party faith to be that the citizens of Pennsylvania should

"Determine with whom their lot shall be cast; whether with the North and East whose fanaticism has precipitated this misery upon us, or with our brethren of the South, *whose wrongs we feel as our own.*"

So, the *Detroit Free Press*, a Democratic organ, April 16, 1862:

"History will relate that we," (the North), "manufactured the conflict, forced it to hotbed precocity, nourished and invited it."

So, too, Edward Ingersoll, in an address to the Democratic Central Club of Philadelphia, delivered June 13, 1863, when Lee was on the borders of Pennsylvania:

"Until the spirit of disunion and hatred, which is Abolitionism, is put down in our midst, government, which alone can give us peace, is impossible. Don't trouble yourselves about the disunion spirit in the South; don't trouble yourselves about the Southern Confederacy; take the beam out of your own eye; we will find political occupation enough at home for some time to come. When the Federal Administration ceases to be a government, and represents nothing but the instinct of hatred and destruction against one section of our country,



*that section wisely and naturally concentrates the whole vigor of its nature in resistance."*

#### PLANS FOR BREAKING UP THE UNION.

Mr. Buchanan had formally declared, in his Message of December, 1860, that there was no constitutional right of secession. His party thereupon commenced to agitate plans by which the South could be coaxed back into a Union wherein the right to secede should be legalized. The most notorious of these schemes was that introduced into Congress by Mr. Vallandigham, proposing a constitutional amendment by which the Union should be peacefully divided, as follows :

"Article XIII. Section I. The United States are divided into four sections, as follows :

"The States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania . . . . shall constitute one section, to be known as the NORTH.

"The States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Kansas, . . . . shall constitute another section, to be known as the WEST.

"The States of Oregon and California . . . . shall constitute another section, to be known as the PACIFIC.

"The States of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri . . . . shall constitute another section, to be known as the SOUTH.

"Article XIV. No State shall secede without the consent of the Legislatures of all the States of the section to which the State proposing to secede belongs. The President shall have power to adjust with seceding States all questions arising by reason of their secession ; but the terms of adjustment shall be submitted to Congress for their approval before the same shall be valid."

This artful scheme for legalizing secession was well received by the Democratic leaders. Mr. George H. Pendleton, the Chicago candidate for the Vice-Presidency, defended it in the House of Representatives as late as January, 1863. May 9, 1863, Mr. Wall, Democratic Senator from New Jersey, in an address to the Democratic Central Club of Philadelphia, not only did not hesitate to give it his hearty approval, but declared that it, or some similar scheme, was the only alternative to eternal separation!

"The plan suggested some years ago by Mr. Vallandigham bears the stamp of his clear sagacity and statesmanlike forecast—dividing the country into four large sections or masses, and requiring a majority of the representation from each to consent to a measure before it should become a law. Mr. Calhoun, notwithstanding the undeserved obloquy now attaching to his name, was to my mind the most honest and comprehensive statesman who grappled with national problems, and I make bold here to say that no wiser, purer, patriotic statesman ever lived. It may be that the South might be willing to return upon the adoption of some such system of reconstruction as this. If this plan of reconciliation and reconstruction fails, then a separation must be the finality."

Mr. Vallandigham's scheme for breaking up the Union having been rejected by Congress and the people, other plans were agitated. A Northwestern Confederacy was freely spoken of, and for a long while the rebels had confident hope of the success of their agents in that direction, working in co-operation with their Democratic allies. It was not difficult for that party to find justification for this or any other destructive plot.

Judge Black, Mr. Buchanan's Attorney General, even went so far as to declare that war made by Congress upon a seceding State would legalize secession and dissolve the union of the remaining States. In an official opinion, dated November 20, 1860, only a fortnight after Mr. Lincoln's election, and which through the traitors in the cabinet was of course made known to the traitors organizing rebellion throughout the South, he says :

"If it be true that war cannot be declared, nor a system of general hostilities carried on by the Central Government against a State, then it seems to follow that an attempt to do so would be *ipso facto*, an *expulsion of such State from the Union*, being treated as an alien and an enemy, she would be compelled to act accordingly. And if Congress shall break up the present Union by unconstitutionally putting strife and enmity and armed hostility between different sections of the country, instead of the 'domestic tranquility' which the Constitution was meant to insure, *will not all the States be absolved from their Federal obligations?* Is any portion of the people bound to contribute their money or their blood to carry on a contest like that?"

The Syracuse Convention, in August, 1864, under the lead of Mr. Vallandigham, drew the same conclusion from different premises, and openly declared the revolutionary doctrine.

"Resolved, That . . . it (the administration) has denied to sovereign States constitutional rights, and thereby absolved them from all allegiance."

#### COERCION UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

Had the Union men of the South felt that they would receive the support of the Government to the last extremity, they might have successfully resisted the tide of secession which swept over the Gulf States in the winter of 1860-1861. In place of this, they were abandoned to the tender mercies of the fire-eating chivalry, and were plainly told that there was no authority in the Constitution to interfere with rebellion. Thus, Mr. Buchanan, in his Message of December 3, 1860, declared,

"The question fairly stated is: Has the Constitution delegated to Congress the right to coërcé a State into submission, which is attempting to withdraw or has actually withdrawn from the Confederacy? If answered in the affirmative, it must be upon the principle that power has been conferred upon Congress to declare or to make war upon a State. After much serious reflection, I have arrived at the conclusion that no such power has been delegated to Congress or to any other department of the Federal Government. . . . Without descending to particulars, it may safely be asserted that the power to make

war against a State is at variance with the whole spirit of the Constitution. . . . Congress possesses many means of preserving it (the Union), by conciliation, but the sword was not placed in their hands to preserve it by force."

This direct invitation to rebellion by a promise of immunity, was at once taken up by those who have ever since controlled the policy of the Democratic Party.

On the 3d of January, 1861, at a "Union" meeting held in Philadelphia, the Hon. Ellis Lewis, a well known and influential Democrat, introduced a series of resolutions, in which the right of secession was denied, but after blaming the North for its unconstitutional proceedings, it concluded :

*"Resolved, That if the Northern States should be unwilling to recognize their constitutional duties towards the Southern States, it would be right to acknowledge the independence of the Southern States, instead of waging an unlawful war against them."*

And at the great meeting of the Philadelphia Democracy, held January 16, after the firing on the "Star of the West" in Charleston harbor, among the resolutions enthusiastically adopted was the following :

*"Tenth. That we cordially approve the disavowal by the President, in his last annual message, for himself and for Congress, of a war-making power against a State of the Confederacy, thus reaffirming the express doctrine of two of the great founders of the Constitution, James Madison and Alexander Hamilton."*

These views were formally adopted by the party. On January 18, the Military Committee reported to the House of Representatives a bill to provide for calling out the Militia, when Mr. George H. Pendleton opposed it by an elaborate argument, in which he said :

*"Now, sir, what force of arms can compel a State to do that which she has agreed to do? What force of arms can compel a State to refrain from doing that which her State government, supported by the sentiment of her people, is determined to persist in doing. . . . Sir, the whole scheme of coercion is impracticable. It is contrary to the genius and spirit of the Constitution. . . . My voice to-day is for conciliation; my voice is for compromise. I beg you, gentlemen, to hear that voice. If you will not, if you find conciliation impossible; if your differences are so great that you cannot or will not compromise them, then, gentlemen, let the seceding States depart in peace; let them establish their government and empire, and work out their destiny according to the wisdom which God has given them."*

And, in the division which followed, the Democratic members, with but four exceptions, registered their agreement with Mr. Pendleton in a solid body.

It was for such doctrines as these that the great Democratic Party selected Mr. Pendleton as its standard bearer in the presidential contest of 1864. That these views were regarded as a sure passport to its favor is evident when we see them advanced by so shrewd and unscrupulous a

politician as Mr. William B. Reed, who, on the 28th of March, 1863, in an address to the Democratic Central Club of Philadelphia, observed :

“Had the Government never gone beyond the limits of consent ; had it rejected, *as did its founders, the HERESY OF COERCION*, as applied to any State or combination of States, it would have been far stronger in the elements of republican power, than it is now in all the panoply and parade of war.”

Even three years of war did not suffice to cause the abandonment of this dogma. The Democratic Convention of Kentucky, assembled June 28, 1864, to select delegates to the Chicago Convention, adopted a series of resolutions, among which the following is the third :

“Guided by these lights, we declare that the coercion and subjugation of eleven or more sovereign States was never contemplated as possible or authorized by the Constitution, but was pronounced by its makers an act of suicidal folly.”

And Mr. William B. Reed reiterated his views in a letter to a sympathetic Marylander, dated November 5, 1864, and published November 7, as sound Democratic doctrine by the Philadelphia organ of the party :

“I deny as I have ever done since this experiment of civil war has awakened me to the truth, that the Federal Government has any right under the Constitution to coerce by force of arms any one or more of its great constituencies.”

#### PRO-SLAVERY RECONSTRUCTION.

So far from maintaining the indissoluble nature of the Federal bond, the Democratic Party at an early period in the struggle adopted the theory that the secession of the South absolved the remaining States from all further obligation to the Constitution, and that they were individually at liberty to separate and set up for themselves or form new connections on such terms of alliance as they might please. There can be but little doubt that the ultimate object of this scheme was to reorganize under the Montgomery Constitution, whereby the old supremacy of the alliance between slavery and democracy might be restored, and the domination of the party be perpetuated. The key-note to this will be found in one of the resolutions adopted at the great Democratic meeting in Philadelphia, held January 16, 1861. We have the authority of Mr. William B. Reed, for the assertion that “it was adopted with enthusiastic unanimity.”

“Resolved, That in the deliberate judgment of the Democracy of Philadelphia, and, so far as we know it, of Pennsylvania, the dissolution of the Union by the separation of the whole South, a result we shall most sincerely deplore, may release this Commonwealth from the bonds which now connect it with the confederacy, and would authorize and require its citizens, through a convention to be assembled for that purpose, to determine with whom their lot shall be cast ; whether with the North and East whose fanaticism has precipitated this misery upon us, or with our brethren of the South, whose wrongs we feel as our own, or whether Pennsylvania shall stand by herself, ready, when occasion offers, to bind together the broken Union.”



That these were the views of the dominant men of the party is evident from the fact that Judge Woodward at that time made no secret of his desire that Pennsylvania should go with the South.

So, in the spring of 1861, ex-Governor Price, of New Jersey, in a letter to L. W. Burnet, of Newark, argued the matter thus :

“ I believe the Southern Confederation permanent. The proceeding has been taken with forethought and deliberation—it is no hurried impulse, but an inevitable act, based upon the sacred, as was supposed, ‘ equality of the States ;’ and in my opinion, every slave State will, in a short time, be found united in one confederacy. . . . Before that event happens, we cannot act, however much we may suffer in our material interests. It is in that contingency, then, that I answer the second part of your question. ‘ What position for New Jersey will best accord with her interests, honor, and the patriotic instincts of her people.’ *I say emphatically, they would go with the South, from every wise, prudent and patriotic reason.*”

At the time of the Chicago Convention, these views were not so openly ventilated, but they evidently were at the bottom of the reconstruction contemplated by the “ cessation of hostilities” and “ convention of all the States” advocated in the platform. One speaker, however, D. H. Mahoney, of Dubuque, Iowa, was bold enough to enunciate them, and they were favorably received,

“ We must elect our candidate, and then, holding out our hands to the South, invite them to come and sit again in our Union circle. [A voice—‘ Suppose they won’t come ?’] If they will not come to us, then I am in favor of going to them.” [Loud cheers.]

And the Van Buren County *Press*, at Paw-Paw, Michigan, declared ;

“ If the North and South are ever re-united, we predict it will be when the Confederate States North adopt their new (‘ Montgomery’) constitution, or something very near like it. There’s a good time coming boys.”

#### DISUNION CONVENTIONS.

As indicated by the resolutions quoted above from the Philadelphia platform of June 16th, 1861, the machinery by which this scheme was to be carried out, was that of conventions, either State or National. The party therefore commenced to agitate for conventions. The experience of the South had shown how easy it was under skillful manipulation, with such instruments, to carry State after State into open and armed opposition to the central authority. A national convention might reconstruct the Union on a Southern basis at one blow, or a series of State conventions could accomplish the same result piecemeal, while crippling fatally the Government in its struggle with rebellion. The machinery of the party, therefore, was forthwith set to work.

As early as July 15th, 1861, the project was broached by the Hon.

Benjamin Wood in the following resolution offered in the House of Representatives, which received the vote of every Democratic member :

“ *Resolved*, That this Congress recommend the Governors of the several States to convene their Legislatures for the purpose of calling an election to select two delegates from each Congressional District, to meet in general Convention at Louisville in Kentucky, on the first Monday in September next; the purpose of the said Convention to be to devise measures for the restoration of peace to our country.”

The revolutionary project was allowed to sleep for a year, when the disasters of the Peninsular campaign encouraged an attempt to revive it.

Mr. William B. Reed came forward to feel the way. In August, 1862, he published his “*Vindication*,” in which he affected to believe that a restoration of the Union was impossible, and that all that remained for us was to decide upon the new leagues which should be formed. To accomplish this, he preferred separate State action.

“If the choice be between a continuance of the war, with its attendant sufferings and demoralization, certain miseries and uncertain results, and a recognition of the Southern Confederacy, I am in favor of recognition, of course making the Abolition Party responsible for this dread necessity. The blood of the Union is on them.

“If it be a choice between the slow but ultimately successful conduct of the war, the subjugation of the Southern States, their tenure as mere military provinces, involving of course a radical change in the political organization of the triumphant North, so as virtually to abrogate State rights and create a centralized domination with all the heresies of the day engrafted, and peaceable recognition, I still prefer recognition.

“If the inquiry be further pressed as to how I would arrange the terms of pacification and recognition. . . . I do not hesitate to say that, dodge or defer it as we may, in my opinion the decision—I mean as to limits and possibly as to debt—must be made by the States and their citizens, acting as they did, when seventy years ago they entered into the Federal compact. There is no other conceivable mode. Maryland and Kentucky, after all, each for herself, will have to determine where her lot shall be cast, and what her pecuniary liability must be, whether for a share of the Federal or of the Confederate debt, or whether to be exempt from both. *What Maryland and Kentucky do, Pennsylvania and Ohio have a right to do.* This settles the question of boundaries, and nothing else will; and if the decision involves the abandonment of Washington, and leaving it the monument of what was once the Capital of a great Republic, be it so. I would rather see it a ruin than what it is now.”

In November, Mr. Reed returned to the charge, and openly suggested the raising of the standard of revolt by the Middle States.

“Yet should, in the providence of God, the spirit of topical fanaticism which has brought all this misery upon us still maintain its sway, it may be the destiny of these great Middle States to speak, and if need be to act, in self-defence in maintenance of all that is left of Constitutional liberty in the fragmentary and shattered Union which yet survives. They may act together, or they may act separately. Within each of them is the perfect machinery of Government, and all that is wanting is an animating and practical spirit of local loyalty. It may be that one man can supply that spirit: and it is the hope that these fugitive words of earnest suggestion rather than of counsel, may find an answer in the heart of the people, that they are given to the public.”

These utterances are valuable as affording us a key to the conferences between Lord Lyons, the English Minister, and the leading Democrats of New York, in November, 1862. The party had been elated with its success in carrying the State of New York a few days before, and had been both depressed and irritated by the dismissal of McClellan. Lord Lyons' official dispatch states :

“Several of the leaders of the Democratic Party sought interviews with me, both before and after the arrival of the intelligence of General McClellan's dismissal. The subject uppermost in their minds while they were speaking to me was naturally that of foreign mediation between the North and the South. Many of them appeared to think that this mediation must come at last, *but they appeared to be very much afraid of its coming too soon*. . . . I gave no opinion on the subject. I did not say whether or not I myself thought foreign intervention probable or advisable ; but I listened with attention to the account given me of the plans and hopes of the Conservative party. At the bottom, I thought I perceived a desire to put an end to the war, even at the risk of losing the Southern States altogether ; but it was plain that it was not thought prudent to avow this desire. Indeed, some hints of it dropped before the elections were so ill-received, that a strong declaration in a contrary sense was deemed necessary by the Democratic leaders.

“They maintain that the object of the military operations should be to place the North in a position to demand an armistice with honor and effect. The armistice should, they hold, be followed by a Convention, in which such changes in the Constitution should be proposed as would give the South absolute security in its slave property, and would enable the North and the South to reunite and to live together in peace and harmony. The Conservatives profess to think that the South might be induced to take part in such a Convention, and that a restoration of the Union would be the result. The most sagacious members of the party must, however, look upon the proposal of a Convention merely as a last experiment to test the possibility of reunion. They are, no doubt, well aware that the more probable consequence of an armistice would be the establishment of Southern independence, but they perceive that if the South is so utterly alienated that no possible concessions will induce it to return voluntarily to the Union, it is wiser to agree to separation than to prosecute a cruel and hopeless war.

“If their own party were in power, or virtually controlled the Administration, they would rather, if possible, obtain an armistice without the aid of foreign governments ; but they would be disposed to accept an offer of mediation, if it appeared to be the only means of putting a stop to hostilities.”

These humiliating negotiations with the agent of a foreign and unfriendly power show that Mr. Reed had only been the mouth-piece of the secret councils of his party. He, too, had urged an armistice as a necessary preliminary to the contemplated surrender.

“I would begin with a cessation of hostilities and an armistice for a fixed period, not too short. . . . If arms were laid down for a time, there would be a repugnance to take them up again, which, of itself, would be favorable to satisfactory adjustment.”

Thus was inaugurated the policy of a “cessation of hostilities” and a Convention, to which the Democratic party steadily adhered. At Chicago,



two years later, it formed the basis of the platform, and in November, 1864, it was indignantly rejected by the people. During those two years it was constantly put forward that the people might become accustomed to it, and no longer dread the fearful anarchy which would be its almost necessary result.

Thus, at the formal inauguration of the Democratic Central Club, of Philadelphia, with which the party celebrated the 8th of January, 1863, the orator of the day, Mr. Charles Ingersoll, made the proposed Convention the subject of his discourse, and was prepared to adopt the most revolutionary means of attaining the object.

"There is but one way of arriving at a solution of the question as to whether we are to have a speedy peace and union, and that is by conventions of the people. To effect this is not easy of accomplishment, because, throughout the North there are many States in possession of the Republicans, and there is hardly any State in which the Democrats are wholly in power. In this State the Democrats have the Governor and Senate against them, with the House in their favor. Under these circumstances, we should do what has frequently been resorted to in England—we *should refuse the supplies*. The speaker advocated this measure at some length as a means of instituting a State Convention. This would be followed by Conventions throughout the Northern States. We should then be in a position to offer our terms and settle with the South this great question. Mr. Ingersoll concluded amid prolonged applause."

In March, Mr. Ingersoll again urged the subject in an address delivered before the same body, and on the 28th of the same month, Mr. Reed also recurred to it on a similar occasion. His remarks, though somewhat obscure, are fearfully suggestive.

"The path which I desire to pursue to take me out of the miseries and oppressions upon us is one which the Constitution prescribes—a popular Convention—National, if it can be, if not National, a State Convention. *But I look upon a Convention as an end, not as a means; for, as a means, it is too slow.* We shall bleed to death before a Convention can be instituted. *Still, it is a good ultimate result.* . . . Such conventions emanating from and directly representing the people, would have adequate power. They would be as the Convention that made the Constitution. *They would change, modify, abrogate.*"

We are thus prepared to understand the authorized exposition of Democratic policy, as published to the world at Chicago, and can appreciate what was meant by the second resolution of the platform, where the war was explicitly declared to have been a failure

"*Resolved*, That this Convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that, after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretence of a military necessity of a war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and public liberty and private right alike trodden down, and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired, justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate Convention of all the

States, or other peaceable means to the end that at the earliest practicable moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States."

It is no wonder that the rebels, in their terrible straits, hailed the "ray of light from Chicago." There is a wonderful similarity between the words of Alexander H. Stephens, when treating of such a Convention in his letter of Oct. 16, 1864, and those which we have already quoted from Mr. Reed's "Vindication."

"All questions of boundaries, confederacies and union or unions would naturally and easily adjust themselves, according to the interests of parties and the exigencies of the times. Herein lies the true law of the balance of power and the harmony of States."

So, too, the Hon. W. W. Boyce, of South Carolina, in a letter to Jefferson Davis, Sept. 29, 1864—

"I think our only hope of a satisfactory peace, one consistent with the preservation of free institutions, is in the supremacy of this (the Democratic) party, at some time or other. Our policy, therefore, is to give this party all the capital we can. You should, therefore, at once, in my opinion, give this party all the encouragement possible, by declaring your willingness to an armistice and a Convention of all the States, in their sovereign capacity, to enter upon the subject of peace.

"It may be said, the proposed convocation of the States is unconstitutional. To this I reply, we can amend the Constitution. It may be further objected that to meet the Northern States in convention is to abandon our present form of government. But this no more follows than that their meeting us implies an abandonment of their form of government. A Congress of the States in their sovereign capacity is the highest acknowledgment of the principles of State Rights."

Mr. Stephens was suspected of being weak in the knees, and, on Nov. 14, 1864, when a frank exposition of his views could no longer injure the prospects of McClellan, he communicated to the press another letter, dated Nov. 5, 1864, in which he gave his reasons for desiring the Convention, as proposed at Chicago. A paragraph in this remarkable document shows in the clearest light the results expected, North and South, from the co-operation of the States Rights Democracy with rebellion, and the fearful abyss which we escaped by the re-election of Mr. Lincoln.

"There is no prospect of such proposition (a Convention of the States) being tendered, unless McClellan should be elected. He cannot be elected without carrying a sufficient number of the States, which, if united with those of the Confederacy, would make a majority of the States. In such a Convention, then, so formed, have we not strong reasons to hope and expect that a resolution could be passed denying the constitutional power of the Government, under the compact of 1787, to coerce a State? The Chicago platform virtually does this already. Would not such a convention probably reaffirm the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 1798 and 1799? Are these not strong reasons, at least, to induce us to hope and believe that they might? If even that could be done, it would end the war. It would recognize as the fundamental principle of American institutions the ultimate absolute sovereignty of the several States. This fully covers our independence—as fully as I ever wish

to see it covered. I wish no other kind of recognition, whenever it comes, than that of George III. of England, viz: the recognition of the sovereignty and independence of each State separately and by name."

The same ground was taken by the Hon. H. W. Hilliard, of Georgia.

"It seems to me plain that we should accept the forum indicated by the Chicago Convention, as the appropriate one for the settlement of our troubles. The very proposal to refer the settlement of the great quarrel to the arbitrament of a convention, composed of delegates from all the States, is the most emphatic recognition of sovereignty of the States. They would assemble as sovereigns. They would discuss the grounds of difference between them as sovereigns. They would adjust their political relations independently. Closing their deliberations, they would refer the measures they had matured to the people of the several States for final action."

Thus, by the mere fact of their assembling, the Union would be resolved into a mass of independent jarring nationalities, and they would then proceed, as Mr. Reed told us, "to *change, MODIFY, ABROGATE.*"

#### SYMPATHY WITH THE SOUTH.

Entertaining these views, and cherishing these schemes, it was natural that the Democracy should look upon the Southern leaders with sympathy and respect, and should endeavor to divert the antipathy of the people from them to the Administration. Thus the following, from the *Philadelphia Age* of Sept. 23, 1864, palliates the rebellion and its chief by establishing a parallel with the Revolution and George Washington.

"They (the Yankees) have lately added to their collection the Bible of Mary Washington, the mother of a certain slaveholder named George, who made himself notorious some years back in a little rebellion which was got up in this country. Mary's Bible was very properly stolen from Arlington and carried to New England, for if she had read it in the spirit of the enlightened thief whose library it now decorates, she would have taught George better than to hold slaves and lead rebellions."

So the same journal of Dec. 7, 1863, in commenting on General Meigs account of the battle of Lookout Mountain, observes—

"It was shining—this full moon of the Tennessee mountains—on other contrasts. It shines, as General Meigs is quite aware, on the great joker at Washington and his truculent War Minister—and it shines, too, on the stern, attenuated and resolved rebel at Richmond, whom General Meigs, of all men in the world, would be most sorry to encounter, and who, when the name of Meigs and others are mentioned, must thrill sadly on this world's ingratitude."

This comparison of the national with the rebel authorities, to the disadvantage of the former, has been a favorite with the Democracy. Thus the same journal, the *Age*, of Feb. 6, 1864, inquires:

"Is it any worse to fire at our flag than it is to fire into our Constitution? . . . And now we take upon ourselves to say, that while the rebels, at Sumter, fired at the flag, Mr. Lincoln, in his sphere, has fired into the Constitution,

and has literally attempted its destruction. If the rebels, for firing at the flag, deserve to be devastated by war, what punishment should be visited upon the President for firing into the Constitution?"

And Mr. William B. Reed, in a letter to the Hon. E. F. Chambers, of Maryland, published in the *Age*, Nov. 7, 1864, draws a picture of the time when, in case Mr. Lincoln should be re-elected,

"Lee and Beauregard, Johnson and Longstreet, and Breckinridge and Ewell and Early are killed, or captured, or fled to the mountains, or gone, like the unfortunate but gallant Jacobites, like Berwick and Sarsfield, into foreign service," while "the work of conquest, or even subjugation, if that be the wretched word," is entrusted "to the unsaturated Molochs whom three years of bloody, fruitless warfare have not satisfied."

So the Philadelphia *Evening Journal* of Jan. 20, 1863, commences an elaborate article devoted to the praises of Jefferson Davis, as follows:

"The third annual message of Jefferson Davis to the Confederate Congress and Abraham Lincoln's last message to the United States Congress, provoke a comparison quite damaging to the intellectual capacity of the Federal President."

At the great ratification meeting of the Chicago nominations, held in Philadelphia Sept. 17, 1864, the Hon. Emerson Etheridge made a speech, in which he said, as officially reported in the *Age*,

"There is not an honest man in my State, there is not a man with an honest reputation who will vote for Abraham Lincoln. [Laughter and cheers.] They think the unlawful despotism of Jefferson Davis is no more unconstitutional and dangerous than the arbitrary usurpations of Abraham Lincoln. [That's so, and applause.] . . . Before the war, no Southern man ever made war upon our liberties until Northern aggression converted them from our friends to our foes, and to-day, Abraham Lincoln stands, according to his own confession, as much opposed to the restoration of the Union as Jefferson Davis. Lincoln says they cannot come back unless under an unconstitutional condition, while Jefferson Davis says he will not come back unless he can have his own way. Now who is the worst traitor, Jefferson Davis or Abraham Lincoln? [Cries of 'Lincoln,' and cheers.]"

Even the Hon. S. S. Cox, of Ohio, who was the leader in Congress of what was called the War Democracy, while professing opposition to the rebels, in his Chicago speech denounced the Administration with equal or greater bitterness.

"For less offences than Mr. Lincoln had been guilty of, the English people had chopped off the head of the first Charles. In his opinion, Lincoln and Davis ought to be brought to the same block together. The other day, they arrested a friend of his, a member of Congress from Missouri, for saying, in private conversation, that Lincoln was no better than Jeff. Davis. He was ready to say the same here now in Chicago. Let the minions of the Administration object, if they dare."

At a Democratic celebration in New York, April 13, 1865, just after Lee's surrender, and the day before the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, Mr.



Edward Ingersoll, of Philadelphia, made a speech, reported in full in the *New York News*, in which he said :

“I yield to no man in sympathy for the people of the South—a gallant people struggling nobly for their liberty against as sordid and vile a tyranny as ever proposed the degradation of our race. Nay, I go further, and with Jefferson, Madison, and Livingston, I fully embrace the doctrine of secession as an American doctrine, without the element of which American institutions cannot permanently live.”

Thus, in the beginning, the Democracy invited secession, and, to the end, it encouraged rebellion with sympathy and prospects of ultimate success. Let us now turn to the relations held by the party to the Government which was fighting the desperate battle for national life.

## II.—OPPOSITION.

Every measure adopted by the Administration to suppress the rebellion was honored by the hearty opposition of the Democracy, which spared no effort to influence the people against those to whom was entrusted the safety of the nation during its hour of trial. The war itself received their heartiest condemnation.

### THE DEMOCRACY A PEACE PARTY.

It is true there was a wing of the party, known as "War Democrats," but they were powerless, and such as attempted independence of action were promptly read out of the party. The peace men controlled the organization and policy of the party, and the war men never failed to support them at the polls. Practically, the party was a unit in favor of peace; and in this it was consistent from first to last.

At the great Democratic meeting of January 16, 1861, at Philadelphia, the ninth resolution adopted declared,

"We are therefore utterly opposed to any such compulsion as is demanded by a portion of the Republican Party; and the Democratic Party of the North will, by the use of all constitutional means, and with its moral and political influence, oppose any such extreme policy, or a fratricidal war thus to be inaugurated."

And a month later, at the Democratic State Convention, held at Harrisburg, February 22, 1861, the following resolution "was received with the most rapturous applause, nearly all the members of the Convention rising, cheering, and waving their hats."

"*Resolved*, That we will, by all proper and legitimate means, oppose, discountenance and prevent any attempt on the part of the Republicans in power to make any armed aggression upon the Southern States, especially so long as laws contravening their rights shall remain unrepealed on the statute books of Northern States, and so long as the just demands of the South shall continue to be unrecognized by the republican majorities in these States, and unsecured by proper amendatory explanations of the Constitution."

It was in precisely the same spirit that Benjamin G. Harris, a Democratic member of Congress from Maryland, on April 9, 1864, had the effrontery to declare in the House of Representatives:

"The South asked you to let them go in peace. But no; you said you would bring them into subjection. That is not done yet, and God Almighty grant that it never may be. I hope that you will never subjugate the South."

This being good Democratic doctrine, it is not surprising that, with one exception, the Democratic members voted in a solid body against Mr. Harris' expulsion, nor that, when he was sent as a delegate to the Chicago Convention, he was received there as a member of the party, in full communion and good standing.

At Chicago, indeed, Mr. Harris found himself among congenial spirits. There the Rev. C. Chauncey Burr, of New Jersey, publicly declared,

"You cannot have the face to ask the South to come back into the Union until you withdraw your marauding army. Is there a man in this audience that wants to have one half of the States conquered and subjected? [No.] When this is done you have ended the Government. After three years of war, who are conquered, you or the South? I say you are conquered. You cannot conquer the South, and I pray God you never may."

James S. Rollins, of Missouri :

"I love our Southern friends; they are a noble, a brave, and a chivalrous people [cheers], although they are trying to break up the Government; and however much we may hate them, we must remember that they are our countrymen, and cannot be subdued so long as we insist upon depriving them of their rights."

John J. Van Allen, of New York :

"War is disunion. War could never produce peace. It was impossible to subjugate eight millions of people, and it ought not to be done, if it could be done."

In fact, the Chicago Convention was a peace convention, of which the ruling spirit was Vallandigham. He framed the second resolution of the platform, which, as we have seen, was regarded at the South as tantamount to recognition of their independence. In his Chicago letter of October 22, 1864, he boasted that, in the Committee on Platform, it received fifteen votes out of eighteen; and in his speech at Sydney, Ohio, he stated that an amendment, suggesting the alternative of war, in case of the failure of "peaceable means," was unanimously rejected. So well was he satisfied with the result, that, while yet fresh from Chicago, in his Dayton speech, of September 6, he exultingly exclaimed :

"That convention has met every expectation of mine. The promises have all been realized. The convention was emphatically not only a peaceable but a *peace convention*. It was a peace convention; and, speaking in the name of more than twenty millions of freemen, it demanded peace after the failure of the experiment of war. No man among the earnest advocates of peace, from the beginning of the war till this hour, has in any formal public declaration demanded more than that convention has declared. It meant peace, and it said so. It meant, and it means now, that there shall be no more civil war in this land."

Mr. Vallandigham was justified in this assertion, not only by the plat-



form, but by the temper of the Convention, as shown by the speeches of its members and hangers on. Thus Mr. G. C. Sanderson exclaimed,

"Is it not time that this infernal war should stop? [Cries of yes.] Has there not been blood enough shed? Has there not been property enough destroyed? Have we not all been bound, hand and foot, to the abolition car that is rolling over our necks like another Juggernaut. . . . We must have peace. Peace is our motive; nothing but peace. If the Southern Confederacy, by any possibility, be subjugated by the abolition administration, the next thing they would turn their bayonets on the freemen of the North, and trample you in the dust."

And the Hon. James H. Reed, of Indiana :

"The will of the people is declared for peace, and in this declaration there is nothing tending to folly, inasmuch as in the coming election they intend to oust the incumbents of office, and to inaugurate a rule which will bring peace and prosperity once more to this land."

So the Rev. J. A. McMaster, of New York :

"Let us demand a cessation of the sacrifice until the people shall pronounce their great and emphatic verdict for peace, and let the tyrant understand the demand comes from earnest men and must be respected. We are often called the 'Unterrified.' I trust you are. I hope that your nerves may be of steel, for there is a day of trial coming and you must meet it."

It is hardly worth while to multiply examples of this seditious peace spirit in the convention, and we will content ourselves with a few indications of the mode in which the party elsewhere endorsed it.

Thus at the McClellan Ratification Meeting, held in New York, August 30, 1864, every speaker declared in favor of peace, denounced the draft, and congratulated the party that it had finally and definitely accepted the peace policy. Mr. James Brooks exclaimed, "No more fighting; fighting will never restore the Union; fighting and cuffing make no friends." Judge Daly "thought there was a possibility of a peace and a preservation of the Union through a compromise." Mr. Nelson Smith told the crowd of admiring Democrats :

"The question now is, whether after four years of war this Union can be saved without any further prosecution of the war. . . . After four years of war, we must now resort to some other means than war, by which our troubles can be settled and peace restored—that peace is received as the duty of the incoming administration, a cessation of hostilities, and a convention of the two PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY, to see if they cannot settle this matter."

Mr. Conrad Swackhammer assured his applauding auditors that,

"George B. McClellan will be the next president, and within twenty-four hours after that election peace will be declared. We are tired and sick of calls for 500,000 more men by those who have no thought but for slavery. I hope in November you will all go forth, not with a musket to take your brother's life, but to cast a little white ballot for McClellan and Pendleton, and thus this war will be stopped. This war will be ended by diplomacy."

Mr. Robert C. Hutchins declared that,

"The people demand some other means of restoring the Union than that of war, and believe that a restoration can be reached by peaceable means, and not by massacre. War and only war can never restore the Union; an armistice may, but a million of men cannot; it has been proved that an armed force cannot."

Mr. William G. Gover said :

"I am in favor of an armistice, and believe that we can settle our difficulties better by diplomacy than we can by the bayonet and the sword."

Mr. John L. Overfield exhorted his hearers :

"Now, gentlemen, you've but to look this matter in the face and say whether you will pay these high prices, and be drafted and torn from the bosoms of your families. [Cries, No, no.] Will you be torn from these, or will you stay at home and train your children up; that, gentlemen, is to be decided next November."

And the great peace organ, the *New York News*, rejoiced over the authoritative exposition of its favorite principles, as follows :

"We accept the platform of the Convention as a great triumph of the peace party. The proposition for an armistice and a convention of all the States, as suggested several months ago by *The News*, has received the sanction of the Democracy through their delegates, and the peace men may rest assured that that proposition, carried into effect, will bring about an enduring peace between the sections. The nominee of the Chicago Convention for the presidency is not the candidate of our preference, but, standing upon the platform upon which he has been nominated, and . . . being assured that with the election of General McClellan the war will end, we will support the nominations made at Chicago, from this hour until the close of the polls in November.

"The nominee for the Vice Presidency is the man of all men, whom, had the choice been ours, we would have selected. In the nomination of George H. Pendleton, a tribute has been worthily offered to the peace sentiment, of which he has been a consistent champion."

It is true that General McClellan made a feeble attempt to justify the War Democrats in their support of him by some generalities in his letter of acceptance, but he was speedily given to understand that, as James Buchanan said, he was a platform and not a man. Thus Fernando Wood in a meeting held September 17, in New York, assured his hearers :

"Besides, if elected, I am satisfied he will entertain the views, and execute the principles of the great party he will represent, without regard to those he may himself possess. He will thus be our agent, the creature of our voice, and as such cannot if he would, and would not if he could, do otherwise than execute the public voice of the country."

So at the great Ratification Meeting held in Philadelphia on the same day, Mr. George M. Wharton laid down the received rule of party discipline:—

"The platform of the Chicago Convention stands before the American people

as the political creed of the Democratic Party in the existing crisis of the country. It must necessarily be the rule of practice of every one who accepts a nomination under it."

Mr. Vallandigham himself, the great apostle of a submission peace, in his Dayton speech of September 7, said of McClellan :

"I accept him as presented by, and support him to carry out—as I know he will carry out—the doctrines and principles enunciated in that Convention, which are now the demand of the people of the United States."

And the Indianapolis *Sentinel* proclaimed for its party candidate,

"His programme will be a cessation of hostilities and an attempt to restore the Union by compromise and reconciliation ; or, failing in that, taking the last extreme—*recognition*."

#### DENUNCIATION OF THE WAR.

The Democracy from the first having denounced the war as unconstitutional, unlawful, and hopeless, were not likely to soften their opposition to it as it progressed. If its fortunes were adverse, it afforded an opportunity of unlimited abuse of the Administration ; if our arms were successful, it threatened to destroy their hopes of a pro-slavery reconstruction, and their bitterness was intensified ; while the sacrifices entailed by the struggle formed an inexhaustible theme for appealing to the worst passions of the people.

At a great meeting of the party, held in Philadelphia, September 17, 1863, to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution, Mr. Joel Cook declared, and his remarks, according to the party organ, were received with great enthusiasm :

"I do not wish in these days to see the flow of blood, or hear the din of battle ; to have my property seized for taxes or mortgaged to secure an immense national debt, or to know that my friends or neighbors, or perhaps myself, can be dragged off by conscription laws to fight against their brethren. . . . I cannot regard a great victory over my brethren as anything but food for melancholy reflection."

In the same mood, Mayor Gunther, the representative of New York, the great headquarters of the Democracy, in his message of September 29, 1864, vetoing the resolutions to illuminate in honor of Sheridan's victories in the Valley :

"I yield to no man in my attachment to the Union as it was and the Constitution as it is, but as the President demands of the *Southern people* to abandon the rights which the Constitution confers, I do not see how those, who have always held that the Federal Government has nothing to do with the domestic institutions of the States, can be expected to rejoice over victories which, whatever they may be, surely are not Union victories."

So, at the Syracuse Convention, held August 18, 1864, preliminary to

that at Chicago, among the resolutions adopted denouncing the Administration, we find the following :

“ It has, and is still waging a bloody and relentless war for the avowed purpose of exterminating eight millions of freemen from the homes of their fathers, and blotting out from the American constellation one-half of the States of the Union. It has sought to arouse and enlist the most wicked and malignant passions, reckless of all ends if it but subvert the existing Government and immolate American citizens.”

The Ashland, Ohio, *Union*, a paper warmly supported by the Democratic organization of its region, could scarcely find words too bitter to describe our armies :

“ Hired Hessians going to the sunny Southern soil to butcher by wholesale not foreigners, but good men, as exemplary Christians as any of our own men. . . . This is a damned abolition war. We believe Abe Lincoln is as much of a traitor as Jeff. Davis.”

In a speech before the Lansing (Michigan) Democratic Association, in March, 1863, Mr. George W. Peck declared,

“ You black Republicans began this war. You have carried it on for two years. You have sent your hell hounds down South to devastate the country, and what have you done? You have not conquered the South; you never can conquer it. And why? Because they are our brethren.”

A tract, extensively circulated by the Democratic Committee of Pennsylvania, in the canvass of 1864, thus addressed the citizens of the State :

“ FARMERS,—*men of the rural regions!* This abolition business has MORTGAGED your farms *forever* to the rich men of this country and Europe for every penny the lands are worth; and you will have to pay the interest of this mortgage *annually*, in the form of heavy and ever increasing taxes. This, in addition to the chance of being yourselves or of having your sons or relatives dragged away by the DRAFT, to meet danger or perhaps death on the battlefield! All, to set loose upon the country a parcel of brutal Africans, who, for all they can ever hope, here or hereafter, are better off in their present homes than anywhere else in the world, or than they would be in Africa itself.”

At the Chicago Convention, of course, this feeling found full and free expression. The Rev. C. Chauncey Burr exclaimed,

“ We had no right to burn their wheat fields, steal their pianos, spoons or jewelry. Mr. Lincoln had stolen a good many thousand negroes, but for every negro he had thus stolen, he had stolen ten thousand spoons. It had been said that if the South would lay down their arms they would be received back into the Union. The South could not honorably lay down her arms, for she was fighting for her honor. Two millions of men had been sent down to the slaughter pens of the South, and the army of Lincoln could not again be filled, neither by enlistments nor conscription. If he ever uttered a prayer, it was that no one of the States of the Union should be conquered and subjugated.”

And Mr. Henry Clay Dean :

“ For over three years Lincoln had been calling for men, and they had been

given. But with all the vast armies placed at his command he had failed! *failed!! FAILED!!! FAILED!!!!* Such a failure had never been known. Such destruction of human life had never been known since the destruction of Sennacherib by the breath of the Almighty. And still the monster usurper wanted more men for his slaughter pens. . . . Ever since the usurper, traitor and tyrant had occupied the presidential chair, the Republican Party had shouted war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. Blood had flowed in torrents, and yet the thirst of the old monster was not quenched. His cry was for more blood."

Entertaining these views with respect to the war, of course the efforts of the party were directed to render it unpopular, and to oppose every measure necessary for its continuance and success. The Hon. D. W. Voorhies, of Indiana, understood this when in an address to his constituents in April, 1861, he promised them :

"I say to you, my constituents, that as your representative, I will never vote one dollar, one man, or one gun to the Administration of Abraham Lincoln to make war upon the South."

In this, Mr. Voorhies merely gave expression to the received policy of his party as constantly recorded in the proceedings of Congress. It would require too much space to trace the opposition more or less disguised with which every financial and military measure was obstructed by Democratic members, and it will be sufficient to mention a test vote taken in the House of Representatives, December 17, 1863, on the following resolution of the Hon. Green Clay Smith, of Kentucky :

"That we hold it to be the duty of Congress to pass all necessary bills to supply men and money, and the duty of the people to render every aid in their power to the constituted authorities of the Government in the crushing out of the rebellion, and in bringing the leaders thereof to condign punishment."

On this simple proposition, in a full House, the vote on the Democratic side was three yeas to sixty-five nays. And the pledge thus given for the party has been faithfully carried out in every detail.

#### OPPOSITION TO VOLUNTEERING.

Thus, when the country depended upon volunteers to keep the ranks of the Union armies full, Democrats in their zeal constantly exposed themselves to the penalties of the law by discouraging and dissuading men from enlisting. Their arguments are well put by the Grand Rapids (Michigan) *Enquirer*, in 1861.

"The Democrats and the South have no quarrel; why then should we be called upon to assault and murder our friends and desolate their lands? It seems unreasonable that sensible men should ask such a thing. If we remain passive in this contest, these Abolitionists ought to be satisfied. Again we say, Democrats ponder well before you enlist."

Even the smallest incidents were taken advantage of to keep Democrats



from volunteering, both from opposition to the war and a desire to keep up the party strength at home. Thus the *Philadelphia Age*, of November 2, 1863, on learning that the defeat of Vallandigham in Ohio had caused rejoicing in Rosecrans' army, says :

"Every Democrat, therefore, who volunteers and happens to get into the Department of the Cumberland, must expect to join in 'three times three' whenever his party is defeated. . . . We know that in this State we outnumber and outmatch them ; but, although they may be unable to cut all of our throats, why, *we can commit suicide*. Let us hasten to do it."

If, these were the orthodox Democratic views on the subject of volunteering, it is easy to imagine how bitter were their

#### DENUNCIATIONS OF THE DRAFT.

It might have been thought that the New York Democratic draft riots, in July, 1863, in which Governor Seymour addressed the mob as his "noble hearted friends," would have proved a terrible warning of the results of thus working on the passions of the multitude. It would appear, however, as though their only influence was to excite regret at their prompt suppression, for they were immediately followed by a systematic process of again stimulating opposition to the point of resistance. Scarcely was the month out, when the "New York States' Rights Association" published a "Declaration" in which it took the ground that,

"Whenever the sovereignty of the State is invaded, and the rights essential to its existence are usurped, it is the duty of the Governor to take official, prompt, and public notice of the wrong and danger, and forthwith prepare to maintain its sovereignty, if needs be, with all the power of the State. . . . The act commonly called the Conscrip Act does invade the sovereignty and jurisdiction of this State, and usurp rights essential to its existence. We denounce it as contrary to the fundamental rights and liberties of the land, unequal in the distinction it makes between the rich and the poor ; oppressive in its compulsory provisions, whereby the freemen of this State are illegally compelled to go out of the State to fight, being a forced military service never before demanded or claimed by the Federal Government. We denounce the whole Act in its general intent and purport, and its special provisions, as despotic, harsh, unjust and illegal. We therefore call upon the Governor to 'maintain and defend the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the State,' and to protect the people in their rights and liberties from this most odious and intolerable oppression."

Governor Seymour was quite ready to go as far as he dared in response to this appeal. In his letter of August 9, 1863, to Mr. Lincoln, he says :

"It is believed by at least one-half of the people of the loyal States that the Conscription Act, which they are called upon to obey because it is on the Statute Book, is in itself a violation of the supreme constitutional law. There is a fear and suspicion that while they are threatened with the severest penalties of the law they are to be deprived of its protection. . . . I do not dwell upon what I believe would be the consequence of a violent, harsh policy before

the constitutionality of the Act is tested. You can scan the immediate future as well as I. The temper of the people to-day you can readily learn."

The significance of these scarcely veiled threats is apparent from a call made to the citizens of the Nineteenth Ward, New York, to raise a regiment of National Guards

"To be placed at the disposal of the Governor at the earliest possible moment, either to repel a foreign foe, or to maintain the rights of the Empire State; an invasion or usurpation would be equally obnoxious; therefore, as we value liberty, so let us be vigilant."

This dangerous temper of the people was carefully fostered by the Democratic press. Even the organ of the professed War Democrats, the *New York Leader*, lent its aid to sedition. In speaking of the examination of claimants for exemption, it exclaimed, August 15, 1863,

"The story of Wat Tyler taught our British ancestors the danger of combining indecency with tyranny. Have our rulers forgotten the lesson, or does our degeneracy justify the contempt with which they treat it?"

Mr. William B. Reed, of course, was not behind hand in the endeavor to render the law odious. In his Meadville speech, September 17, 1863, he remarked:

"Now what shall I say of the other Federal centralizing device, by which uniforms are forced on the backs of those who do not wish to fight, and a heavy tax is laid, not according to any principle of law or Constitution, but by lot. This, it will be admitted, is a very imperial sort of decree, by which Mr. Lincoln declares every able bodied citizen of Pennsylvania, from eighteen to forty-five, a soldier in his army,—to be handcuffed, if need be,—to be put in any regiment he chooses, and to be relieved from service only by paying into his treasury a tax of three hundred dollars."

No time was lost in getting a decision adverse to the Act, and on November 10, the Democratic Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Lowrie, Woodward, and Thompson, pronounced it unconstitutional. The use made of this judgment was promptly shown by the *Philadelphia Age* of November 12, which said of the Enrollment Act: "It ceases to be a law, and it becomes the duty of every good citizen to resist its enforcement." At that time, the draft was indicated for January 5, 1864, and lest the people under its pressure should endeavor to avert it by volunteering, the *Age* proceeded to argue that no danger of a collision with the authorities was, however, to be feared, for

"Were there no better reason, it would be sufficient for the Washington authorities to know that those who should attempt to arrest men in this State, by virtue of the Conscription Act, would be mere trespassers, and to resist them would be every one's right and duty. It is not possible that such collisions will be provoked, and we conclude, therefore, that for the present the people of Pennsylvania are relieved from the terrors of the conscription."



And Congress was scarcely organized before Mr. Philip Johnson, a Democratic representative from Pennsylvania, introduced a resolution requiring the President either to acquiesce in the decision of the State tribunal, or to submit the question to the U. S. Supreme Court, then under Chief Justice Taney. For this obstructive measure the Democratic members, with the exception of four, voted in a solid body. What is known as the Columbia County Conspiracy, an armed and organized resistance to the law, was the natural result of these teachings.

The privilege of commutation had been the chief point of attack by the Democrats, but its removal only intensified their bitterness. At the Chicago Convention the draft was the subject of the most inflammatory appeals to the people. Thus, the Hon. James H. Reed, of Indiana, said :

“He advised open and above-board resistance to the draft. If Lincoln and his satraps attempted to enforce it, blood would flow in our streets, and it would be right it should flow. Lincoln was already damned to all eternity, and he did not know if even this iniquitous measure would materially affect the estimation in which the people held him. . . . He advised his hearers to shoot down those who would enforce the draft; to insist upon the right of the writ of habeas corpus; to resist to the bitter end the attempt to make the military power superior to the civil, and to openly arm themselves that they might be prepared for horrible contingencies.”

Mr. Paine, of Missouri, asked his hearers,

“Did the people want a draft? [Not by a d—d sight.] Then they must upset the present government at Washington. This dynasty had already placed in the field 2,200,000 men to be offered upon the altar of the negro, and now it demanded 500,000 more. If these are given there will be no finality, but only a prelude to fresh calls, all to elevate the flat-nosed, woolly-headed, long-heeled, cursed of God, and damned of man, descendants of Africa.”

The Hon. H. S. Orton, of Wisconsin, however, admitted that he liked the draft, on account of the political advantage it gave the Democracy.

“Under the pressure of the draft—and God bless the draft—it is the best argument that has ever been addressed to the American people. It proves that we have touched bottom, we have got a realizing sense that we have got nearly to the last ditch, the last man and the last dollar.”

The Rev. C. Chauncey Burr gloated over the resistance that had already been made, and threatened a revolution.

“In New Jersey they had shifted the responsibility of these despotic acts to the shoulders of the Abolitionists, and more than one provost marshal had a hole made through his head. In that State it was a difficult matter at one time to find an Abolitionist who would accept such a position, and the Administration had tried to bribe Democrats, but, thank God, they had failed. But they had well nigh reached the end of their reign of despotism. They could and should not go any further. They were about to be swept from the land by an indignant people. They talked about a rebellion down South, but a greater rebellion had been in progress in the North.”

## DEMOCRATIC ASSAULTS ON THE FINANCES.

If the Democrats thus did all they could to prevent the government from getting men, they were not less eager to cut off its supplies of money, by attacking its credit, and keeping the prospects of repudiation before the people.

Governor Seymour, while canvassing the State of New York before his election in 1862, thus artfully deprecated and threatened repudiation :

"The weight of annual taxation will severely test the loyalty of the people. Repudiation of our financial obligations would cause disaster and endless moral evils. But pecuniary rights will never be held more sacred than personal rights. Repudiation of the Constitution involved repudiation of national debts."

Mr. William B. Reed, shortly afterwards, in his "Vindication" was more out-spoken.

"Will any man, the veriest optimist who lives, tell me that in his conscience he looks to the payment—even to the extent of its appalling interest—of the war debt we are now rolling up so fast—its thousands or hundreds of millions, funded or unfunded,—without counting the millions of negroes and by, for claims and damages and pensions, or the contingent cost of negro deportation and colonization? It is a grave subject, this, of public credit, on which no one should talk lightly. Its abuse and its disparagement are alike, though not equally, mischievous. But the fear and the belief of every thoughtful man must at this moment be that, unless some limit to new debt be soon imposed, when pay-day comes there will be a race among the States of the North as to further disintegration, and an effort in this way to escape from the overpowering burthen of desperate indebtedness."

The same gentleman, a year later, in his Meadville speech of September 17, 1863, thus attacked the whole financial system and credit of the government :

"First, as to the Federal paper currency. It is a huge engine of ultimate misery. It is pestilent because it is insidious, and pervades every channel of active life, and influences every relation of business. It is pestilent as a confession of weakness, for no government that felt itself strong, and was not on the defensive, ever made such an experiment. . . . We do it with all our boasted prosperity, because, in point of truth, the sources of real and substantial credit are cut off by our own insanity; because no one abroad will lend us money, and no one at home will, if they can help it, lend us money. . . . The only persons who need not take this trash, or who are forbidden to take it, are the government itself; for remember, one large element of the enormous price you now pay for tea, and coffee, and sugar, and such necessaries of life, is the heavy duty in gold and silver which the government exacts. But, except the duty thus paid, and the little interest they promise to pay on the public debt, there is nothing about us or around us but a vast ocean of unconvertible and irredeemable paper, increasing every moment that the bleeding artery of war expenditure continues to flow."

In August, 1864, Mr. Vallandigham, at the Syracuse Convention, indulged in the most fearful amplification and prophecies of evil.

"A debt of nearly four thousand millions, a daily expenditure of nearly five

millions, and a currency worth about thirty-eight cents on the dollar, which two months ago was worth one hundred per cent. more than it is now, and which two months hence will be worth *one hundred per cent. less*. Ruin is impending."

Nor have these persistent assaults upon the credit of the government ceased with the triumphant close of the war. That has vindicated itself, but the public debt is a thing as well of the present and the future, and the Democracy, who grudge the object for which it was created, still continue their attacks upon it. On May 24, 1865, the Democratic Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania pronounced the Legal Tender Act unconstitutional, and Mr. Edward Ingersoll, in his New York speech of April 13, 1865, attacked the very corner-stone of public faith and national credit, and boldly justified repudiation.

"I shall deal with this question politically, and inquire, for a moment, whether the laboring and producing classes of America are, by our laws, or by our system of government, or by any code of law or honor, human or divine, bound to assume this burden? . . . If, on the contrary, it is revolutionary, and has been created in violation and in overthrow of our institutions, our duty as conservative and honest citizens is to resist it and support these institutions. . . . In short, sir, to put the argument in a word, this is the debt of Abolitionism. If Abolitionism has been false to American institutions, . . . then are the laboring and producing classes of America under no obligation to its support."

This is not merely a sporadic manifestation of individual seditious dishonesty, but an indication of a determinate party policy, which shows itself elsewhere with more or less distinctness. The New York *World* occasionally experiments upon the patience of its readers with insidious comparisons between the Confederate and the Federal debt. The Cincinnati *Inquirer*, the organ of the party in the Central West, is more outspoken. In its issue of June 6, 1865, it says:

"Sincerely, we are afraid that the national debt will not be paid. . . . We must certainly not repudiate, though we may fail to pay. To repudiate, would be to declare that we do not owe, which would be very wrong; to fail to pay might be entirely right, as it could be put upon the ground of overpowering necessity. There is always an implied condition in the creation of debts, public as well as private, that the party promising shall, at the time it falls due, have the means to meet his obligation. If members of Congress find themselves unable, in conscience, to vote taxes upon their constituents, or instalments when there is no money in the Treasury, who is to blame? If the people resolve to vote for a representative whose sincere convictions are against taxes, rather than for one whose convictions are the other way, who is to blame them? . . . When the people decline to vote for members of Congress who are known to be in favor of continued or increased taxation, and conclude to vote for members who are known or believed to be opposed to such continuation or increase, we shall be disposed to hold that they understand their own business and ability best, and shall not, therefore, be impelled to pronounce against their honesty or their patriotism. So far, we think, we can promise."

And this barefaced repudiator returns to the attack, June 10, with an

article, in which he lets us see how he expects to bring about his object, by familiarizing the people with the idea of repudiation.

"As the good Mr. Sleek said of the Potowatomies, we say of the public creditors, we *hope* they will get their money. . . . We have always observed, that when some men begin to speak of not paying their debts, provided things are thus and thus, it is not long before they learn to drop the contingency and go in for non-payment altogether."

#### THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

was not intended to soothe the exacerbations of pro-slavery Democracy, and no surprise, therefore, can be felt at its calling forth denunciations in every degree of bitterness. Two examples will suffice to show the temper in which it was received. Thus the *Age* of Nov. 13, 1863, indulges in playful pleasantry.

"The original draft of the Emancipation Proclamation is for sale out West; and one bid has been offered of twelve hundred dollars for it. Some Loyal Leaguer 'hopes it may be secured for a loyal Historical Society.' Dick Turpin's commission to rob on the highway, which this eccentric rascal had drawn up and forged the seal and signature to, recently sold in London for £240, just exactly the price offered for the Emancipation Proclamation."

The *Philadelphia Evening Journal* of Jan. 20, 1863, was, however, not disposed to regard the subject in so jocular a light. It quoted the following from Jefferson Davis' recent message concerning the Proclamation, and endorsed the remarks as being "truthfully spoken:"

"It is also in effect an intimation to the North *that they must prepare to submit to a separation*. . . . Humanity shudders at the appalling atrocities which are being daily multiplied under the sanction of those who have claimed temporary possession of the power in the United States, and who are fast making its once fair name a reproach among civilized men."

And the *Journal* proceeded to comment and enlarge upon this text.

"None of the great benefits predicted from the Emancipation Proclamation have been realized. The slaves have not risen and cut their master's throats, as the Abolitionists so fondly hoped. . . . Well, the slaves have not risen, but it has been through the Providence of God, and not from the desire of Mr. Lincoln to the contrary. He issued his incendiary address to them, inviting them to strike for freedom, but they have remained faithfully with their masters, except where they have been driven away at the point of the bayonet by Federal troops. . . . The President has just as much right to declare the marriage tie dissolved in the South as the bond of master and servant. One is as much a military necessity as the other. Who but a madman or a fool believes that the Union can be restored by such means."

#### THE AMNESTY PROCLAMATION

found as little favor in the eyes of the Democracy. Its terms were so liberal, and it manifested so earnest a desire to restore the Union, that the Democratic organs at once set to work to persuade the South that they

could not, in honor, avail themselves of it. Thus, the *Age* of Dec. 11, 1863, argues :

"For Mr. Lincoln, therefore, to compel the people of the South to swear that they will 'abide by and faithfully support all proclamations having reference to slaves,' is not less arbitrary and unreasonable than to force them to give in their allegiance to his creed about spirit-rapping, and, if complied with, would strip those who yielded of even the semblance of self-government."

The New York *Leader* of Dec. 12, was even more vehement.

"The grotesque absurdity of this plan is at once apparent. Why, to say nothing of those in rebellion against the Union, we can most confidently assert that at least three-fifths of the people of the so-called loyal States would refuse to take any such oath under any circumstances whatever. The recent illness of Mr. Lincoln must have affected his brain. . . . As Democrats, we care nothing for this Proclamation. It can have no official force until it is issued, and then it will fall as flat as dish water. It is inconsistent, contradictory, unconstitutional and nullifies itself."

The Greensburg (Pa.) *Argus* was especially solicitous for the honor of its Southern friends. According to it, the Proclamation

"Proposes to absolve treason by an *oath* involving not only a VIOLATION OF THE CONSTITUTION, but also the surrender of all POSSIBILITY OF MANHOOD, by swearing to sustain measures of the Executive not yet proclaimed. In a word, under the specious pretence of proposing a plan for the restoration of the Union, it adopts a plan *which is sure to defeat it.*"

The New Haven *Daily Register* of Dec. 11, it is true, took a different view of the matter, which shows the extent to which lust of power and place can go. It advised its Southern allies to submit to the degradation, and promised them the assistance of its party in breaking their oaths of amnesty.

"We hope the people of the South will accept this offer, and thus put an end to this bloody strife. With their representatives again in Congress, it will not take long to wipe out the revolutionary measures of the Abolitionists and place the Union again on the basis of the Constitution. *By this means, too, they can help the conservative Union men of the North to recover power in the Government.*"

#### DENUNCIATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

It will be difficult for the next generation to credit the wrathful bitterness with which the Administration was daily assailed throughout the length and breadth of the land—a bitterness contrasting strangely with the reticent sympathy manifested towards the rebels. In the Chicago platform, for instance, there is no word of reprobation for those who for four years had been seeking to destroy the nation, while one-half of the resolutions were devoted to an arraignment of the Administration.

"*Resolved*, That the direct interference of the military authority of the United States in the recent elections held in Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri



and Delaware, was a shameful violation of the Constitution, and the repetition of such acts in the approaching election will be held as revolutionary, and resisted with all the means and power under our control.

*Resolved*, That the aim and object of the Democratic party is to preserve the Federal Union and the rights of the States unimpaired; and they hereby declare that they consider the Administrative usurpation of extraordinary and dangerous powers not granted by the Constitution, the subversion of the civil by military law in States not in insurrection, the arbitrary military arrest, imprisonment, trial and sentence of American citizens in States where civil law exists in full force, the suppression of freedom of speech and of the press, the denial of the right of asylum, the open and avowed disregard of State rights, the employment of unusual test-oaths, and the interference with and denial of the right of the people to bear arms, as calculated to prevent a restoration of the Union and the perpetuation of a government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed.

*Resolved*, That the shameful disregard of the Administration to its duty in respect to our fellow-citizens who now and long have been prisoners of war in a suffering condition, deserves the severest reprobation, on the score alike of public interest and common humanity."

This, however, is moderate in comparison with the fierce abuse lavished upon the Government by the orators of the Convention. Thus the Rev. C. Chauncey Burr declared,

"Argument was useless and the time for action had come. He would speak with that freedom which had been the wont of the people of America for the last three years. During that time, spies and informers had been on the track of the people, and, in point of fact, we had lived under a despotism worse than that of Austria. The people had submitted to that despotism, not because of a want of courage, bravery, or pluck, but because they were a law-and-order people. They had patiently waited for a change in the policies of Lincoln's administration, but it had been denied them, and for nearly four years they had submitted to these acts of despotism. And it was a wonder they had a Cabinet and men who carried out the infamous orders of the gorilla tyrant that usurped the Presidential chair."

And Captain Kuntz, of Pennsylvania, asked,

"Shall more wives be made widows and more children fatherless, and greater hate be stirred up between children of the same glorious Constitution? If not, we must put our foot on the tyrant's neck and destroy it. The Democratic government must be raised to power, and Lincoln with his Cabinet of rogues, thieves and spies be driven to destruction."

This, in fact, was the tone of the Democratic organs everywhere. Thus, at the Syracuse Convention, Aug. 18, 1864, one of the resolutions declared,

*Resolved*, That we offer our solemn protest against the usurpation and lawless despotism of the present Administration as subversive of the Constitution and destructive to the liberties of the people. It has denied to sovereign States constitutional rights, and *thereby absolved them from all allegiance*. It has trampled down a nation that it may instal a military despotism upon the ruins of constitutional liberty. . . . It has struck down freedom of speech and of the press. It has stripped from the American citizen his panoply, and consigned him to the bastille without process of law, without charge, and without opportunity of trial. It has, by the military, violently suppressed the freedom

of the ballot, and dictated elections at the point of the bayonet. It has annulled every constitutional guarantee for the protection of the citizen and subjected him to an irresponsible tyranny of military violence."

So the State Central Committee of Pennsylvania, in their address to the people during the canvass of 1864, assured us—

"Nor can hope find a resting-place in contemplating the MEN who now control our Government and administer the laws; and it turns sickened and sadly away from the audacity, arrogance and tyranny it finds in high places, even in the very citadel of the nation. Sciologists in government; atheists in religion; men who are free-lovers in one sphere and free thieves in another; renegades in politics and scoffers at every well settled principle of public right and private virtue now sway the destinies of this Republic, and are crushing out the very life of American freedom."

This cry was echoed everywhere, but a single additional example must suffice, taken from the *Philadelphia Age* of Oct. 1, 1864.

"When we review the long and fearful catalogue of wrongs and infamies and crimes committed on these suffering people under orders from the great criminals at Washington, we cannot believe that any one wearing a human form and having a human heart within his breast could sit idly by and not give a cheering voice and extend a helping hand to his Democratic brethren of the North, who now, in the face of despotic power, are fighting this last great battle for human freedom. . . . We have wept with them when the standard of civil and religious liberty has been trodden in the dust by Mr. Lincoln's myrmidons. We have unsparingly denounced the cowardly acts of the base traitors at Washington who have taken away their dearest rights and liberties."

#### DENUNCIATION OF MR. LINCOLN.

Concentrated upon the President, this abuse became frantic reviling. Those who now profess to revere his memory could then find no words coarse or bitter enough to express their hatred and contempt of his person and motives. The "Great Joker," baboon, ape, gorilla, usurper, tyrant, monster, widow-maker, Negro-God,—such were the customary epithets applied to the Chief Magistrate of the nation. Enough of this, perhaps, has incidentally been given above, and from among fifty specimens of ribaldry which lie before us, we can find space but for the following, which will exemplify their general tone. It is from the *La Crosse (Wis.) Democrat*, and was largely and approvingly copied by other Democratic papers.

"Yesterday was Fast-Day. The widow-maker called for half a million of men, and then asked God to bless him for the cruel deed! And in this connection we are led to repeat:

"*God bless our noble President!*

"Bless him for being the poorest apology for a Chief Magistrate the world ever saw.

"Bless our noble President for being the only clown, buffoon, and story-teller ever elevated to a position of influence in this country.

"Bless him for filling the land with smutty jokes—with foul-mouthed and obscene stories which even blackguards by profession are ashamed to repeat.

"Bless him for overriding all laws, both human and divine.

“ Bless him for his imbecile incompetency, and for his success in ruining a great nation.

“ Bless him for turning the war for a restoration of the Union, and for the suppression of the rebellion into a wicked and murderous crusade for cotton, niggers and power.

“ Bless him for making a million of widows, and five millions of orphans.

“ Bless him for robbing the North of its bone and sinew, for using the bodies of those whose servant he is to enrich the soil of rebel territory.

“ Bless him for piling mountains of taxes upon us—for the stamps we use—for the depreciation of our currency—for the poverty, ruin, and suffering in the land—for the thousands of women he has forced into houses of prostitution—for the thousands of broken hearts—for thousands of orphaned children who will curse him forever—for the army of cripples—for the corruption in high places—for the trampling upon the liberties of a free people—for freeing the negroes by a stroke of his pen—for continuing this war till slaves are freed, thus proving the foolishness of his proclamation—for the failure of his armies—for the deprivation of rights which had made America the home for all God's oppressed—for the depopulation of the land and the feeling of undefinable dread, which might have been golden had he been more of a man and a statesman, and less of a pliant tool in the hands of fanatics.”

The promulgation of these sentiments naturally led to threats of vengeance, legal or illegal, such as those made by excited orators at the Chicago Convention, where the Hon. W. W. O'Brien, of Illinois, assured his hearers that,

“ When Abraham Lincoln retired from the Presidential chair, they would renew trial by jury and try him for the offences he has committed against the laws and the Constitution. He would be provided with counsel and protected by good Democratic lawyers. (Cheers.) They would try him as Charles I, was tried in England, and the verdict of the jury might be the same, that he had been found guilty of being a tyrant and a traitor. Whatever they would do would be under the law, and if they found him guilty, they would find men to carry out the law. (Cheers).”

And the Hon. Benjamin Allen, of New York, prophesied :

“ The people will soon rise, and if they cannot put Lincoln out of power by the ballot, they will by the bullet.”

The crime of Booth was the logical result of all this, and its sequence is to be found in the *New York News* of June 8, in which the court now trying the assassins is told :

“ If they order any body to be executed, they will be simply guilty, every one of them, of deliberate murder, and when this people wakes a little out of their bewilderment, the members of that military commission will be hanged.”

#### THREATS OF RESISTANCE.

The aid and comfort afforded to rebellion by the Democracy was not confined to argument and denunciation. Efforts were constantly made to stir the people up to the pitch of armed resistance, and, but for the sleepless vigilance of the Government, the attempt would have been infallibly made through the agency of the secret Democratic orders, the “ Knights

of the Golden Circle," the "American Knights," and the "Sons of Liberty."

The leading principles which, more or less concealed, form the basis of much that has been quoted above, will be found reduced to their simple expression in the following from the "Lesson" of the First Degree of the Order of the Sons of Liberty.

"10. Whenever the officials, to whom the people have entrusted the powers of the Government, shall refuse to administer it in strict accordance with its constitution, and shall assume and exercise power or authority not delegated, it is the inherent right and imperative duty of the people to resist such officials, and, if need be, to expel them by force of arms. Such resistance is not revolution, but is solely the assertion of right.

"11. It is incompatible with the history and nature of our system of government, that Federal authority should coerce by arms a sovereign State; and all intimations of such power or right were expressly withheld in the Constitution, which conferred upon the Federal Government all its authority."

And the Grand Commander of the Order in Indiana, (H. H. Dodd, of Indianapolis, who confessed his guilt by violating his parole and escaping to Canada while under trial), in his address to the Order of that State, February 16, 1864, thus communicates the views of Vallandigham on the subject:

"He finally judges that the Washington power will not yield up its power, until it is taken from them by an indignant people by force of arms. He intimates that parties, men and interests, will divide into two classes, and that a conflict will ensue for the mastery."

The same ideas, more decently veiled, are conveyed in the third and fourth resolutions of the Chicago Platform, under guise of fear lest the coming elections should be controlled by the military power of the Administration, and of indignation at the disarming of the Sons of Liberty in Indiana.

In view of the programme thus indicated, it is easy to understand the threats in which Democratic demagogues habitually indulged.

Thus Mr. Max Goepf, in a speech at Lancaster, Pa., September 17, 1863, told his hearers:

"So long as the free exercise of the elective franchise is left us, I still hope. Should that be taken away, we have nothing left to live for, and may as well sell our lives as dearly as we can."

So Mr. Senator Wall, of New Jersey, May 9, 1863, enlightened the Democratic Central Club of Philadelphia, on their rights and duties:

"I do not hesitate to declare in the ears of the Administration and of the Loyal Leagues its allies, that if their war upon the personal liberty of the subject, in defiance of the guarantees of the Constitution, goes on, the time may come when 'forbearance ceases to be a virtue,' and 'resistance to tyrants



becomes obedience to God.' Let our cry be, in the fearful contest which is approaching, 'We will ask for nothing but what is right; we will submit to nothing that is wrong.'"

And Mr. Edward Ingersoll endeavored to excite the passions of the same body, June 13, 1863 :

"Can the Democratic people of America protect and defend the institutions of this country against the revolutionary assaults of Abolitionism? Aye, sirs, and whether the appeal be to the ballot-box, or the hideous but not less popular appeal to the cartridge box be forced upon the people, I have not a particle of doubt of the result. . . . Maintain your laws, peaceably if you can, forcibly if you must. Your Constitution provides that, 'the right of the *people* to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.' That clause has full meaning, and was not provided for you without anxious thought for the future, founded on a knowledge of the past!" -

Nor was there wanting a Tyrtæus to sing the wrongs and threaten the vengeance of the martyrs who were cruelly restrained from destroying their country. To relieve the monotony of prosaic treason, a few lines may be quoted, from "The Bastiles of America," "written for the AGE," and printed therein, September 23, 1863.

"A thousand memories of wrong, which freemen ne'er forget,  
Are brooded o'er in Warren, and the vaults of Lafayette,  
The shield of law our fathers gave, their children's sole defence,  
You've wrested on the 'safety' plea, the tyrant's old pretence;  
And now, with daggers at our breasts, you bid us hug our chains,  
And bear in silence all the stripes, dealt by a host of Cains.  
No! by the bright heroic past, its deeds of high renown,  
That thundered at the gates of kings, and shook their sceptres down,  
By shades of Franklin, Jefferson, of Henry, Adams, Lee,  
And sires that fought with Washington the battles of the free,  
We will not be your willing slaves, while one warm drop remains,  
Unchilled by tyrant's menaces in dauntless freemen's veins!"

This sort of malignant folly was kept up until the eve of Mr. Lincoln's re-election. The National Democratic Executive Committee, on October 10, 1864, issued an address in which they endeavored to inflame the passions of the people by recounting the tyrannical excesses of the Government, and wound up by threatening a revolution in case of McClellan's defeat at the polls.

"They believe that the American people, armed with the majestic authority of the Constitution and the laws, will meet these beginnings of usurpation in the spirit and with the determination of their fathers; nor suffer Executive ambition so far to corrupt the constitutional remedies of Executive wrong-doing as to condemn this great and free people in the immediate future to the condition of the remedies of the subject populations of the older world."

On the same day, the special organ of the Peace Democracy, the *New York News*, carried out the proposition to its legitimate results, by declaring that McClellan's election was hopeless, and that the time for action was at hand.



' The sun is not more certain to rise to-morrow, than that the President of these United States for the next four years will be Abraham Lincoln! . . . The last refuge and hope of law, order and Constitutional Government trampled under foot, it becomes the bounden duty of every man among us who would be free, to look, like our Revolutionary fathers, to the remedy of his own right-hand; and, standing on his constitutional rights, to declare in the face of hostile or banishment, or still better, in the very front of hurtling battle, that 'RESISTANCE TO TYRANTS IS OBEEDIENCE TO GOD.'

Fortunately, the popular condemnation of these wicked schemes was so overwhelming, that in very despair they abandoned the plot, and the only portion of it which ripened to development was the Chicago attempt to set loose the rebel prisoners at Camp Douglass.

#### REBEL APPRECIATION OF THE DEMOCRACY.

It is not to be supposed that the rebels failed to recognize their friends. When Jacob Thompson could award to a Democratic member of Congress a part of the funds entrusted to him for the hire of assassins, incendiaries and propagators of pestilence, he showed his estimate of the value set upon the services of the Hon. Benjamin Wood, his paper and his party. Notwithstanding the reticence which was imperative in the public avowal of this mutual support, still its expression by rebel statesmen and journals was sufficiently frequent and open to show how confidently it was relied on as one of the elements of success, as soon as the stubborn valor and persistency of the North showed them the fallacy of their early contempt for the Federal power.

Thus when Captain Maury, after the disasters of Gettysburg and Vicksburg, sought to reassure the enemies of freedom in Europe, he did not rely upon the rebel armies, but drew his argument from the anticipated triumphs of the Democracy, as the sure forerunner of Confederate independence. In his letter of August 17, 1863, to the *London Times*, he says:

"New York is threatening armed resistance to the Federal Government. New York is becoming the champion of State rights in the North, and, to that extent, is taking Southern ground. . . . Vallandigham waits and watches over the border, pledged, if elected Governor of the State of Ohio, to array it against Lincoln and the war, and to go for peace. . . . Never were the chances of the South brighter. All that we have to do is to maintain the defensive, watch our chances, and strike, whenever there is an opportunity for a good stroke with the sword or with the pen."

Maury but echoed the received opinions of his friends at home. The principal argument used to stimulate the rebel armies to follow up their victory at Chickamauga, was that their success would insure that of the Democracy with whom they were virtually coöperating. Thus the Rich-

mond *Enquirer*, of September 22, 1863, says that if the Federal troops could be

“Defeated at Chattanooga and driven back upon Nashville, the Vallandigham men in Ohio could carry the election next month with little difficulty; the peace men in the United States would once more assert their manhood, and speak out as they did before the late *disasters* had choked their utterances.”

This was no temporary or exceptional policy. Just before the Chicago Convention, the rebel press again urged the importance of rebel victories to help the Democracy. The *Richmond Dispatch* of August 15, 1864, thus speculated on the future, not anticipating how thoroughly the Peace Democrats would control the party organization.

“Reverses to the Yankees, in the next two months, should they be serious, may bring about great changes. They alone can checkmate Lincoln and weaken his hand, which is quite strong as compared with the frantic organization led by the ridiculous Fremont, and the Democratic Party, broken in two by the peace and war divisions. With success to Lincoln’s armies, we are satisfied these elements do not exist in sufficient force to throw off the Lincoln yoke. Yet they may be strong enough, with the help of Southern victories, to dethrone the abominable Illinois ape. The armies of the South are indeed fighting for the liberties of the Northern States, as well as for those of the Southern.”

The hollowness of McClellan’s pretensions to be a war candidate did not deceive these keen-eyed observers. The *Richmond Enquirer*, of September 8, boasted that,

“Every defeat of Lincoln’s forces enures to the benefit of McClellan. . . . The influence of the South, more powerful in the shock of battle than when throwing her minority vote in an electoral college, will be cast in favor of McClellan by this indirect yet efficacious means.”

So the Hon. W. W. Boyce, of South Carolina, in his letter of September 29, 1864, to Jefferson Davis, says:

“But fortunately Mr. Lincoln and those he represents are not all of the North. There is a powerful party there which condemns his policy. That party is rational on the subject of slavery. It represents whatever of amity and conservatism is left at the North. This party proposes that the war shall cease, at least temporarily, and that all the States should meet in amicable council, to make peace if possible. This is the most imposing demonstration in favor of peace made at the North since the war broke out. . . . Your only hope of peace is in the ascendancy of the Conservative Party North. *Fortify that party if you can by victories, but do not neglect diplomacy.*”\*

Jefferson Davis took the advice. He did not neglect “diplomacy,” for on October 3, his agents in Canada remitted to their friends in New

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\* Since the collapse of the Rebellion, Mr. Boyce has been putting on some pretended airs of Unionism. His true sentiments may be found in a speech which he delivered at Columbia, S. C., on the evening before the election of Mr. Lincoln in 1860. “I think the only policy for us is to arm as soon as we receive authentic intelligence of the election of Lincoln. . . . We will not submit, whether the other Southern States act with us or with our enemies.” And at that time, Mr. Boyce was a member of Congress.

York, \$10,000 in gold, on October 11, \$5,000 in gold, and on November 3, 4 and 8, \$6,000 in currency. He also felt the importance of fortifying the Democratic Party by rebel victories, for in his Augusta speech of October 3, he exclaimed :

“We must beat Sherman, we must march into Tennessee ; there we will draw from 20,000 to 30,000 to our standard, and, so strengthened, we must push the enemy back to the banks of the Ohio, and thus give the peace party of the North an accretion no puny editorial can give.”

And the next day, at Columbia, S. C., he repeated the sentiment :

“Let fresh victories crown our arms, and the peace party, if such there be at the North, can elect its candidate.”

So, after Mr. Lincoln's re-election, November 9, Mr. Foote, of Tennessee, declared in the Richmond Congress :

“I say we have friends—good, true, valiant friends at the North. Every vote given for McClellan was for peace. Every vote given for McClellan was a vote against Lincoln's African policy. Every vote given for McClellan was a vote given for an armistice. If McClellan had been elected, he, Foote, was prepared to make from his seat a proposition for a convention of the sovereign States, North and South, and he believed the South would have secured from it peace and her independence.”

The “peace” thus confidently anticipated from McClellan's success by all parties at the South, was a peace founded on separation and independence. In Jefferson Davis' Augusta speech of October 3, he declared :

“My first effort was for peace. . . . From time to time, I have repeated efforts to that end, but never, never, have I sought it on any other basis than independence.”

Even in the despondency of last winter, when the Rebel Commissioners met Mr. Lincoln at Fortress Monroe, the same high spirit was preserved. At the great meeting in the African church at Richmond, February 9, 1865, to fire the Southern heart anew, Mr. Secretary Benjamin, in rendering an account of the negotiations, told the disappointed people :

“Our Commissioners, sent to confer with the enemy, went with a piece of blank paper filled with one word written by our President—Independence. . . I believe, contrary to the honorable gentleman who has preceded me, that when Blair came to Richmond, there was an opportunity for suspending fighting and bloodshed, in which time measures might be taken for restoration of peace, but none of us for a moment dreamed of reconstruction.”

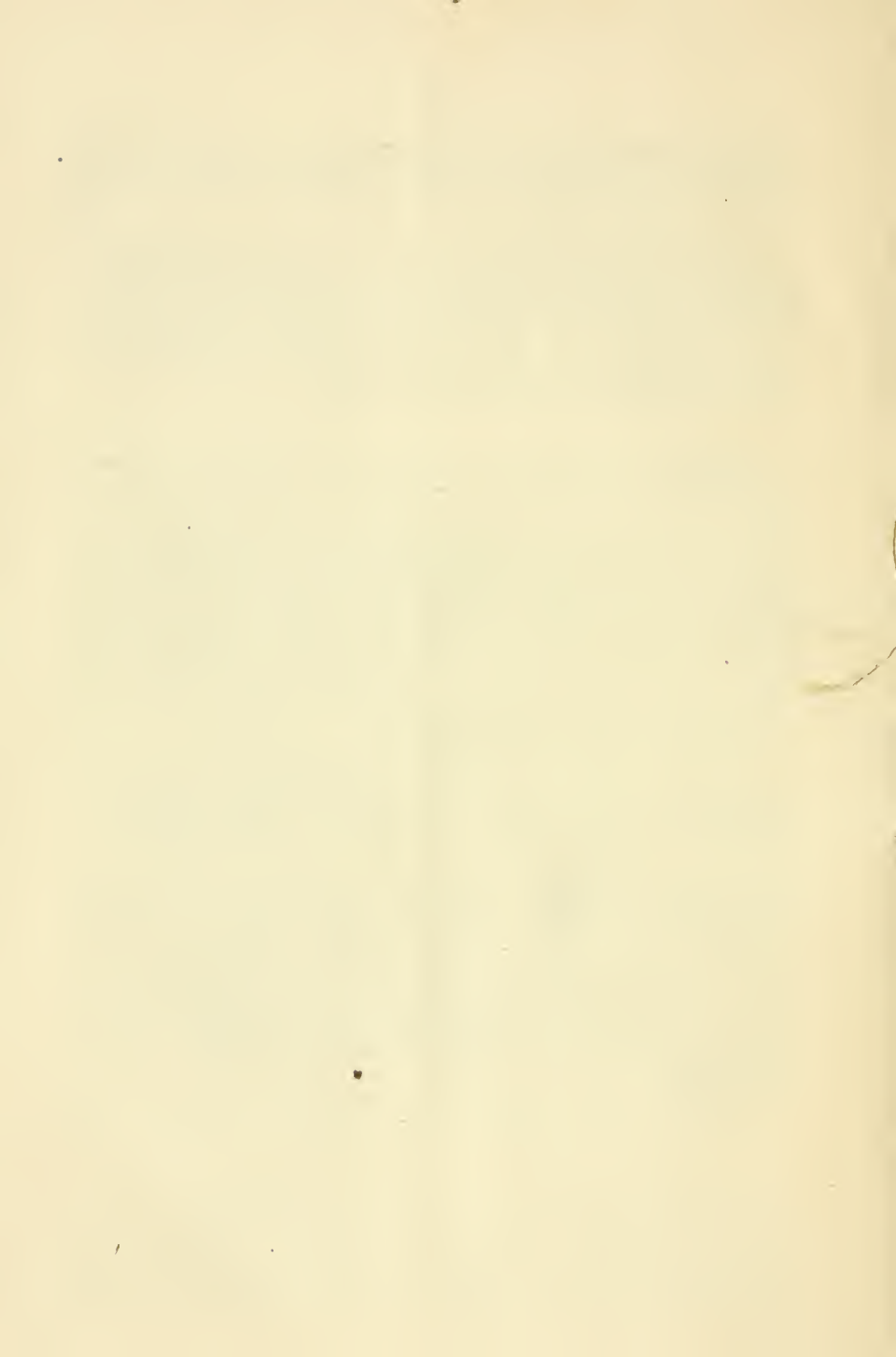
Even still, now that the Confederacy and its independence have vanished like a dream, ambitious demagogues are striving to build up a reconstructed Democratic Party on its ruins. The red-handed accomplice of Booth, George N. Sanders, in his proclamation of June 1, “To the Patriots of the South,” promises them the aid of the Northern Democracy in re-vindica-

ting their old supremacy, and evidently looks forward to the time when by this means he shall be enabled to insult a nation of mourners by his restoration to a place in its councils.

“The Northern conservatives cannot stand by motionless and see established, upon a pretext of punishing rebels, the agrarian precedent announced in President Johnson’s ‘disability’ proclamation. . . . You have the power to direct the future. Then call upon the men of the North, who acknowledge your equality in the Union, to meet you in convention in New York City, before the Northern fall elections, and there to organize with you a great national party, such as will deter the profligate President and his provost spies from laying their brutal hands upon unoffending men, women and children.”

This, then, is the record which the Democratic Party has made for itself during the war for the Union. It rejected from its communion the men whose patriotism set country above party, and surrendered its destinies to short-sighted and narrow-minded politicians, whose blind selfishness led them to see their advantage in sedition and treason. In a Republic, two parties are well nigh indispensable, and an honest, patriotic Opposition is in the highest degree desirable; but an Opposition which, in a rebellion, takes sides with insurgents, forfeits for the future all claim upon public confidence, and must be content with the contemptuous obscurity accorded to unholy ambition baffled in its wicked schemes.

Our repulsive task has been to show, upon Democratic evidence, that this is the doom earned for itself by the Democratic Party. Yet another lesson may also be learned from the retrospect. Without a clear understanding of the policy and efforts of the Opposition, it is impossible to appreciate the full glory of Mr. Lincoln’s Administration, engaged in a desperate war with rebellion, and crippled at every turn by an active and unscrupulous faction, which at times threatened to paralyze utterly the arm of the nation. Nor, without considering the aims openly avowed, and the means unhesitatingly adopted by that faction, can we sufficiently admire the invariable good temper, magnanimity, firmness, and reverence for law, which set at naught their plots without sacrificing the rights and liberties of the nation.





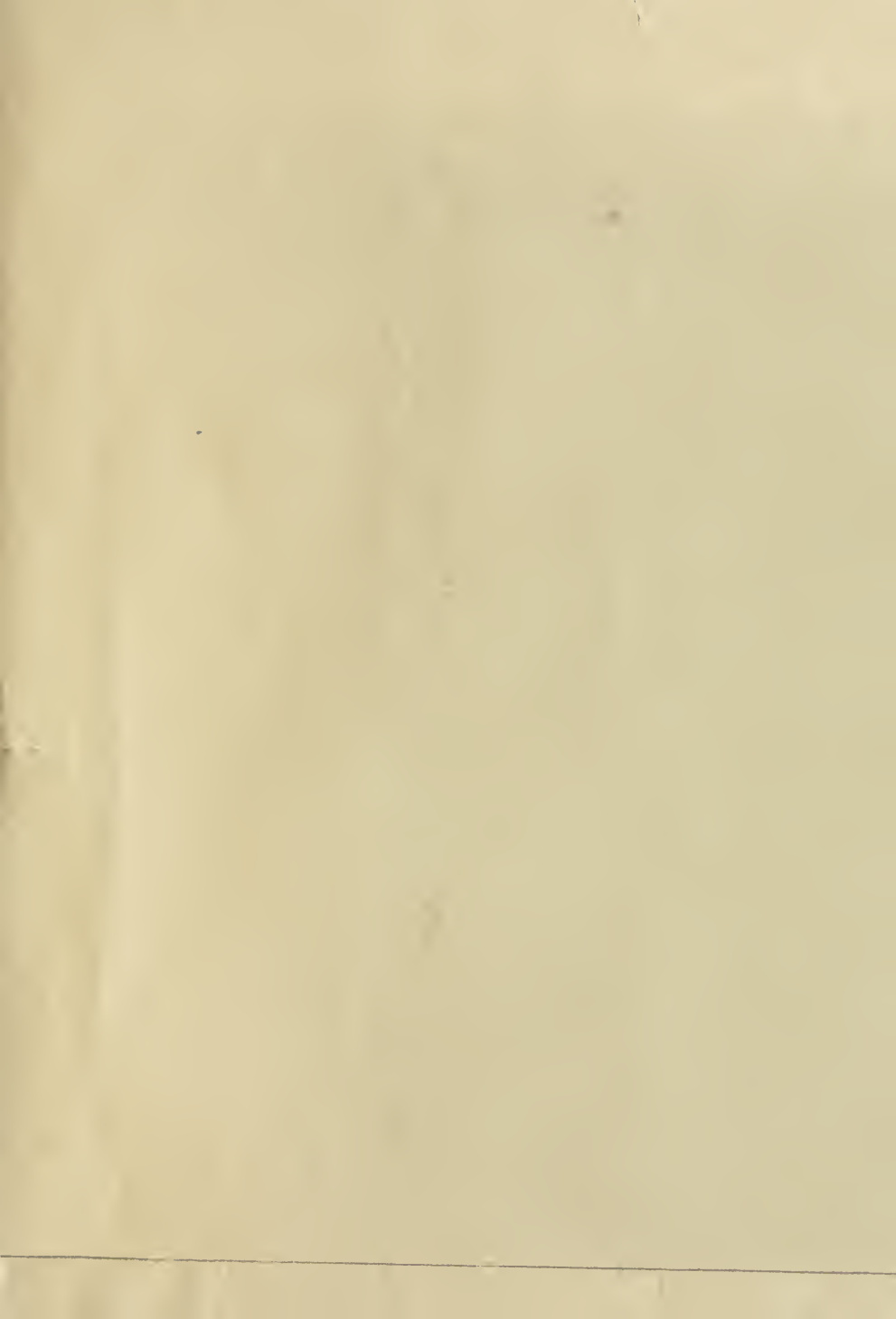


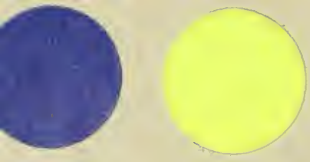
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