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Letters and discussions
on the formation of colored
regiments

Alfred M. Green.

1862.





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LETTERS AND DISCUSSIONS

ON THE

Formation of Colored Regiments,

AND THE

DUTY OF THE COLORED PEOPLE

IN REGARD TO THE

GREAT SLAVEHOLDERS' REBELLION,

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.)

By ALFRED M. GREEN.

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AT the beginning of the great struggle between the Government of the United States and the traitors who lifted their hands against it, I sought the oracles of history for a precedent; and, having easily found it, before uttering a single sentence as to its influence or results upon the great question of slavery in America, I carefully scanned and surveyed the whole question or ground upon which the issue rested. By the fairest rules of comparison and analogy, I found it impossible to separate slavery extension, or the nationalization of this vilest of evils, from the purpose of the arch traitors as their avowed object, and the determination on the part of slaveholders to exercise unlimited power over their dejected victims of the African race as their leading object and the mainspring of the rebellion. Then, having followed history by the same rules of comparison and analogy, it was not very difficult for me to decide as to our duty. Nor have I ever seen anything written, spoken, or performed by the government—its agents—by my abolition friends and associates—or by the conservative Democracy of our land—which has given me occasion to change my opinion.

I have not a doubt at this hour, but that my hopes on the one hand, and my fears on the other, may both yet be realized. A careful reading of the following pages will clearly develop in what these hopes and fears consist. My friends, who ask me from time to time what I think of the present aspect of affairs, may learn from these pages that I am still sanguine of the success of our cause as the result. Still, much depends upon our own exertions as to the character and quality of freedom, suffrage or the enfranchisement that we may enjoy.

Having written much upon the subject, I have been induced to throw together some scraps of arguments offered in reply to the opposition I have met in regard to my opinions, &c.

The first two articles in this pamphlet may be justly styled the foundation of all discussion upon the questions presented. They were met and opposed by white and colored men, while many others of all parties gave my views support. After discussing the question through the columns of the *Pine and Palm* with my anti-slavery coadjutors, I met and discussed it before the Church Anti-Slavery Society of this city on the second Tuesday in September, 1861. A short report of said debate appearing in the *Anglo-African*, drew forth the vigorous discussion through the columns of that journal from which the body of this pamphlet is made up.

I have several lectures and a poem on this same subject, entering more minutely upon the details of the war and its results, which I have delivered with great success and which I now propose, at the suggestion of friends, to lay before the public for perusal at their leisure.

A. M. GREEN.

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THE COLORED PHILADELPHIANS FORMING REGIMENTS.

From the Philadelphia Press, of April 22, 1861.

A NUMBER of prominent colored men are now raising two regiments at the Masonic Hall, in South Eleventh street, and hundreds of brawny ebony men are ready to fill up the ranks if the State will accept their services. Peril and war blot out all distinction of race and rank. These colored soldiers should be attached to the Home Guard. They will make Herculean defenders. Colored men, it will be remembered, fought the glorious battle of Red Bank, when the city was in peril in 1777. The following is the address :

The time has arrived in the history of the great Republic when we may again give evidence to the world of the bravery and patriotism of a race, in whose hearts burns the love of country, of freedom, and of civil and religious toleration. It is these grand principles that enable men, however proscribed, when possessed of true patriotism, to say: "My country, right or wrong, I love thee still!"

It is true, the brave deeds of our fathers, sworn and subscribed to by the immortal Washington of the Revolution of 1776, and of Jackson and others, in the War of 1812, have failed to bring us into recognition as citizens, enjoying those rights so dearly bought by those noble and patriotic sires.

It is true, that our injuries in many respects are great; fugitive-slave laws, Dred Scott decisions, indictments for treason, and long and dreary months of imprisonment. The result of the most unfair rules of judicial investigation has been the pay we have received for our solicitude, sympathy, and aid in the dangers and difficulties of those "days that tried men's souls."

Our duty, brethren, is not to cavil over past grievances. Let us not be derelict to duty in the time of need. While we remember the past, and regret that our present position in the country is not

such as to create within us that burning zeal and enthusiasm for the field of battle, which inspires other men in the full enjoyment of every civil and religious emolument, yet let us endeavor to hope for the future, and improve the present auspicious moment for creating anew our claims upon the justice and honor of the Republic; and, above all, let not the honor and glory achieved by our fathers be blasted or sullied by a want of true heroism among their sons. Let us, then, take up the sword, trusting in God, who will defend the right, remembering that these are other days than those of yore—that the world to-day is on the side of freedom and universal political equality.

That the war-cry of the howling leaders of Secession and treason is, let us drive back the advance guard of civil and religious freedom; let us have more slave territory; let us build stronger the tyrant system of slavery in the great American Republic. Remember, too, that your very presence among the troops of the North would inspire your oppressed brethren of the South with zeal for the overthrow of the tyrant system, and confidence in the armies of the living God—the God of truth, justice, and equality to all men.

With a knowledge of your zeal and patriotism, and a hope of its early development, I am yours, for God and humanity,

A. M. GREEN.

PHILADELPHIA, April 20, 1861.

NEGROES IN THE SERVICE.

From the Philadelphia Sunday Transcript, May, 1861.

The colored portion of our population are anxious to do the State some service. Already they have organized one or more regiments, and are perfecting themselves in the drill. Among the documents which have already emanated from this branch of our population, as to the propriety of their engaging in such service, is the following from the pen of "Hamilcar," a negro of more than

ordinary ability. Without endorsing his communication we give it place, so that all sides may be heard :

“ While many persons in the North—perhaps strong friends of the Union—are not prepared to endorse the idea of admitting colored regiments into its service, it might be well for us to remember that every effort is being made by the South to make their black population efficient aids in defending their soil against our army. The State of Louisiana, for more than three months, has had colored regiments in the home guard service, under the most efficient drill and pay. Vice President Stephens recommended this course to all the States. Tennessee, in pursuance of this recommendation, has passed an act to employ all the available muscle of her free black population. There are four colored regiments now in Virginia, in the service of the rebel government. It is said, on perfectly reliable authority, that black troops shot down Union men at the late battle at Manassas Gap.

“ Where, then, is the consistency, or expediency, of fruitlessly wasting so much time at the North, in discussing the propriety of adopting such a measure, with reference to preparing our colored population for an emergency, such as may be thrust upon us by the introduction of 50,000 or 100,000 Indians and negroes brought into the field against us, and they having all the advantage of the most efficient drill and endurance, by long months of preparation and practice, that we have hopelessly wasted in discussing questions of propriety, &c., &c.

“ Are we to be duped and forestalled in this last hope, so much relied upon as a means of bringing rebels to terms, as we have been in almost every other available means of speedy and honorable settlement? Should the South generally adopt the idea of their dictators, Davis and Stephens, to place in the field 50,000 free blacks, at \$12 per month, (term of enlistment for three years,) will they not soon discover that the same amount of money would emancipate and place in the field 125,000 men, paying their masters liberally—settling also the question of servile rebellion among themselves, the question of contraband emancipation, and the general insecurity of that species of property during the rebellion?

“ Would any offer of our government induce those people to desert or fight against their former masters and emancipators

in such an event? Does not our own wars, and the French and Spanish wars in Hayti, sufficiently develop the fact that the slaves will defend the soil of their birth, even on the most superficial promise of those who are their superiors. Would not the South, by such an act, draw largely upon the moral sentiment of Europe, (that must in no small degree operate for or against their recognition,) by such an act in advance of the North?

“Could we draw more largely on that sentiment at home or abroad by adopting such a measure, by mere necessity, than would the South by the same principle? And especially, when we had to throw into the field raw and undisciplined recruits against the most able and efficiently drilled regiments?”

“To me it seems that reason, prudence, and judgment, aided by the present signs of the times, would indicate that the available muscle, the bone and sinew of our 30,000 colored inhabitants of the city and county of Philadelphia should be encouraged in their (already manifest) patriotic efforts in preparing to sustain and defend the soil and interests of their native State.”

HAMILCAR.

From the Pine and Palm, June 22, 1861.

MR. EDITOR:

Since I last wrote you, on the subject of American revolution, and the manifest interest we have in the great issue now before the country, I have been incessantly laboring, with might and main, to carry out, or to propagate, by all practicable means, the policy therein indicated. Of course, I have not closed my eyes to the various objections raised by learned and tried friends of the enslaved and disfranchised colored Americans of these United States. Nay, on the contrary, I have read and pondered them all over and over again, and I think I gave them the consideration they merit. I do not advance these suggestions I am now about to make, (in continuation of the position I have maintained in my

previous letter,) with any direct reference to any one of the opinions I have met differing from my own; but merely for the purpose of indicating to those who have been long acquainted with me and my most implacable hostility to the slave power, and all who could in any way sympathize with or apologize for the cruel system of tyranny in this country; and to let those of our rulers who expect our cöoperation know, and know in time, that while I am largely filled with patriotism and sympathy for the government, yet that government must be magnanimously generous to the poor and oppressed of this land, ere it can have my hearty and willing support; and until it can have it thus, it cannot have it at all, by no principle, nor by any rule of coercion or impressment that it might adopt in this direction. I think, indeed I know, I have made myself more thoroughly understood on this point by those in authority, both of the State and of the United States, than among our own people. Many of our people would be willing, after an act was passed, by which they were to be forced into the field, to do the work white men would have them do, *i. e.*—shoot down the slaves and free colored population of the South, who might have no possible means of escaping the necessity of going into the service of the Southern Confederacy. As I remarked to a gentleman, a few days ago, it would take a degree of patriotism that I do not possess, to go South for such a purpose. I would readily go to shoot the enemies of the government; but until it was made manifest to me that these men were possessed of discretionary power, of their own will to act in the case as they felt disposed, I should not be willing to shoot them; nor would I do it, whatever the consequences of a refusal might involve in such a case.

As I before stated, I have a motive, and an honorable and just policy to be effected by the position I have assumed on this question, and that policy must be accomplished through the issues arising out of this great revolution, or rebellion, as you may choose to style it. I can realize the necessity of a brother even shooting a brother, or of a father shooting a son, in behalf of the government, among the whites—for with them it is like Absalom's rebellion against the house of King David. The South, and all who aid them, are fighting for a principle that anticipates the subversion of every principle of justice, and the overthrow of the best and

most liberal government the sun ever shone upon. It is the right, therefore, of all white men who love government and the blessings guaranteed to them by the government of the United States, and who believe that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," to defend it even with the shedding of their own kindred blood, to put down treason and rebellion, and maintain the Constitution and the laws. With us it is different—it is different with the slaves and free people of the South—and it is equally so with us. There can be no comparison of the patriotism required to produce such a feeling in us, and that which actuates white men in the same direction. Finding myself greatly deficient when measured by such a standard, and learning that this was the one by which white men measured for us, I have chosen to make known my devotion to the government, and my willingness to serve it in any just and honorable way. But to set myself boldly in the way of any principle or theory, originating from whence it may, that might serve to decoy my brethren, and lead them indiscriminately into the field, with no other motive or purpose than to serve the doubly rapacious desire of unworthy and unjust, hatefully prejudiced men against ourselves, as well as those poor, friendless men they would have us fight, and who, by a proper appreciation of the government paid to their defenceless and unhappy condition, would settle half the bill with their masters, and leave them an easy prey to the popular government, instead of being compelled by the menacing attitude of both North and South, to take sides against the former, even though they should have to settle with masters whom they well understand afterwards—in such an event, I will never, nor will a single man of the hundreds of my acquaintances, take sides with the milk-and-water policy now manifested by the leaders of the United States forces, though it is evident that they neither reflect the popular sentiment of the people, or the policy of the Administration, only so far as that policy is modulated by circumstances brought about by the long reign of Hunker Democracy, whose demagogues early sought for place and position in the army, since they could not get them by the voice of the people at the last election; but who now for a time are allowed to put in their last pleading, in behalf of their miserably deluded and tyrannical brethren of the South, the

slaveholders, whose days of glory and profit, like their own, "are dwindled to the shortest span."

In my last, I left off by introducing an analogy between our condition and that of four persons living as neighbors in the same vicinity. A, who hates me always, is a slaveholder. B, who is influenced so much by A, is the government. C, who I represented as our friend, is the liberal, true-hearted anti-slavery man of the country, who seeks by any and every means, to emancipate the slaves and enfranchise the already freed man. D, is the colored people, North and South; of course, we've all but one interest in *this* matter, at least. A and B are already in deadly combat. C has a manifest disposition to lend B a hand, for he has often expostulated with B about his allowing A so much influence and power in controlling his affairs, especially on this very subject which has created the quarrel. Of course, if they are not enough for A, D can do nothing less than come in for his share of the responsibility. In a word, if the government and the straight-out anti-slavery men of the North cannot settle satisfactorily with the slaveholders, we are ready to give them such a helping hand as will be felt by Southern chivalry to their heart's content. If the government is not willing to endorse our project till it is reduced to an extremity, it may by such a course advance our interests the more. At all events, hundreds of the noble sons of the old Keystone State are coming into the ranks of our regiments now being organized, and going through with the regular drill and school of the soldier, knowing that the day is not far distant when duty will demand efficient service at their hands, in behalf of the slave. Whether government sanctions it or not, God will.

Respectfully, yours,

A. M. GREEN.

MEETING OF THE CHURCH ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

From the Anglo-African, September, 1861.

The regular monthly meeting of the Church Anti-Slavery Society was held on Tuesday evening, September 10th, at the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Cherry street, east of Eleventh. The meeting was considerably larger than usual, which, of course, during these times, is ominous of good to our cause. Another very important item is the fact that the meeting was largely interspersed with the leading and representative families of color belonging to this city. Our people have long been derelict to duty and interest in this direction, but it is hoped that war—this great purifier and refiner's fire of this as well as every other age—will eventually bring us up to the standard of true elevation.

Wm. S. Young, Esq., was called to the chair, by the temporary absence of the Rev. Dr. Church, the regular chairman. The Rev. Mr. Johnston, of the Old School Presbyterian Church, as I was informed, opened the meeting with prayer.

A note was then read from the Chairman (Rev. Dr. Church,) expressive of his regret for unavoidable absence, and expressing the desire that the meeting might be favored with the best consequences, &c.

By reading the minutes of the last meeting it occurred that, agreeably to announcement, Prof. A. M. Green had been invited to address the meeting on the Duty of the Colored People of the North in Relation to the Great Rebellion. At eight o'clock Mr. Green was introduced, and proceeded with great ability to reason not only the propriety but the practical necessity of colored men taking an active part in this war, against the aggressive power of the mighty dragon of the nineteenth century, American slavery. Mr. Green argued that, viewed from whatever stand-point, every

honest man must conclude that this war is one that has been inaugurated by the labors of abolitionists and anti-slavery men, in a moral contest against this great evil; men have avowed it to be their purpose to bring the two elements to a hand-to-hand struggle; the efforts of our party for thirty years have been to array the North against the South on this question of slavery. And though the government denies the responsibility to be incurred by acknowledging the true issue, yet it also denies that it had any thing to do with inaugurating it. It is just as emphatically true that the government cannot control the issue involved in this war, as it is true that it could not for thirty years control the moral conflict kept up on this same question. It was our duty from very many considerations, elaborately presented by Mr. Green, to bear an honorable part in the great contest.

When Mr. Green closed, an opportunity was afforded for any remarks that might be offered on the question of the evening. A white gentleman present, whose name I learned at the time, but have since forgotten, took the floor, and strongly opposed Mr. Green's position. He claimed that the government was even worse, if possible, than ever it was, for now that it could justly, by availing itself of the war power, emancipate every slave in the South, yet instead of doing so, it fled from it as a man would flee from deadly poison. He said he had neither sympathy nor faith in the government; and until the war-making power became honest enough to emancipate, enfranchise, and wash its hands of the injustice done to black men in the country, it was not fit for Christian men, white or colored, but more especially the latter, to touch, taste or handle. The gentleman argued in this strain at some length. Mr. Isaiah C. Wears was called on, and in his usual very forcible manner dissented from Mr. Green. He made many allusions to the meanness of the government, and thought men would fall like sheep; that colored men could not be spared at such a time, and in such a cause. He said the South were more practically a fighting people than the North; that they were undoubtedly the superiors of the Northern whites in this respect, and the Northern whites were our superiors as much as the South was theirs; it could readily be perceived that we were, therefore, of all people the least prepared to go into this great slaughter-house of the government. He agreed,

however, with many points Mr. Green had raised, and was pleased with his treatment of the subject; he believed this would be a long war, and that no doubt thousands of colored men would see service in this war before rebellion was put down. Several other gentlemen, white and colored, participated on both sides of the question, which kept up quite a friendly and spirited meeting till a late hour of the evening. Just before adjournment, Mr. Green arose and said, he had taken the main points suggested by those who expressed themselves as opposed to his position, and he was willing to give them the consideration they deserved. But he said his opponents admitted too much that was argument for him; he said:

1. They had admitted it was a war between North and South.
2. That these two sections were naturally at war on the slavery question.
3. That the South openly admitted that she was fighting for the uninterrupted extension of the slavery power.
4. That they (the South) were the best fighters.
5. That we, the colored people, were the poorest fighters of either of the disputants.
6. That it would probably be a long war, and we would be called into it after a while.

He said he would ask those gentlemen whether it was not our duty, in view of the first four admissions, to enlist with the North, if honest in our ancient doctrines on the slavery question? And whether, in view of their two last admissions, it was not a positive necessity to counsel strenuous preparatory efforts among our people?

The subject was continued till the next meeting, on the second Tuesday in November.

FORMATION OF COLORED REGIMENTS.

I.

From the *Anglo-African*, September 28, 1861.

MR. EDITOR:

The duty of the black man at this critical epoch is a question of much importance, deeply interesting the friends of liberty, both white and black. The most imposing feature of this duty, I am told, is in relation to military organizations. This question, I am told, is forced upon us by our eminent, educated, far-sighted leaders, who, anxious for our elevation and zealous for our reputation, in connection with our white brothers would have us write our names side by side with them upon the immortal book of fame, won by well-contested and desperate encounters upon the battle-field. Claiming that any omission on our part to exhibit that patriotism so noticeable in the whites, will, when history shall record the doings of this memorable country, leave our names without one deed of patriotism or expressed desire for the success of the cause of liberty; not one laurel to entwine the brows of those whose valor like blazing stars upon the battle-field would, no doubt, have eclipsed those whom we now are satisfied to acknowledge as superiors and protectors. Is this all wisdom, this mode of reasoning; or is it a mistaken idea, called into existence by a desire for fame? Is it a demanding necessity that the world will decide belongs to us to meet, thus to prove our manhood and love of liberty? Have not two centuries of cruel and unrequited servitude in this country, alone entitled the children of this generation to the rights of men and citizens? Have we not done our share towards creating a national existence for those who now enjoy it to our degradation, ever devising evil for our suffering, heart-crushed race?

Who that will carefully note the many historical reminiscences, made mention of by those who are ready to do justice to us, can doubt our bravery? Who that has heard of the many privations,

hair-breadth escapes, and the unflinching determination of our enslaved brethren seeking the free shores of Canada, can doubt our love of liberty? True patriotism does not consist in words alone, neither do patriotic demonstrations always contribute to the end alone, independent of material aid. I do not suppose any people have been taxed heavier or more than the poor colored people for the cause of liberty, with such small results to themselves. Now, if we have contributed our share to support and establish a government, that we are not entitled to a share in the benefits thereof, what becomes our duty when that government is menaced by those they have cherished at the expense of our blood, toil and degradation?

Let your own heart answer this question, and no regiments of black troops will leave their bodies to rot upon the battle-field beneath a Southern sun—to conquer a peace based upon the perpetuity of human bondage—stimulating and encouraging the inveterate prejudice that now bars our progress in the scale of elevation and education.

I claim that the raising of black regiments for the war would be highly impolitic and uncalled for under the present state of affairs, knowing, as we do, the policy of the Government in relation to colored men. It would show our incompetency to comprehend the nature of the differences existing between the two sections now at variance, by lending our aid to either party. By taking such measures we invite injustice at the hands of those we prefer to serve; we would contribute to the African colonization scheme, projected a half century ago, by ridding the country of that element so dangerous to the charming institution of negro slavery.

Entertaining the sentiment and determination that they do, would it not be unjust in them to accept our service? Would we still invite them to cap the climax by forcing us to the cannon's mouth to save the destruction of those whose whole existence should be merged in with their country's weal and woe? That death should be the readiest sacrifice patriotic citizens could offer to uphold the people's hope, the people's palladium, no one should deny. But what do we enjoy, that should inspire us with those feelings towards a government that would sooner consign five millions of human beings to never-ending slavery than wrong one slave master of

his human property? Does not the contemplation of so flagrant a wrong cause your blood to boil with Christian indignation, or bring tears to the eyes of your broken-hearted old men, whose heads, now silvered by time or bleached by sorrow, can no longer shoulder the weightier responsibilities of a young man's calling?

Not only that. Any public demonstration (for this could not well be done in a corner) would only embarrass the present administration, by stirring up old party prejudices which would cause the loss of both sympathy and treasure, which the government cannot well afford to lose at present. By weakening the arm of the government, we strengthen that of the slave power, who would soon march through these States without fear of forcible resistance.

It would be contrary to Christian humanity to permit so flagrant an outrage in silence to be perpetrated upon any people, especially a class who have known naught else but wrong at their hands, whom they would so gloriously serve in time of danger to their own liberties and sacred rights, preferring now their services to uphold a Government leagued with perdition, upon which the doom of death is written, unless they repent, in letters so plain that he who runs may read. Let us weigh well this thing before taking steps which will not only prove disastrous to the cause we would help, but bring suffering and sorrows upon those left to mourn unavailingly our loss.

I maintain that the principle of neutrality is the only safe one to govern us at this time. When men's lives are in their hands, and so little inducement as there is for us to cast ourselves into the breach, our work for the present lies in quite a different channel from assuming war responsibilities uninvited, with no promised future in store for us—a dilemma inviting enmity and destruction to the few, both North and South, among our people, enjoying partial freedom.

The slave's only hope—his only help—is his suffering brother at the North. When we are removed, the beacon light which directs and assists the panting fugitive is darkened and obscured—his once bright hope, that gave comfort to him as he pressed on to liberty's goal, is shadowed o'er forever. Our own precipitous, unwise zeal must never be the cause to stay the car of freedom, but ever let it roll onward and upward until earth and heaven united shall become one garden of paradisaal freedom, knowing no color,

no clime, but all one people, one language, one Father, Almighty God.

Once under army discipline, subject to the control of government officers or military leaders, could we dictate when and where the blow should be struck? Could we enter upon Quixotic crusades of our own projecting, independent of the constituted authorities, or these military chiefs? Will the satisfaction of again hearing a casual mention of our heroic deeds upon the field of battle, by our own children, doomed for all that we know to the same inveterate, heart-crushing prejudice that we have come up under, and die leaving as a legacy unto our issue—all from those for whom you would so unwittingly face the cannon's mouth to secure to them a heritage denied you and yours?

Is this country ready and anxious to initiate a new era for down-trodden humanity, that you now so eagerly propose to make the sacrifice of thousands of our ablest men to encourage and facilitate the great work of regeneration? No! no!! Your answer must be: No!!! No black regiments, unless by circumstances over which we have no option, no control; no initiatory war measures, to be adopted or encouraged by us. Our policy must be neutral, ever praying for the success of that party determined to initiate first the policy of justice and equal rights.

Who can say that in another twelve months' time the policy of the South will not change in our favor, if the assistance of England or France will by it be gained, rather than submit to northern dictation or subjugation? Did that idea ever suggest itself to your mind? Strange things happen all the while. Look back for the last twenty-four months, and ask yourself if you could have fore-told what to-day you are so well informed has actually transpired when coming events cast their shadows before?

In these days, principle is supplanted by policy, and interest shapes policy, I find by daily observation, both in high and low places. Although to many the above idea may seem idle and delusory, inconsistent with the present spirit and suicidal policy of the South, yet I for one would feel justified in entertaining it equally with the idea that the North would proclaim a general emancipation so long as she supposed it a possibility to reclaim the disaffected States of the Southern Confederacy.

And, if an impossibility, what would all proclamations to that effect avail?

I believe with the act of emancipation adopted and proclaimed by the South, both England and France, (and in fact I might safely say all Europe,) would not only recognize their independence, but would render them indirectly material aid and sympathy.

To get the start of the northern slave-worshippers, as they are sometimes termed, who can say that, as a last resort, these rebel leaders have not had that long in contemplation, knowing that should they succumb to this government through force of circumstances, or the uncertain chances of war, their lives would be valueless only as a warning to future generations.

Then, why may we not hope that such is their ultimatum in case of a series of defeats—the liberation of four millions of our poor, heart-crushed, enslaved race. One or two large battles will decide the future policy of both the contending parties—the sooner it comes the sooner we will know our fate. It is in that scale it hangs.

Then let us do our duty to each other—use care in all our public measures—be not too precipitous, but in prayer wait and watch the salvation of God.

R. H. V.



II.

REPLY.

From the Anglo-African, October 19, 1861.

MR. EDITOR :

In your issue of September 28th, appears an able and elaborate article on the "Formation of Colored Regiments." I have no desire for contention at a time like this with those who differ honorably from me in opinion; but I think it just, once in a while, to speak out and let the world know where we stand on the great issues of the day, for it is only by this means that we can succeed in arousing our people from a mistaken policy of inactivity,

at a time when the world is rushing like a wild tornado in the direction of universal emancipation. The inactivity that is advocated is the principle that has ever had us left behind, and will leave us again, unless we arouse from lethargy and arm ourselves as men and patriots against the common enemy of God and man. For six months I have labored to arouse our people to the necessity of action, and I have the satisfaction to say not without success. I have seen companies organized and under the most proficient modern drill in that time. I have seen men drilled among our sturdy-going colored men of the rural districts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, in the regular African Zouave drill, that would make the hearts of secession traitors or prejudiced northern Yankees quake and tremble for fear.

Now I maintain that for all practical purposes, whatever be the turn of the war, preparation on our part, by the most efficient knowledge of the military art and discipline, is one of the most positive demands of the times. No nation ever has or ever will be emancipated from slavery, and the result of such a prejudice as we are undergoing in this country, but by the sword, wielded too by their own strong arms. It is a foolish idea for us to still be nursing our past grievances to our own detriment, when we should as one man grasp the sword—grasp this most favorable opportunity of becoming inured to that service that must burst the fetters of the enslaved and enfranchise the nominally free of the North. We admit all that has been or can be said about the meanness of this government towards us—we are fully aware that there is no more soul in the present administration on the great moral issues involved in the slavery question and the present war, than has characterized previous administrations; but, what of that; it all teaches the necessity of our making ourselves felt as a people, at this extremity of our national government, worthy of consideration, and of being recognized as a part of its own strength. Had every State in the Union taken active steps in the direction of forming regiments of color, we should now, instead of numbering eight regiments or about eight thousand five hundred men, have numbered seventy-five thousand—besides awakening an interest at home and abroad, that no vacillating policy of the half-hearted semi-secessionists of the North could have suppressed.

It would have relieved the administration of so much room for cavil on the slavery question and colored men's right to bear arms, &c. It is a strange fact that now, when we should be the most united and decided as to our future destiny; when we should all have our shoulders to the wheel in order to enforce the doctrine we have ever taught of self-reliance, and ourselves striking blows for freedom; that we are most divided, most inactive, and in many respects most despondent of any other period of our history. Some are wasting thought and labor, physical and intellectual, in counseling emigration, (which I have nothing against when done with proper motives); others are more foolishly wasting time and means in an unsuccessful war against it; while a third class, and the most unfortunate of the three, counsel sitting still to see the salvation of God. Oh, that we could see that God will help no one that refuses to help himself; that God will not even help a sinner that will not first help himself. Stretch forth thy hand, said the Saviour to the man with a withered hand. He did so and was healed. Take up thy bed and walk, said he, and the man arose; go and wash, said he to the blind man, and he did it. How many are the evidences of this kind. God is saying to us to-day, as plainly as events can be pointed out, stretch forth thy hand; but we sit idly, with our hands folded, while the whole world, even nations thousands of miles distant across the ocean, are maddened by the fierceness of this American strife, which after all is nothing less than God's means of opening the way for us to free ourselves by the assistance of our own enslavers, if we will do it.

Can we be still or idle under such circumstances. If ever colored men plead for rights or fight for liberty, now of all others is the time. The prejudiced white men, North or South, never will respect us until they are forced to do it by deeds of our own. Let us draw upon European sentiment as well as unbiased minds in our own country, by presenting an undaunted front on the side of freedom and equal rights; but we are blindly mistaken if we think to draw influence from any quarter by sitting still at a time like this. The world must know we are here, and that we have aims, objects and interests in the present great struggle.

Without this we will be left a hundred years behind this gigantic age of human progress and development. I never care to reply

to such views as those which set up the plea of previous injustice or even of present injustice done to us, as a reason why we should stand still at such a time as this. I have lived long enough to know that men situated like ourselves must accept the least of a combination of difficulties; if, therefore, there is a chance for us to get armed and equipped for active military service, that is one point gained which never could be gained in a time of peace and prosperity in this country; and that could have been done months ago, and can now be done in a few weeks, if we adopt the measure of united effort for its accomplishment.

Does any one doubt the expediency of our being armed and under military discipline, even if we have always been sufferers at the hands of those claiming superiority? But enough of this. As to public demonstrations of this kind weakening the arm of the Federal Government, I must say that I was prepared to hear that remark among Democratic Union-savers, but I am startled to hear it from among our own ranks of unflinching abolitionists.

Indeed, sir, the longer the government shirks the responsibility of such a measure, the longer time she gives the rebel government to tamper with the free colored people of the South, and prompt and prepare their slaves for shifting the horrors of Saint Domingo from the South to the North; and, in such an event, could we rid ourselves from the responsibility of entering the field, more than any other Northern men whom the government chose to call into active service?

Could we more effectually exercise proper discretion, without arms, without drill, without union, than by availing ourselves of all these at the present time, looking boldly forward to that auspicious moment?

The South (as I have said in an article written for the Philadelphia "Press," and copied into several popular journals) can mean nothing less than emancipation, by the act of her having thousands of free colored men, as well as slaves, even now under the best military discipline. England and France of course would favor such a project, should the South thus snatch the key to a termination of this rebellion from the hands of the Federal Government. But how much better off would we be, sitting here like Egyptian mummies, till all this was done, and then drafted and driven off,

undisciplined, to meet well-disciplined troops, who will then truly be fighting for freedom; and while we could have no other motive than to help conquer a peace for the "*Union still*" in its perfidious unregenerate state? Tell me not that it will be optional with us, in the event of emancipation by the South, whether we fight or not. On the contrary, there is no possible way to escape it but to either commit suicide or run away to Africa, for even the climate of Canada, in such an event, would not be cool enough to check the ardor of fighting abolitionists against the hell-born prejudice of the North, and the cowardly black man, would sit here quietly with his arms folded, instead of taking advantage of the times, till even the emancipated slaves of the South, rigorous in their majesty, force him to rise and flee to Canada to save his unsavory bacon. Let us then, sir, hear no more of these measures of actual necessity inaugurating a "dilemma, inviting enmity, and destruction to the few, both North and South, among our people enjoying partial freedom." That is a work that cannot be accomplished by loyal patriotic efforts to prepare a hundred thousand men to do service for God, for freedom, for themselves. Sitting still, shirking the responsibility God has thrown upon our shoulders, alone can engender such a dilemma.

Your correspondent also asks whether: "Once under army discipline, subject to the control of the government officers or military orders, we could dictate when and where the blow should be struck. Could we enter upon Quixotic crusades of our own projecting, independent of the constituted authorities or these military chiefs?" Sir, it appears to me that, under whatever changes of governmental policy, our favor would be courted more under such circumstances, and our dictation received with more favor and regard, both by the authorities, chiefs, and the people at large, than by our weak, effeminate pleadings for favor on the merits of our noble ancestry, rather than nerving our own arms and hearts for a combat that we have long half-heartedly invited by our much groanings and pleadings at a throne of grace.

The issue is here; let us prepare to meet it with manly spirit; let us say to the demagogues of the North who would prevent us now from proving our manhood and foresight in the midst of all these complicated difficulties, that we will be armed, we will be

schooling in military service, and if our fathers were cheated and disfranchised after nobly defending the country, we, their sons, have the manhood to defend the right and the sagacity to detect the wrong; time enough to secure to ourselves the primary interest we have in the great and moving cause of the great American rebellion. I am, as ever, yours, for truth and justice,

ALFRED M. GREEN.

III.

REJOINDER.

From the *Anglo-African*, October 26, 1861.

MR. EDITOR:

That it is the duty of every one advancing propositions for public adoption, inviting scrutiny and analysis, counseling a policy, to assign competent reasons, I am sensibly convinced; and that Mr. A. M. Green, in your issue of the 12th, was disposed to combat my ideas—I could only accept as a compliment—differing, no doubt, from what it was intended. It raises me in my own estimation to think that one like myself, of so feeble an intellect, of so little cultivation, should have provoked the notice of so able a man as my literary opponent. I therefore bow to it, and for the last time upon this subject, proceed to reiterate in substance my former sentiments, while I attempt to reply to my worthy antagonist, though co-worker, who has the advantage of me in assuming the leadership or acting the spokesman for our race in this country.

Mr. Green says:—

“But I think it just, once in a while, to speak out and let the world know where we stand on the great issues of the day, for it is only by this means that we can succeed in arousing our people from a mistaken policy of inactivity,” &c., &c.

The policy which he recommends, is certainly one which, if followed, must destroy every vestige of that power which by our united influence has so long troubled the plotters of our ruin and extinction to the detriment of their wily schemes.

If his sentiments are those of our people generally, I am heartily sorry, and must differ with them, though I stand alone, as the only advocate of the policy of peace measures or neutral action in the great struggle.

He also says, that "this inactivity that is advocated, is the principle that has ever had us left behind and will leave us again, unless we arouse from our lethargy and arm ourselves as men and patriots against the common enemy of God and man."

I admit that there is less activity in the right direction than advisable or beneficial to our cause, but never have our people displayed more wisdom than the present in refraining from initiating or making demonstrations of war measures. In that particular, discretion has marked their action—I, for one, must give them credit. That grasping the sword will emancipate us from prejudice, from slavery, may be well enough to declaim, but will it bear questioning? He intimates that it will emancipate us from our now unhappy and heart-crushing disabilities, will take the manacles from our limbs, remove the obstacles that debar our elevation to the equality to which we aspire.

I have yet to learn that these are practical established facts; it may be clear to the mind of Mr. G., but he must make it appear so by something more than simple declamation.

Who accuses us of cowardice? No one, unless it be my honorable opponent. Can we purchase freedom and independence by the sacrifice of thousands of our unfortunate people, in belligerent opposition to those who have the præminence in position, power and influence; whose numerical strength is ten times that of our own? We may sell our lives dearly, carry havoc and destruction into the ranks of our enemies, but the numerical preponderance, the unlimited means at their control, must force us to succumb or cease to exist on this continent as a race. All reason and experience will decide that—look at it as you may. The history of the Aborigines of this country must satisfy you of the force of this mode of reasoning.

To contend against the government then with any hope of success, is vain and not worthy of the time we spend in discussing it.

Admitting, for mere argument, that the government would accept our services, how could we, more than the commander of the West, General Fremont, influence the policy of the administration to our liberation or emancipation from prejudice and slavery? No, my friends, your reason must answer, no!—no fighting will emancipate you from prejudice. Will any one tell me that to-day a poor man, of little or no intellectual cultivation, from the Independent Government of Hayti, will be more respected in this or any country than one of the native born of this country, of our color? Did they not wield both fire and sword fiercely, to desperation, for the liberties they now enjoy? But to command respect, wealth and education must do it—*they* will do more towards destroying that prejudice which darkens our existence than all the fighting we can effect under the most favorable circumstances.

Mr. G. tells us that we should make ourselves felt. In that I agree with him; but may we not question the manner in which we can do it the more effectually.

I am told the object of the exhibitors at the Great Exhibition in London, the World's Fair, in 1851, was to make themselves felt by the exhibition of their great advancement in Art and Science; the object of those nations contributing their quota by invitation, was the same. The Fair was, we are told, a complete success. That should satisfy us, that the cultivation of peace, of arts and science, will go equally as far as an unsuccessful war, to produce that high respect we are advised to fight for. I, for one, am satisfied that other means of making ourselves felt, at less sacrifice of existence and more beneficial to the desired end, than wielding the sword, can be found. That impression that awards us credit, and challenges not only competition as equals, but commands that respect which an array or force of arms, situated as we are, can never force upon this or any nation whose interests are immediately identified with the institution of slavery—and the safety of that depending to an extent upon the crushing despotism and deprivations visited upon those dangerous to its progress or stability—is what we want to make ourselves felt. No unarmed, ununi-

formed masses of colored men, parading through the streets, will ever produce or tend to produce such impression.

Mr. G. takes this stand: (I give his own language, word for word, as follows:) "Now I maintain that, for all practical purposes, whatever be the turn of the war, preparation on our part, by the most efficient knowledge of military art and discipline, is one of the most positive demands of the times."

As an off-set to that position, I here take my stand: That the encouragement of every pursuit of industry and education, aside from war matters, are deserving and should (more especially at this time while the usurpers of our rights and liberties are engaged in desperate conflict) meet our most vigorous and undivided cöoperation! That that policy, adopted, realized, and perfected, alone can produce the requisite means to establish our claim to the respect we need; to open the many avenues of wealth, prominence, political and civil equality, without which, no display of military drill, of hordes of unarmed or armed men, ignorant of every other necessary qualification as servicable citizens, will command.

Momentary admiration for exhibitions of well drilled men and military tactics, which I believe would follow, would create sensation among the sight-lovers who swarm in all thickly populated districts; but that indellible impression, mighty to move the hearts of men to action, but when moved, calls forth imperishable convictions, lasting as time itself, must emanate from something deeper, more reliable, than brute force or the chance life of military campaigning, of soldiers ungarnished by the more essential qualities that make the man the citizen. As to military displays creating respect by efficient drill, especially among us, I have my doubts. The most ignorant, unprincipled desperado, or tyrant, or usurper, that disgraces humanity by his villainy, may be the most perfectly disciplined soldier, may be daring, regardless of danger either to limb or life—his daring may create admiration, but his infamous character, as a man of dishonorable proclivities, dissipation and barbarity, will blast his reputation, however bravely won on the field of battle.

Mr. G. says: "Had every State in the Union taken active steps in the direction of forming regiments of color, we should now, instead of numbering eight regiments, of about eight thousand five

hundred men, have numbered seventy-five thousand, besides awakening an interest, at home and abroad, that no vacillating policy of the half-hearted semi-secessionists of the North could have suppressed. It would have relieved the administration of so much room for cavil on the slavery question, and colored men's right to bear arms," &c., &c.

Permit me to ask of any candid thinker, who, perhaps, is better informed than myself on this matter, whether the States can independently force any number of men upon the General Government contrary to the wish or will of the constituted authorities, who I suppose have the power of either accepting or rejecting white or colored men, as prudence, interest, or necessity dictates, or who were disqualified by legal restrictions?

If the States cannot constitutionally do this, would not then the encouragement of raising those regiments environ the administration in complications, and force that cavil which friend G. would obviate?

Mr. Green also informs us that "the evidences of God's demands upon our patriotism as warriors, are so strong, that none need mistake them." I have yet to see the evidences of God's will or demands upon us in that direction, to take up arms for our own destruction, to destroy our bond brother, or to assist those who are contending in spirit against His righteous mandates, the principle of which is "Love thy neighbor as thyself." If, then, the result of that policy advocated by Mr. G. cannot effect the desired end he would have, we must, if ever entertaining it, abandon it at once, and pursue that policy which reason teaches is not only the safest but the wisest.

I am satisfied, that recruiting, drilling or fighting, will never break this innate prejudice imbedded in the hearts of this nation.

The admiration we might win by bravery, &c., when brought into action as soldiers, might easily be overshadowed by one act or false accusation, brought against us by those jealous of our gallant exploits when in active service.

With all respect for Mr. Green's literary accomplishments and scholar-like production, he is still in the dark, and may with propriety cry out, as one in times gone by, "Lord! that I may receive my sight."

Supposing that we, with one accord, enter upon that fallacious policy of raising regiments for the war, could we do it without it becoming a public feature, noticeable by foes as well as friends?

With Southern emissaries thronging our hotels, thoroughfares, stores, &c., would not the Confederates be likely to gain this important information with equal facility as they obtain other news that enables them to counterbalance every move made by the national forces? If we admit this, why may we not, from the knowledge we have of their (the Southerners') disposition, believe that, as a direful retaliation, they would arm their free and enslaved colored men, and compel them to fight against us on the field of battle, while such patriots as A. M. G., who we could not well afford to lose, would have the unpleasant duty assigned to him and his associates in arms of destroying those whom he might now benefit by adopting a policy contrary to the misguided suicidal course he so eloquently advocates. If I have the honor to be termed "one of those unfortunates who are willing to wait and see the salvation of God," by Mr. G., I accept the conferred honor with many thanks.

The wisdom of the course I advocate, and that advocated by A. M. G., time alone will decide. Patiently, however, I abide time, clinging to my avowed policy, humbly trusting in Him who I have every reason to think has taken the cause of the oppressed of our people in this land out of our weak hands, and has or is about to answer our many appeals in His own glorious way, while we continue to lift our hearts, our hands, in praise and thanksgiving to His holy name.

R. H. V.



I V.

R E P L Y.

From the Anglo-African, November 9 and 16, 1861.

MR. EDITOR:

Absence from home has prevented my notice of the rejoinder of your able correspondent, R. H. V., on the war policy. I now avail myself of a leisure hour to reply. I am one of those who

believe that truth loses nothing from investigation, and it is at all times the most pleasant and agreeable feature in the honest investigation of truth to know that your opponent can properly appreciate honor, candor and gentlemanly generosity for the views of his antagonist. My friend, your correspondent R. H. V., seems largely to possess those characteristic traits of a gentleman and scholar. I am pleased to find my antagonist on this question, of that progressive class of minds, who can honorably differ with his fellows, without condescending to that hateful and disgusting virulence manifested of late among the ancient leaders of our people, in very high circles. I think among us boys, (as our more ancient leaders are wont to term us,) this practical fact of itself develops progress. My friend thinks that so far as my declamation is concerned, my arguments may do very well; but he wants facts to make it appear that my position is tenable. I am willing to submit our previous articles, respectively, to the arbitration of those who have read them, and abide their decision as to whose arguments are the most self-evident, and whose position is sustained by the greatest number of facts. I think that a careful comparison of the articles and the premises on which they are based, will prove my friend's production quite as liberally bereft of that important auxiliary in debate (proof) as my own iridescent missive. Invidious distinctions among the colored people of this continent have done more to keep us oppressed than all other efforts of white men combined. By this rule we have ever been unable to wring from this government the acknowledgment of black genius, adequate to the successful competition of whites, in governmental power. White men have ever made us believe that the interests of black men in Mexico, Hayti, Jamaica, Canada, and even in Africa, were really as dissimilar to the interests of colored Americans, as is the difference in the respective statures of the giraffe and dormouse. All these countries offered very superior advantages to colored men of genius, long before American diplomacy and American prejudice had the power to influence them against us. But this stand-still policy, and this reasoning upon the false and prejudiced suggestions of our oppressors and misguided friends, has been the successful drawback to every well-directed plan of concentrated effort for our elevation, such as would have been adopted with successful

results by any other people similarly situated. Had we obeyed the dictates of reason, and the offer of those people made to us years ago, instead of now going to California to black boots, wait at tables, and wash spittoons, our leading men might have been large contractors, land owners, and citizens to all intents and purposes; while the secondary class of our people might have filled very enviable positions in contrast to what they now fill in that country; for, you remember, that the acquisition of territory from Mexico changed none of her laws relating to her resident citizens in any part of the territory ceded to, or purchased by, the United States. What, then, kept us from joining with the English and French emigrants in California before the war?—becoming citizens under the law of Mexico, and forcing the United States, by the laws of nations, to respect that position to the present day, as she does blacker men and less cultivated than two-thirds of the colored people of the United States—who cannot even enjoy their oath against one of those fellows, black though he be, if he happen to be a Mexican? The reason is obvious; white men, seeing the result of such a measure, denied our identity of interest with the colored people favored by the laws of Mexico and California; and though Mexico entreated us to make our home with them, (as Hayti now entreats us from the same reasons,) we objected. Our leading men, reasoning upon this absurd theory of prejudiced white men, counseled us to stand still and see the salvation of God; but instead of the analogy being carried out, and we seeing our oppressors declining in strength, as did Israel, we see them day by day growing stronger; until they had made that blessed land of Freedom as odious from their accursed prejudice as any other part of the United States, and now these same leaders cease to counsel standing still, but counsel our going to California. In the name of heaven, I ask, for what should we now go there? They say, to better their condition and make a living; I say to become worse slaves and menials than us they leave behind. This is the stand-still policy I am at variance with; standing still till all advantages are lost, and we are left in the same darkness and degradation that a brilliant epoch in the history of our country has found us, and is compelled to leave us, because we refuse to get up and run with the world to the great issue to which she is tending—universal Freedom. There is no

such thing as stand still in this nineteenth century; you must progress backward or forward; the world is rushing on; he or they who will not move with her, must be crushed by her onward march.

My friend says he has yet to learn that these are practically established facts; "that grasping the sword will emancipate us from prejudice and slavery." Indeed, he asks: "Will the proposition bear questioning?" I answer, yes, in the most positive sense, because four-fifths of all the emancipations from these evils among men have been brought about by this means. The Israelites were carried away captives seven times by Pharaoh, Tiglath-Pilaser, Shalmanezer, Nebuchadnezer, and finally, by Titus. These men forced them to serve as slaves and vassals, not only to themselves, but to their successors in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Persia, over which empires they respectively held dominion. The Israelites groaned and prayed to God, lifting their windows towards the city of the great King, three times a day—but never were released in five out of seven cases, till they grasped the sword, and like Samson, cried to God for strength to drive it to the hilt. In one of the other cases of the seven, God himself, by the use of elements more destructive and desolating than the sword, effected the purpose by a national slaughter. My comment on all these Bible transactions may be found in the writings of the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Hosea. A careful study of these inspired writers, and the chronological history of the Jews through all those years of their servitude and degradation, develops the fact that the special direction of God, by the mouth of his prophets, is decidedly at variance with my friend's peace measures and neutral policy, in a war against the greatest moral, social, and intellectual antagonist to human progress that now curses the civilized world. Turning from sacred history to more recent dates, I am taught by the modern historian that the vassals and slaves of the entire continent of Europe, a few centuries ago, are now its free citizens—made free by the power of their own strength, contending often against fearful odds for the advancement of the cause of human suffrage. The once lowest castes of Hindostan are now the free gentoos of that empire. The slaves that built the pyramids of Egypt are now, it is true, the degraded but free Moslem of that land. The Mexicans that Cortez found in that country, working

as slaves of the emperors and priesthood, are now the free population of Mexico. The slaves of England, France, and Spain, in the West Indies, are now the independent Haytians, the citizens of the Dominican Republic, and the British West Indies. Now let me ask by what special interposition of Providence, aside from the general rule of grasping the sword, have these changes been brought about? The answer comes back from the earliest antiquity, that the universal rule for Emancipation, Equality and Enfranchisement, whether it be to the Jewish slaves of antiquity, the Roman slaves, the Grecian helots, the German fuedal vassals, the serfs of Russia, the Indian slaves of Mexico and Central America, or the African slaves of the West India Islands, the one, the all-prevailing influence for removing these accursed systems of tyranny and oppression is, and ever has been, an appeal to the sword, wielded by strong and energetic arms and minds, aided and guided by that Omnipotence that is ever on the side of justice, and who directs the blow so as to spread terror and dismay among the oppressors of a crushed and bleeding race, the outraged struggling victims of injustice and wrong. So will God help us if we conform to this universal rule; and cease to cling to this abstract rule of "stand still and see the salvation," etc., which, after all, never can be applied to our case at present, for the Israelites had done what we have steadily refused to do, *i. e.*, they had spoiled their oppressors, and were marching out of their land in rank and file. Are we willing to do likewise? Then, again, it was only when they had gone to the last extremity of human effort, and were about to turn back to slavery, and to be buried in Egypt, that Moses gave the command to stand still, etc. Now, I am willing to grant my friend the full benefit of this one isolated case in support of his theory, as far as it goes—when we have performed our part as faithfully even as those to whom it was addressed. When the slaves have raised the standard of rebellion against their masters, and have broken every yoke, and then, by some great impending danger, are about to yield and go back again to slavery, I, like Moses, rather than retrograde, would readily counsel standing still, at least for a while. When we of the North, by indefatigable exertion (and sacrifice, if required) have armed and equipped ourselves, and become proficient in all that pertains to self-defence, as men in our condition should be, and then

find ourselves environed with some of the difficulties that my friend predicts would follow such a significant result, and we, like Israel, are about turning back to our present unhappy and insignificant condition, I, for one, should steadfastly counsel standing still with fixed bayonets and torn cartridges, to see the salvation of God; which I verily believe would be seen, if we followed those general rules to which I cling, notwithstanding the enemy's præminence of position, superior numerical strength, &c.

I think that I am quite safe in assuming that there is no scrap of history that can be brought by analogy to prove, "that we must either succumb to the numerical preponderance of power, which our enemies may bring to bear against us, or cease to exist on the continent." I think the history of the aborigines of this country goes but a short distance in proof of this mode of reasoning; they sunk by thousands in the very pursuits under which our race have steadily increased. Besides, there are very many reasons why they have diminished, aside from the aggressive war of extermination forced upon them by the whites; while the sword among them has slain its thousands, the introduction of rum of the most poisonous character has slain its tens of thousands. Delirium tremens, mania a potu, and a thousand other hereditary diseases more fruitful of death and the entire destruction of the human family than the sword, through the wily craft of white men have been thrust among them—then what has followed? Internal dissensions among the different tribes, by which means the sword, in the hands of brethren, has done more for their extermination than enemies of the opposite race. But our people usually drink good whiskey, or the best of brandy, and I therefore do not exactly look for the same results to them in this direction; and, with their knowledge of the deceptive character of our oppressors, I cannot think we will ever be induced by them to slay each other indiscriminately, as the Indians have. My friend speaks of world's fairs, agricultural pursuits, arts and sciences, etc., versus momentary admiration for exhibitions of well disciplined men, well drilled in military tactics, &c. He brings wealth, education, industry, &c., against efficient military drill, well contested battles, bravery and gallant exploits in active service, etc. But he evidently does not draw his conclusions from a very careful study of his subject and the

nations to whom he refers. Great Britain first made herself free, then became the governess of her numerous colonies, then became mistress of the seas, before she turned her attention to these social and civil pursuits that my friend cites us to. France had pillaged the world by her superior perfection in artillery and infantry tactics, before she was satisfied to go to work at world's fairs and what not. But the slaves of every nation are those who challenge competition in mechanics, agriculture, and the fine arts. Why then have they not been freed by this means without an appeal to arms? My friend refers to Hayti, and says, they are not more respected though "they wielded the sword to desperation, etc." Thank God, they are at least free and independent. Besides this, the colored planters, though they were acknowledged the most wealthy, educated, industrious, and thrifty of the Haytians, challenging competition by their industry and wealth, and commanding respect by their education and refinement, yet they never were recognized or respected at home or abroad until they grasped the sword and taught their oppressors and the world a lesson of African chivalry, versus so much mock morality, peaceful submission, etc., in this stirring age of human progress. By this means the blacks of Hayti are felt in a way that world's fairs, &c., &c., would not have made them felt for centuries yet to come. My friend inquires how we could influence the administration more than Gen. Fremont; and whether the States could thrust upon the war department persons whom interest or necessity might dictate they should reject; or whether they could accept the services of those who are legally disqualified? He then says, if this may not be constitutionally done, would not my policy environ the administration and force that cavil I would obviate? I think I fairly met these questions in my previous article. I will again, for the esteem I have for my friend, answer him as best I can. First, no one can tell how much Gen. Fremont has or can influence the war department; the fact that Mr. Cameron visited Fremont in person, and that Fremont has made no public protest against the ruling of the cabinet, looks very suspicious that they understood each other, and were only acting up to the necessity of keeping their own counsel. Fremont evidently wields an influence that would require but a very few men of his stamp to emancipate the entire South. He

may yet be commander-in-chief under our present administration. Secondly, the States have and are doing every day all that we would require them to do ; *i. e.*, they are raising troops, preparing them by all available means for the time the government will need them ; and may they not as readily prepare colored as white men ? Would this not be a step in the direction of enfranchisement ? And after all, is it not through this medium, the recognition of our rights by the people, that we may ever hope to reach the government ? As to legal disqualification, and constitutional necessity being in our way, I would refer my friend to Mr. Lincoln's speech at Independence Hall, in this city, when he said that "after all, decisions of the Supreme Court, and our constitutional and compromise obligations are not eternal principles, but must vary with the necessities of the times, etc." A solution of these strange words are given in the Rev. H. H. Garnet's passports by Mr. Seward ; and Mr. Lincoln's answer to the writ of habeas corpus issued by the highest judicial authority in the country. Garnet's passport and the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus are the best of arguments against constitutional and legal restrictions, preventing the recognition of a hundred thousand men of the best muscle and determined bravery in the Federal ranks.

As to what southern emissaries may do, by throwing information into the hands of the Rebels, of our movements, etc., I have only to say that it is an abstract question that should have no weight with men willing to do their duty in a great crisis like the present ; follow this rule of reasoning and we should have no army, no President, no freemen, no free-soil, nor aught else to defend. Seven years ago the serfs of Russia were hopeless slaves ; the nobility had frustrated the efforts of every cabinet for the amelioration of their condition. At length a war broke out between Russia, Turkey, France and England. The Czar, driven to an extremity, proposed to place in the field 250,000 serfs. The nobility protested against it, fearing the result to themselves. The serfs opposed it because they could see no issue in the war favorable to their interest ; they believed England and France to be far more favorable to their freedom than Russia. The war raged, and finally Alexander, over the heads of nobility and serfs, drafted 75,000 serfs and sent them off to the Crimea, and in less than three years from

that time, nearly thirty millions of slaves are freed by the result of that policy. There was no way to dispossess these people of the influence they swayed by that one stroke of war policy; but to emancipate them was inevitable. Is not our condition analogous to theirs in many respects, and may we not by the same policy expect a similar result? I must thank my friend for two considerations of kindness toward his old, misguided, suicidal friend; first, for his anxiety "that I might receive my sight;" second, for his anxiety lest I should be lost while performing an unpleasant duty. There are two kinds of blindness mentioned in scripture, an unfortunate blindness and a wilful one; as my friend has placed me among the first class, by Moses' law, Leviticus. 19: 14, I am entitled to commiseration, and by the same law, Deut, 27: 18, he should be sorely punished for trying to lead me to wander out of the way, etc. I am somewhat fearful that my friend may be of the opposite class mentioned in the ¶ from the 37th to the 52d verse of the 12th chapter of John. If so, a solution to his unfortunate state may be found in Matthew, 15: 14.

A. M. GREEN.

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